

THE Federal Manager

Issue 44.3 | Summer 2024

Federal Managers Association | Advocating Excellence in Public Service

A portrait of Craig Carter, a middle-aged man with short, graying hair and a goatee, wearing a purple button-down shirt and a purple and white striped tie. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. In the background, an American flag is partially visible on the left side.

CRAIG CARTER FMA MANAGER OF THE YEAR!

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• Annual National
• Convention

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• Generation Why:
• Harnessing
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Article Submission

All materials submitted to The Federal Manager should pertain to public service managers. Copy should be double-spaced and no longer than 10 pages. High resolution 300 dpi, color images in JPG or TIF format, as well as charts, or illustrations in EPS vector format, should be included if possible. Text should be submitted by email or on compact disc. Please also include a biography of the author.



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From Our President...

FMA'S BUSY 2024!

FMA Family,

I hope you are doing well. As we start into the summer months and I look back, it was a very busy winter and spring for the federal workforce.

I'm happy to report we had a great 86th annual Federal Managers Association National Convention and Management Training Seminar, March 25 through March 27, at the Hilton Old Town in Alexandria, Virginia. I especially want to thank our keynote speaker, Loren Schulman, Associate Director for Performance and Personnel Management, Office of Management and Budget. We were also honored to hear from our luncheon presenter, Rear Admiral Scott M. Brown, Deputy Commander, Industrial Operations, Naval Sea Systems Command. Monday's lunch was sponsored by the four public shipyards. Additionally, I want to recognize our management training speakers, two of whom were FMA members. A special thanks goes to Vincent Stamper, Region 4 Director from Chapter 14 (Puget Sound Naval Shipyard), and Adam Henckler, who is from Chapter 6 (Portsmouth Naval Shipyard), for their outstanding presentations. Thank you, Team FMA, for another wonderful national convention. If you were unable to attend, I hope you can join us next year! For more details on the convention, see the article starting on page 10.

On April 11, we held a virtual Town Hall Zoom meeting on dealing with poor performers and the assistance that our agencies/commands provide to help managers deal with these problems. All FMA members were invited to attend. Our next Town Hall virtual meeting will be July 18, when we will discuss scheduling and meeting with our congressional representatives in district when they are home on recess in August. This is the perfect time to schedule meetings with your elected members of Congress to talk about federal employee issues such as hiring and retention in the federal workforce, providing a reasonable pay raise in the 2025 budget, and keeping our benefits intact. According to the Federal Salary Council, the federal sector is still 27 percent behind the private sector in hourly pay, and this issue is one of the biggest factors in the hiring/retaining challenges we have for the federal workforce. The discussion will be led by Greg Stanford, FMA's Director of Government Affairs. If you have anything you would like to see discussed in future virtual Town

Halls, please reach out to FMA Executive Director Todd Wells.

On May 2, FMA was invited to attend the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) Director Kiran Ahuja's farewell celebration as she departed that role. She was the longest serving OPM director in a decade. Todd attended the event on the association's behalf. On May 21, Todd and I attended the joint Employee Thrift Advisory Council and Federal Retirement Thrift Investment Board meeting. I traveled to D.C., June 10-13, to attend scheduled meetings with members of Congress together with our Government Affairs Director Greg Stanford.

As I serve my last two-year term as your FMA national president, I want to thank you for your trust in me these last four years. I officially retired from government service on March 30, 2024, after 34 years with the Department of the Navy, with the last twenty-five years serving at Norfolk Naval Shipyard in Portsmouth, Virginia. I have always wanted to travel and meet the members of FMA and help start new chapters. Now, I have the time to do this. I, as well as the other members of your national executive board and your national staff, are available to attend chapter executive board and/or member meetings, and other events, either virtually or in person. I am already penciled in to attend three of these meetings in person in the near future. Please reach out to Todd and me if you are interested in doing this for your chapter.

As always, thank you for your support of the men and women of our armed forces, your commands/agencies, your communities, FMA, and the citizens of the United States of America. ●

Sincerely,

Craig Carter
FMA National President

A professional portrait of Craig Carter, a middle-aged man with short, graying hair and a goatee. He is wearing a purple long-sleeved button-down shirt and a purple and white striped tie. He is seated with his hands clasped in front of him. In the background, an American flag is visible on the left side. The overall lighting is soft and professional.

COVER

CRAIG CARTER
FMA MANAGER
OF THE YEAR!

The Federal Managers Association proudly named Craig Carter as FMA's Manager of the Year! He was recognized for this outstanding achievement at FMA's 86th annual National Convention and Management Training Seminar. Read more about Craig's many accomplishments deserving of this prestigious recognition below.

A recipient of many awards over the course of his career with the Department of the Navy (DON), Craig Carter is particularly proud of receiving the Civilian Service Commendation Medal in December 2021. This award is presented to Department of the Navy civilians "who distinguish themselves by performing well above their specialty or grade," and clearly illustrates Craig's contributions as a manager to the mission at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) and the DON. He now adds FMA's prestigious Manager of the Year award to his mantle, as Carter embodies the Association's mission at his agency, his community, and as a leader within FMA.

