

## MEMORANDUM

**To: FMA Regional Directors**

**From: Greg Stanford and Katie Maddocks**

**Re: FMA Government Affairs Update for October 2013**

**Date: Friday, November 8, 2013**

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a brief narrative and status of ongoing government relations and public affairs activities the FMA government relations department worked on in October 2013 on behalf of FMA members. Please share this information with chapter presidents, legislative action team leaders and others in your region.

### **Issue Brief Timeline**

In preparation for FMA's 76<sup>th</sup> Annual National Convention, we have outlined the following schedule for development and consideration of the 2014 Issue Briefs:

- **Friday, December 6, 2013:** Draft Issue Brief Executive Summary to Executive Board for review
- **Monday, December 16, 2013:** Memo to Executive Board, Conference Chairs and Co-Chairs, Chapter Presidents, LAT leaders and MALs providing draft 2014 Issue Brief Executive Summary for review
- **January 1 – 10, 2014:** Schedule conference calls with Regions to get feedback on outline (upon request from the regions)
- **Monday, January 13, 2014:** Draft Issue Briefs are sent to Executive Board, Conference Chairs and Co-Chairs, Chapter Presidents, LAT leaders and MALs for review
- **Friday, January 31, 2014:** End comment period for 2014 draft issue briefs
- **March 9-12, 2014:** Final presentation on FMA Issue Briefs at National Convention. All Issue Brief items (including FMA National President Patricia Niehaus' cover letter and executive summary) will be available for delegates to distribute during the Association's Day on the Hill on **Wednesday, March 12, 2014**

### **Federal Government Shutdown**

As you know, the federal government was shut down on October 1, 2013, causing many FMA members to be furloughed for a second time in 2013, and others to work with delayed pay. During this time, FMA

focused its time and resources to urge an end to the shutdown and the return of all federal employees to their jobs.

1. FMA created a Shutdown page to the website ([www.fedmanagers.org](http://www.fedmanagers.org)) to keep all members apprised of developments related to shutdown furloughs, guidance from the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and resources such as financial advice, unemployment benefits information and educational opportunities.
2. FMA National President Patricia Niehaus sent a letter to all FMA members to convey her concern and commitment to doing everything FMA could to end the shutdown.
3. FMA sent a letter to all Members of Congress in support of legislation (H.R. 3223 and S. 1567) to pay all federal employees retroactively for the duration of the shutdown. H.R. 3223 passed unanimously in the U.S. House, and back pay was included in the CR that reopened the government, P.L. 113-46.
4. FMA sent Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel a thank you letter following his actions that returned 90% of civilian DOD employees to work a week before the federal government reopened.
5. FMA Director of Government Affairs Greg Stanford appeared on the In Depth with Francis Rose show on Federal News Radio on the first day of the shutdown to share the management perspective. A link to the interview can be found on the FMA website.
6. We expressed FMA's budget related concerns to House and Senate staff in numerous phone conversations, in-person meetings, and emails. It is important that both chambers and both parties understand how an underfunded agency negatively impacts not only federal workers, but the country as a whole.
7. We worked with the Fed-Postal Coalition on coordinated messaging to amplify outreach and share concerns about the negative impacts of the shutdown with Congress, the Administration, and targeted media outlets. Joint letters from the FPC can be found on the FMA website.

### **Budget Conference**

On October 16, 2013, Congress passed the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2014, which President Obama signed into law as P.L. 113-46. The bill ended the shutdown, funding the federal government through January 15, 2014, and increasing the debt limit through February 7, 2014.

As part of the final deal, Senators and Representatives agreed to a budget conference charged with resolving the differences between the Senate- and House-passed budgets for Fiscal Year 2014.

1. FMA National President Patricia Niehaus sent a letter to all 29 members of the budget conference committee urging that a proposed switch to Chained-CPI not be part of any final budget package.

2. Separately, President Niehaus sent a letter to say that federal employees have already contributed enough (\$114 billion) in deficit reduction and urged lawmakers to avoid any further cuts to federal pay and benefits.
3. The government affairs department had meetings on Capitol Hill with staff from Senators and Representatives on the budget conference to advocate FMA's priorities. These meetings included Sen. Bill Nelson (D-FL), Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), Sen. Tim Kaine (D-VA), Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA), Sen. Angus King (D-ME), and Rep. Nita Lowey (D-NY). We will continue to schedule and meet with other members of the committee. The next meeting of the budget conference committee will be held on November 13, and its work will end on December 13. Based on our meetings to date, it appears the committee is primarily working to develop a topline budget number that both the House and Senate can agree to.
4. FMA signed on to a Fed-Postal Coalition letter, joining unions and other management associations with a unified message on behalf of the entire federal workforce.

### **Sequestration**

FMA will continue to compile information on sequestration and how it will affect feds throughout the country. A link is available on the front page of the FMA website. Agency leaders continue to warn congressional members on the financial consequences of sequestration.

### **Niehaus Visit to Washington, D.C.**

President Niehaus had a productive visit to Washington, D.C., during the week of October 14-18. Greg and Katie scheduled her itinerary and accompanied her to meetings including:

- **U.S. Representative Frank Wolf (R-VA)** – Discussed the government shutdown and Mr. Wolf's efforts on securing back pay.
- **House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Staff (Majority)** – Discussed the shutdown and FEHBP reform.
- **House Oversight and Government Reform Committee Staff (Minority)** – Discussed the government shutdown, FEHBP and succession planning
- **Office of Sen. Ben Cardin (D-MD)** – Discussed FMA's proposal to create a leave bank for newly hired disabled veterans, supervisor training, and several other FMA priorities.
- **Office of Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)** – Discussed the budget conference committee, chained-CPI and other FMA legislative priorities.
- **Office of Rep. Paul Cook (R-CA)** – Discussed improvements to the Pay Our Military Act.
- **Senate Special Committee on Aging (Minority)** – Discussed security clearances and adding a Self Plus One option to FEHBP.

### **FMA Region Conferences**

Katie attended the FMA Region 4 conference hosted by Chapter 14 in Las Vegas, NV, on Saturday, October 12. She provided a government affairs presentation and update.



### **EPA National Partnership Council**

In September, FMA President Niehaus addressed the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) National Partnership Council to discuss the work of National Council on Federal Labor-Management Relations. She was joined by National Federation of Federal Employees President Bill Dougan. Greg worked on presentation materials and provided staffing support for the event.