Craig's career with the Department of Defense has spanned more than 33 years, all with the Department of the Navy. He began his service working for the Naval Public Works at Naval Station Norfolk in 1990. In 1999 he began work at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) where he continued until recently retiring in April. He was promoted to first line supervisor inside the nuclear division in 2007 and has served as Zone Manager and Assistant Project Superintendent for the Special Emphasis Division performing major component replacement and maintenance on the Navy's fleet of nuclear aircraft carriers. Craig served as both Deputy Director and Director of the Covid Management Team at NNSY since the COVID-19 global pandemic hit our nation.

FMA is fortunate to be able to look forward to two more years under Craig's

passionate leadership as he was reelected National President during FMA's 2024 Convention. Craig's leadership within the association is a model for all managers in public service. He has served tirelessly in every capacity possible, most notably as National President, but also as National Vice President, Chapter 3 (Norfolk Naval Shipyard) President, Region 2 Treasurer, Chapter 3 Treasurer, and National Membership Coordinator.

He was President of FMA Chapter 3 when the chapter twice won the "President's Award" for best FMA chapter in 2017 and 2018, becoming the first chapter to win that award in consecutive years in the nearly 110-year history of the association. He won FMA's Gil Guidry award as best Chapter President in 2020 for his leadership at Chapter 3.

Since 2009, Craig has been one of the most successful recruiters of new members to FMA. He won the "Super Recruiter Award" in 2014, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022, recruiting more members than anyone else in the association. He recruited a record eighty-two new members into FMA in 2019. He is always informed on FMA issues and passionate about taking FMA's story to Capitol Hill. He meets with legislators and their staff, committee staff, and administration officials about FMA legislative and policy priorities. He has provided testimony for the record in congressional hearings, official comments to administrative rulemaking, legislative language for amendments and bills, and talking points for Members of Congress. He also represents FMA on boards with the Office of Personnel Management, the Office of Management and Budget, the Employee Thrift Advisory Council (which advises the Thrift Savings Plan), and multiple other avenues.


Craig participates in many community events in the Norfolk area with his chapter.

Each year Chapter 3 does many community events such as "Clean the Bay," where the chapter members clean up trash and debris from their shores and waterways. They participate in the Annual Breast Cancer Awareness March and have marched in the Portsmouth Memorial Day parade. Craig has been a faithful participant and leader in these events throughout his time as a manager. He is happily married to his wife Jo Ann, and he has two stepsons and six granddaughters.

The FMA Manager of the Year award is presented annually to an outstanding manager or supervisor in the federal government who is a member of the Federal Managers Association. Chapters may nominate one member to their respective region director, and that officer submits up to two nominees from the region, along with supporting documentation, for consideration of the award. The selection committee reviews three categories in determining the winner:

- Workplace accomplishments/contributions
- FMA involvement at the chapter, regional or national levels
- Local community accomplishments/contributions

"FMA, the Department of the Navy, and our nation are privileged to have a leader like Craig Carter," said Todd Wells, Executive Director of FMA. "His distinguished service on behalf of Norfolk Naval Shipyard, and his leadership at the Federal Managers Association, are hallmarks of what FMA stands for. His peers rightly recognize his many years of hard work, and he has earned both their respect and admiration which are reflected in him being named FMA's Manager of the Year. Congratulations on this honor, and thank you, Craig, for your service." ●



GENERATION WHY![?]

GENERATION WHY: HARNESSING DIFFERENCES FOR A STRONGER TOMORROW

By Adam Henckler

At the Federal Managers Association's 86th annual National Convention & Management Training Seminar, I had the privilege of presenting a session on the topic of generational differences in the workforce

and how they can be harnessed for a stronger tomorrow. This is a topic of great relevance to leaders in the federal government, as understanding and leveraging these differences can lead to more effective management and a more productive workforce.

The current American workforce

is primarily driven by three distinct generational groups:

Generation X: Born between 1965 and 1980, this group, once the majority, is now trending downward in numbers, with around 43 million employees. They are often referred to as the "MTV Generation."

Generation Y: Born between 1981 and

1996, this group comprises about 49 million individuals in the American workforce.

They are known for their tech-savviness and entrepreneurial spirit.

Generation Z: The group quickly replacing the Baby Boomers, born after 1996, currently makes up a growing 17 million people in the office space. They are often referred to as the “Zoomer” generation.

To understand the strengths and weaknesses of each generation, we must consider the economic, political, technological, and social impacts that shaped their formative years.

Economic

Generation X: Experienced economic downturns such as the 1987 Black Monday, 1990 Recession, and 1997 Asian Financial Crisis, leading to a more risk-averse approach.

Generation Y: Lived through the Dot Com Bust, September 11th attacks, and the 2008 Real Estate Bust, making them more risk aware.

Generation Z: Witnessed events like the 2018 Crypto Crash and the 2020 Stock Market Correction, which might explain their propensity for risk-taking.

Political

Generation X: Influenced by events like the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Gulf War, leading to a more conservative mindset.

Generation Y: Experienced the aftermath of the September 11th attacks and the War on Terror, with administrations of Clinton, Bush, and Obama shaping their liberal views.

Generation Z: Growing up in a time of political unrest and congressional stalemate, leading to a sense of political uncertainty.

Technological

Generation X: Transitioned from paper-

based work to the introduction of cable news and home computers.

Generation Y: Emerged as digital natives with the mainstreaming of the Internet, corporate networks, and email.

Generation Z: Grew up in a paperless society with real-time information and user-generated content.

Social

Generation X: Witnessed the AIDS crisis, War on Drugs, and the end of the Cold War, leading to a heightened awareness of social issues.

Generation Y: Engaged in social movements such as Same-Sex Marriage, Womens’ Movement, and the rise of Social Networking.

Generation Z: Advocates for issues like Global Warming, Civil Rights, and Gun Violence, reflecting a strong sense of advocacy.

Strengths and Weaknesses

Each generation brings unique strengths and weaknesses to the table:

Generation X: Strong at evaluating risk, conservative and committed, but may struggle with change and be technologically challenged.

Generation Y: Entrepreneurial, technology adaptive, embraces diversity, but may be impatient and question authority.

Generation Z: Technology leaders, multitaskers, risk-takers, but may require frequent feedback and prefer small tasks over large projects.

In conclusion, effective management requires embracing the individual



Adam Henckler presents during FMA's National Convention in March.

strengths and weaknesses of each generation. Recognizing and leveraging these differences can lead to a more inclusive and productive environment where all employees feel empowered to contribute their unique skills and perspectives for the greater good of the organization. By understanding the impacts of national and global events on each generation, leaders can navigate the complexities of a multigenerational workforce and build a stronger tomorrow.

Check out more tips, tools, and techniques for management at [AdamHenckler.com](https://www.adamhenckler.com). ●

Adam Henckler is the Superintendent of Production Engineering and Facilities (Code 980), Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, in Kittery, Maine. He is a member of FMA Chapter 6, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, and presented at FMA's 2024 National Convention & Management Training Seminar. You can find his videos on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/@AdamHenckler>.



FMA'S 86TH ANNUAL NATIONAL CONVENTION

Federal Managers Represented on Capitol Hill

By Todd Wells

Members from chapters from across the country, and various agencies, came together March 24-27, 2024, for the Federal Managers Association's 86th annual National Convention and Management Training Seminar in Alexandria, Virginia, just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C. Delegates enjoyed the very convenient hotel, one block from the King Street Metro station, and around the corner from the FMA National Office. With a free trolley running the length of King Street, all of old town Alexandria was easily accessible, including shopping and dozens of restaurants. In addition to the training seminar and tour of the National Archives, we heard updates on FMA's legislative efforts, recognized award winners, conducted National Officer and Regional elections, and voted to change the bylaws to allow Associate Members to run for FMA leadership positions as high as Vice Regional Director.

On Sunday evening, the FMA National Office hosted a meet-and-greet where members could tour the office, and enjoy light fare in a casual setting perfect for getting reacquainted with old friends, and making new ones.

We were honored to kick off the convention with keynote presenter Loren Schulman, Associate Director for Performance and Personnel Management, Office of Management and Budget. Over the last couple of years, Loren has hosted meetings with FMA to discuss the President's Budget and the President's Management Agenda, as well as Public Service Recognition Week. Her convention presentation spoke to the challenges our manager members encounter in their everyday work. Her experience, in and out of government, helped inform her understanding of the hurdles and advantages the current climate presents to feds. At the conclusion of her remarks, FMA members had the opportunity to ask Associate Director Schulman questions, with a great back-and-forth.

National Officer and Director Elections

Elections for the positions of FMA National President and National Secretary were held March 25, with chapters prepared to cast their votes in person or via proxy. National President Craig

Carter, Chapter 3, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia, ran unopposed and was declared the winner of a third term as National President.

National Secretary Chris Lombardi, Chapter 6, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, also ran unopposed and was declared the winner of a second term as National Secretary. Both the president and secretary positions are two-year terms.

Regions 1 and 3 also held elections for their respective Region Directors. Incumbent Jeremy Barton, Chapter 6, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, won a second term for the position of Region 1 Director. Jeremy has also undertaken leadership of the FMA Membership Committee, and you are encouraged to join him in his efforts to strengthen and grow the FMA ranks.

Incumbent Region 3 Director Peggy Hatcher, Chapter 125, Corpus Christi Army Depot, Corpus Christi, Texas, was re-elected to a third term in that position for two more years.

FMA Naval Shipyard Conference Luncheon & Presentation

Thanks to the sponsorship of the FMA Naval Shipyard Conference, convention attendees had the honor of hearing from our special guest, Rear Admiral Scott M. Brown, Deputy Commander, Industrial Operations, Naval Sea Systems Command. Admiral Brown spent some quality time with FMA members and shared insights into what he sees on America's horizon and what we are doing to prepare.



National President Craig Carter opens FMA's 86th National Convention.

Management Training Seminar

On Tuesday, presenters provided a great day of management training starting with our own Chapter 6 member Adam Henckler, and ending with Chapter 14 member and Region 4 Director Vincent Stamper. Adam gave an entertaining and thought-provoking presentation on "Generation Why," a play on Generation Y, and the challenges managers confront when dealing with employees of various generations. Vince spoke on "The Adjacent Possible," taking the participants on a trip through the present and future, where artificial intelligence (AI) is now being utilized, and how we can expect it to affect our work in the future. Vince did a great job of helping those in attendance consider how AI relates to their work, regardless of their agency. We also heard from Federal Manager magazine Legal Brief columnist Conor Dirks, who hit on important "Merit System Principles" managers need to keep in mind for both their employees and their own protection. We send a big "Thank You" to each of our presenters.

We then broke for the Awards Luncheon before heading off on a tour of the National

Archives for the afternoon. Viewing America's founding documents in person, including the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution, is a humbling and precious thing to do. The other exhibits were also interesting, making for an educational and fun way to end the day.

FMA Award Winners!

During the Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, FMA announced the winners of the Association's highest honors – the winners of the Manager of the Year Award, the Gil Guidry Award, the President's Award, and the Odell Green Award, as well as FMA's Super Recruiter, and other top recruiting members. FMA has a wealth of amazing members, and it is always a pleasure to hear about the many amazing things they accomplish as federal managers, and in their personal lives. It is wonderful to recognize these very deserving winners in front of their FMA colleagues.

FMA Manager of the Year: Craig Carter

The Federal Managers Association is proud to name Craig Carter the FMA Manager of the Year! Craig belongs to FMA Chapter 3, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia. Before serving as National President, Craig served as President of Chapter 3. Without a doubt, Craig's actions and leadership exemplify the Association's motto of "excellence in public service."

To learn more about Craig, please see the cover article featuring him starting on page 6. FMA sent a press release upon the announcement being made and Craig has been interviewed by several media outlets since.

continued on next page

MEMBERS IN ACTION

The FMA Manager of the Year Award is presented annually to an outstanding manager or supervisor in the federal government who is a member of the Federal Managers Association. In recognition of excellent leadership and dedication to FMA, the Manager of the Year receives a Life Membership in the Association, an award, and his/her name engraved on a perpetual plaque displayed at the National Office. If you know a worthy candidate, please consider nominating them through your chapter for the 2025 national convention.

Gilbert N. Guidry Memorial Award: James Cappa

This year, we are proud to recognize James Cappa, Chapter 14 President, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington, as the winner of the Gilbert N. Guidry Memorial Award.

James is a hands-on leader of an active chapter. Chapter 14 holds events throughout the year with a good number of chapter members attending the various activities. His chapter is known to have a great sense of community among its members and their colleagues on base.

The Gil Guidry Award is presented to the outstanding Federal Managers Association Chapter President in memory of the late Gilbert N. Guidry, former President of Chapter 4, Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, whose leadership represented the finest tradition of service to the United States of America and to the principles of FMA.

In recognition of excellent leadership and dedication to FMA, Gil Guidry Award winners receive a Life Membership in the Association, a plaque, and his/her name engraved on a perpetual plaque displayed at the National Office.

President's Award: Chapter 375 - Environmental Protection Agency - Chicago

This award recognizes a chapter in the

Association that has displayed outstanding leadership and service to its facility, community, agency, and nation during the past year.

The winner of this year's President's Award is Chapter 375, Environmental Protection Agency - Chicago. This outstanding chapter, led by President Mike Beedle, went from struggling during the pandemic to growing its membership, holding well-attended chapter meetings, and serving an ever-increasing number of EPA managers. FMA National President Craig Carter and Executive Director Todd Wells joined the chapter for one of its meetings and were impressed with the engagement and questions from the members. Congratulations to Chapter 375!

Odell Green Award: Jeremy Barton, Region 1 Director

This award recognizes excellence by a member of the National Executive Board in the preceding year. It was established in memory of Odell Green who performed exemplary service for FMA. Odell served for two years as the Zone 8 President and was former President of Chapter 16, Mare Island Naval Shipyard in Vallejo, California. He passed away in 1992.

The winner of this year's Odell Green Award is Jeremy Barton, FMA Region 1 Director, National Membership Committee Chair, and member of Chapter 6, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

In addition to his regular work on behalf of the members of FMA Region 1, Jeremy took on the planning and execution of the FMA Regions 1 & 2 Conference in Manchester, New Hampshire, in the fall of 2023. He also volunteered to reinvestigate FMA's Membership Committee and serves as Chair. Additionally, he was one of FMA's top recruiters of new members in the previous year. His energy and commitment are obvious for all to see. For these reasons

and more, we congratulate Jeremy on being named the Odell Green Award winner.

Super Recruiter: Jeris Smith

FMA Chapter 3 President Jeris Smith, of Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Virginia, is this year's Super Recruiter. Jeris recruited a very impressive 16 new members! Thank you, Jeris, for working hard to strengthen FMA through increasing our membership.

FMA Membership Recruitment

During the Awards Luncheon on Tuesday, we also recognized the top recruiters from small, medium, and large chapters who are doing all they can to keep FMA's membership healthy.

Small Chapter Top Recruiter

FMA's top recruiter from a Small Chapter is:

Mike Beedle, Chapter 375, Environmental Protection Agency - Chicago, who recruited 4 New Members. Mike is President of the chapter which is in Region 3.

Medium Chapter Top Recruiter

The top recruiter from a Medium Chapter is:

Savanna Massey, Chapter 11, Fleet Readiness Center - Southeast, Jacksonville, Florida, who recruited 8 New Members. Savanna is the former President of Chapter 11, which is in Region 2.

Large Chapter Top Recruiter

The top recruiter from a Large Chapter is: Jessica Younger, Chapter 3, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Virginia, who recruited 9 New Members!

A raffle was held during the convention with every person who recruited a member during the year entered once for each new member recruited. Thank you to all our

MEMBERS IN ACTION



National President Craig Carter is sworn in to another term.



National Secretary Chris Lombardi is sworn in to his second term.



Associate Director Loren Schulman offers the keynote address.



Proud to have Color Guard present the colors to commence FMA's National Convention.



Director of Government Affairs Greg Stanford presents while National Officers look on.



President Carter congratulates Jessica Younger on being the Large Chapter Top Recruiter.



Rear Admiral Brown makes an address during the Shipyard Conference Luncheon.

continued on next page

MEMBERS IN ACTION



(l-r) National Secretary Chris Lombardi presents Chapter 14 President James Cappa with the Gilbert Guidry Award with National President Carter.



FMA-PAC Chair Pauline Coleman-Sutton and Director of Government Affairs Greg Stanford draw winners of a variety of fun PAC prizes.



National Treasurer Christine Parker and President Carter recognize Jeremy Barton (center) with the Odell Green Award.



FMA National President Carter congratulates Savanna Massey on being the Medium Chapter Top Recruiter.



Chapter 6 members pose outside of Rep. Golden's office after meeting with staffers.

recruiters! We cannot thank you enough for introducing new members into the FMA family.

Day on the Hill

On Wednesday, March 27, FMA's federal managers could be found in every Senate and House Office Building on Capitol Hill! Because both houses of Congress were on recess, congressional staffers had more time to meet with us without the distractions of votes and committee hearings. Lots of good information was exchanged and these staffers learned of issues important to managers, thus beginning the process of remedying problems and raising awareness among their bosses in Congress.

FMA members educated congressional staffers about the issues and legislation that the Federal Managers Association does and does not support. The work of federal managers is vital to the health and welfare of our country, and Congress must hear from our members. As Americans and federal employees, it is critically important to keep a dialogue going with our elected leaders. FMA's Day on the Hill is always a highlight

of the convention, and FMA members return to the evening reception excited and ready to share about their productive day of actively participating in our great democracy!

FMA encourages you to meet with your members of Congress, either in-person or virtually. Hold these conversations, and continue to send FMA Action Letters. Visit www.fedmanagers.org/Action-Letters to personalize and send letters to your elected leaders. Also, review FMA's Issue Briefs (www.fedmanagers.org/Issue-Briefs), and push Congress to act on the ones about which you support.

FMA-PAC Closing Reception

The convention concluded Wednesday night with the FMA-PAC Reception and Raffle. The FMA-PAC Raffle is one of the highlights of the National Convention every year as each chapter in attendance brings gifts from their home to raffle off to those who contribute to FMA-PAC throughout the year. FMA-PAC also contributes grand

prizes to raise the stakes even further.

This year, the grand prize was a \$500 VISA gift card won by Chapter 191, Railroad Retirement Board, Chicago, Illinois. Second place was a \$250 gift card and was won by Glenn Todd, President of Chapter 187, Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC), Honolulu, Hawaii. Third prize was a \$100 gift card which was won by Christine Parker, FMA National Treasurer, and a member of Chapter 121, Warner Robins Air Logistics Center, Georgia.

We sincerely thank these individuals, and all who contribute to FMA-PAC.

Over the course of the convention, FMA-PAC received record-breaking contributions, both in the form of individual contributions and payroll deductions! We are extremely thankful to everyone who contributed. A special "thank you" to our incredible FMA-PAC Chair Pauline Coleman-Sutton who encouraged so much giving throughout the Convention. To learn more about FMA-PAC, or to contribute, visit www.fedmanagers.org/FMA-PAC.

If you have not attended an FMA National Convention before, I urge you to start making plans now for our next convention in March 2025! Members who attend always want to keep coming back. They also gain a much greater appreciation for the work of the association and their amazing fellow federal manager members. FMA conventions are an incredible experience, and we hope every FMA member will take part in at least one during their career as a federal manager. The support and exchange of information, as well as the networking and friendships that develop are invaluable.

We look forward to seeing you next year! ●

Todd Wells is Executive Director of the Federal Managers Association.

EVERYBODY'S TELEWORKING FOR THE WEEKEND



By Greg Stanford

I'd be willing to bet no topic impacting managers and the federal workforce has received more attention and discussion in the 118th Congress than telework and remote work. In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, while many brave employees reported to their duty stations to perform work that could not be done anywhere else, most feds and the private sector alike were thrust into figuring out how to adjust and do their jobs from home.

As the country moves on from the heights of the pandemic – in April President Biden revoked several COVID Executive Orders and closed the Safer Federal Work Force Taskforce – lawmakers and the Administration are engaged in a large debate about what role telework and remote work should play in the federal workforce. There are proposals to restore work arrangements for all feds to return to their offices at pre-pandemic levels or set limits on how much time employees at any agency could telework. Other measures seek to enhance or reform telework policies. This article will examine several proposals introduced in Congress.

It is reasonable to begin by assuming all of the decision makers are seeking the same thing – maximizing the services feds provide on behalf of all Americans. As we will see, there are many diverging thoughts on how best to achieve that goal.

SHOW UP Act

One of the first bills introduced in the 118th Congress was the Stopping Home Office Work's Unproductive Problems (SHOW UP) Act (H.R. 139 / S. 1565), introduced by House Oversight and Accountability Chairman James Comer (R-KY) in the House and Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) in the Senate. As the name of the bill implies, the legislation would require federal employees to return to pre-pandemic telework policies.

In a press release upon introduction, Comer wrote, "The federal government's expansion of telework during the pandemic has delayed critical assistance to veterans, tax refunds, passport applications, and other basic services . . . The bill also requires federal agencies to complete and submit to Congress studies detailing how pandemic-era telework levels impacted their missions."

H.R. 139 garnered 26 cosponsors and moved swiftly through the House of Representatives and was passed on February 1, 2023, by a vote of 221-206. It was sent to the Senate and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. The Senate has not acted on the bill or the Senate companion legislation, S. 1565.

Limitations on Telework

While a complete return to pre-pandemic telework levels seems unlikely to advance, the Administration and lawmakers have been engaged in conversations to potentially limit the amount of time employees can telework. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Deputy Director for Management Jason Miller testified about the Administration's telework policies before the House Oversight and Accountability Committee in April 2024.

Miller first noted that approximately one half of the federal workforce "have to be at a federal worksite to perform their job responsibilities," thereby excluding them from the discussion on telework or remote work arrangements. For those who have traditionally operated in an office setting and are eligible for telework, Miller testified, "we've been clear that our expectation is for



agencies to be achieving at least 50 percent [in person work] while giving them flexibility for how best to deliver based on their diverse missions."

In May, Sens. Mitt Romney (R-UT) and Joe Manchin (D-WV) introduced the Back to Work Act (S. 4266), legislation that would cap federal employees' telework usage at 40 percent of a pay period. The bill could also jeopardize current remote work agreements for most feds. S. 4266 was referred to the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs and currently has no other cosponsors. Neither Romney nor Manchin are seeking reelection when their Senate terms expire at the end of 2024.

"It has been nearly a year since President Biden formally ended COVID-19 public health emergency declarations, yet most of our federal office buildings remain empty – wasting millions of taxpayer dollars

continued on next page

every day. Americans deserve to have a federal workforce that is both present and productive,” Senator Romney said in a press release upon introduction. “Our bipartisan legislation would require federal employees to work in the office for a majority of the time, while still allowing reasonable flexibility for telework. Federal employees play an important role in ensuring that the government works for the American people, and it is past time for them to get back into the office to do the work that our constituents expect from their government.”

Senate Action on Telework Reform

In March 2024, Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI), Chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, and Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA) introduced the Telework Transparency Act (S. 4043). The bill would require agencies to gather data and monitor how telework impacts agency performance and federal property decisions,



“creating more transparency and providing oversight to weigh the pros and cons of telework policies.” FMA has endorsed this legislation.

S. 4043 was briefly considered at a committee hearing in mid-May. During the committee markup, Senator Romney offered an amendment that would require some form of supervisory monitoring or evaluation and that employees report on what they accomplish while teleworking.

“My amendment calls simply for the supervisory staff to monitor those who are teleworking to make sure they are doing something,” Romney said. “It’s not saying what it has to be – it could be a call, or even just an email asking ‘what did you accomplish today?’ The idea of people teleworking and having no reporting or monitoring whatsoever doesn’t make a lot of sense to me.”

Chairman Peters expressed support for the intent of Romney’s amendment and offered to work with him on the language in an effort to find consensus. Consideration of S. 4043 was postponed for a future committee mark-up, and FMA was pleased with this development.

Managers have historically been blamed for impeding implementation of telework among their employees, and many managers have expressed concerns similar to those stated by Sen. Romney. FMA has long advocated that telework policies create a fair and transparent situation for both the manager and employee. Government must invest in its managers so they are empowered to confidently and fairly administer a telework program that seamlessly meshes with the ongoing work of all employees with the overriding goal of accomplishing agency missions. We support the effort to

give managers the tools to effectively manage and ensure employees are meeting their responsibilities.

While the committee postponed consideration of the Telework Transparency Act, it advanced the bipartisan Telework Reform Act (S. 3015), legislation sponsored by Sens. James Lankford (R-OK) and Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ), legislation also endorsed by FMA.

S. 3015 codifies the definitions of telework and remote work. Additionally, it aims to enhance training and monitoring, accountability, and reporting for these arrangements. Further, it orders agencies to “identify potential value from increasing remote and other telework opportunities, which job classifications could benefit from being performed through telework, and expected cost savings and productivity outcomes resulting from the increased use of remote work and telework.” The committee passed S. 3015 by a vote of 9-2, clearing it for consideration by the full Senate.

Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Provisions

Lawmakers included provisions in the final Fiscal Year 2024 appropriations package that will collect data related to telework. The bill requires OMB to share data including information on the average number and percentage of employees working in the office during a typical two-week pay period; current policies on telework (including agreements with unions), and how agencies measure productivity for teleworking employees.

FMA strongly supports the collection of data in order to make informed decisions related to telework and remote work in the federal workforce. Many of the benefits of telework are well known, including a reduction of the federal footprint, environmental benefits from less commuters on the roads, and potentially increased

productivity. Additional data, including federal building occupancy, can only alleviate concerns and help decision makers in their tasks ahead.

Given the flexibilities that technology allows us, it is critical that the federal government continue to adapt and take advantage of the opportunities telework provides. That can only help recruitment and retention as the federal workforce competes for the best talent with the flexibilities provided by the private sector. Allowing federal employees to telework when practical could make civil service more attractive for younger employees and help retain employees with years of valuable experience.

It is also vital that Congress take steps to ensure managers are able to manage effectively and employees are as accountable while teleworking as when in the office. Managerial training will be an essential

component in any scenario Congress and the Administration ultimately takes. FMA looks forward to working with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle as they make decisions that will impact managers and telework policy. ●

Greg Stanford is Director of Government and Public Affairs for the Federal Managers Association.



Make an Impact: Donate to FMA-PAC

PAC funds allow FMA to send you and your colleagues to intimate events with your Senators and Representative to educate them about what it is like to be a federal manager in their state and district.

Visit www.fedmanagers.org/FMA-PAC for info on how you can contribute!

To learn more about FMA's government affairs and FMA-PAC related activities, contact Director of Government Affairs Greg Stanford at gstanford@fedmanagers.org, or call 703.683.8700.





CAPITAL INSIGHTS

On March 11, President Biden announced his budget request for Fiscal Year 2025. He is calling for a 2.0 percent pay raise for the federal workforce in 2025. The budget request outlines updates and initiatives from the President’s Management Agenda (PMA) aimed at recruitment and retention, making the federal workforce a model employer, and learning from the Covid-19 pandemic.

Federal Managers Association (FMA) National President Craig Carter issued a press release on the day the budget request was announced, welcoming Biden’s priorities. Carter expressed full support for the 4.5 percent raise proposed for the uniformed military in 2025. He also urged President Biden and Congress to provide an equal raise for federal employees, rather than the proposed 2.0 percent.

“For very good reasons, pay parity has a longstanding tradition and should be honored in 2025,” Carter wrote. “While feds received a bigger boost in 2024, federal pay continues to lag far behind inflation, and retention of feds remains a severe risk. The Federal Salary Council reported in November 2023 that federal workers earned more than 27 percent less than private sector counterparts, a growing disparity that will only force more of the best and brightest out of federal service. In January, FMA endorsed the Federal Adjustment of Income Rates (FAIR) Act (H.R. 7127 / S. 3688), which would provide for a 7.4 percent pay raise in 2025. We will continue to advocate for the FAIR Act this year,” Carter said. ●

On April 4, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) published the final rule to reinforce and clarify protections for a non-partisan career civil service.

The final regulation implements the following regulatory amendments:

- First, the final rule clarifies that the status and civil service protections an employee has accrued cannot be taken away by an involuntary move from the competitive service to the excepted service, or from one excepted service schedule to another. Once a career civil servant earns protections, that employee keeps them unless waived voluntarily.
- Second, the final rule clarifies that the phrase “confidential, policy determining, policymaking, or policy-advocating” positions—a term of art to describe positions that lack civil service protections—means noncareer, political appointments. This rule prevents that exception from being misapplied to career civil servants.
- Third, the final rule establishes procedural requirements for moving positions from the competitive service to the excepted service and within the excepted service. This change both creates transparency and establishes an appeals process for federal employees when any such movement is involuntary and characterized as stripping employees of their civil service protections.

The Federal Managers Association supports the new rules and submitted comments during the rulemaking process. FMA National President Craig Carter made the following comments upon publication of the final rule:

“On behalf of the managers and supervisors currently serving our nation in the federal government, and whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association, we are pleased for the implementation of the new rules clarifying and protecting the longstanding merit-based system governing our civil service. FMA commented in favor of the proposed rule and the effort to reinforce and clarify important civil service protections for federal employees who may shift from the competitive service to the excepted service, or from one excepted service schedule to another.” ●



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HOUSE MINORITY LEADER, HAKEEM JEFFRIES (D-New York)

Hakeem Jeffries serves as the House Minority Leader, a position he has held since 2023. He represents the 8th District of New York. Currently in his 6th term, Jeffries assumed leadership of the House Democratic Caucus at the beginning of the 118th Congress.

The minority leader position is selected every two years before a new Congress is sworn in. In this role, Jeffries serves as the minority counterpart to Speaker Mike Johnson. Responsibilities include speaking on behalf of the minority party and its policies and protecting the rights of the minority party. Jeffries continues to serve the residents of the 8th District of New York, in addition to his role as minority leader.

While in Congress, Jeffries has served as Chair of the House Democratic Caucus, Whip of the Congressional Black Caucus, and several other leadership positions. He has also served on the Committee on the Judiciary, as well as the Budget Committee.

Prior to his election to the U.S. House, Jeffries represented Brooklyn in the New York State Assembly from 2007 through 2012. He clerked for the Honorable Harold Baer Jr., of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York and practiced law for several New York law firms before joining the State Assembly. He received a bachelor's degree from the State University of New York at Binghamton, a master's degree in public policy from Georgetown University, and a J.D. from New York University, where he served on Law Review.

Rep. Jeffries was born in Brooklyn Hospital and currently lives in Prospect Heights with his family. He and his wife Kennisandra Arciniegas-Jeffries have two children. ●

THE FACTS:

Birthplace: New York, New York

Born: August 4, 1970

Education: State University of New York, Binghamton, B.A., 1992; Georgetown University, M.P.P., 1994; New York University, J.D., 1997

Career:

- House Minority Leader (2023-Present)
- Member, U.S. House of Representatives, 8th District of New York (2013-Present)
- Member, New York State Assembly, 57th District (2007-2012)
- Lawyer, Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison LLP
- Of Counsel, Godosky & Gentile
- Clerk, Honorable Harold Baer Jr., United States District Court for the Southern District of New York

Elected: 2022 (6th term)

Contact Information:

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SPEAKER MIKE JOHNSON (R-Louisiana)



On October 25, 2023, Representative Mike Johnson (R-LA) was elected as the 56th Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. The Speaker is the presiding officer and administrative leader of the House, represents his district, and is second in line, after the Vice President, in the United States presidential line of succession.

As a Congressman, Speaker Johnson represents the 4th District (northwest and western regions) of Louisiana, including Shreveport, in his fourth term of Congress. Prior to his election as Speaker, Johnson served on the House Armed Services Committee and the Judiciary Committee. While in Congress, Speaker Johnson has served as Vice Chair of the House Republican Conference and Chaired the Republican Study Committee.

Immediately prior to his first election to the U.S. House, Speaker Johnson represented the 8th District in the Louisiana House of Representatives from 2015-2017. In addition to this service, Speaker Johnson has worked as a college professor, conservative talk radio host and columnist, a media spokesman, and a constitutional law seminar instructor.

A native of Shreveport, Speaker Johnson earned both undergraduate and Juris Doctor degrees from Louisiana State University. He and his wife Kelly live in Bossier Parish and have four children. ●

THE FACTS:

Birthplace: Shreveport, Louisiana

Born: January 30, 1972

Education: Louisiana State University, B.S., 1995;
Louisiana State University, J.D., 1998

Career:

- 56th Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives (2023-Present)
- Member, U.S. House of Representatives, 4th District of Louisiana (2017-Present)
- Member, 8th District, Louisiana House of Representatives (2015-2017)
- Professor, Liberty University
- Constitutional Lawyer

Elected: 2022 (4th term)

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Website: <https://www.speaker.gov/>



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THANK YOU TO 2023 FMA-PAC SUPPORTERS!

The Federal Managers Association Political Action Committee (FMA-PAC) is the political arm of FMA and the only way FMA can contribute to political candidates. The access FMA-PAC contributions provide has assisted FMA in making positive contacts and impressions with members of Congress and their staffs on issues of importance to our members. FMA-PAC provides FMA members an opportunity to build and strengthen those relationships. Funds are crucial to helping the association build a more visible presence and maintain its healthy stature on Capitol Hill.

FMA-PAC would like to thank all of our 2023 contributors, as well as those who participated in the raffle during our 86th annual National Convention and Management Training Seminar. The donations from the FMA members and chapters listed below allowed FMA-PAC to closely meet its goals for the year, although there is always room for improvement. From all of us at FMA-PAC, a big THANK YOU!

Executive Circle – \$500 (and above)

The following individuals donated \$500 or more to FMA-PAC.

Sue Bokor, Chapter 21
 Craig Carter, Chapter 3
 Sarah Grondin, Chapter 6
 Jerry Grose, Chapter 14
 Renee Johnson, Chapter 21
 Linda Lentjes, Chapter 396
 Chris Lombardi, Chapter 6
 Christine Parker, Chapter 121
 Jason Sargent, Chapter 6
 Glenn Todd, Chapter 187
 Chapter 19



Greg Daniels, Chapter 11
 Jennifer Froderberg, Chapter 14
 Delia Garcia, Chapter 307
 Varney Range, Chapter 19
 Jason Rossman, Chapter 3
 Theresa Trafford, Chapter 6
 Chapter 6
 Chapter 11
 Chapter 14
 Chapter 191

Additionally, the following individuals or chapters donated to FMA-PAC.

John Charalabidis, Chapter 208
 Sid Fischer, Chapter 14
 Evangelina Hernandez, Chapter 385
 Dennis Kapparis, Chapter 258
 Denise Laycock, Chapter 167
 Forrest Lilly, Chapter 3
 Desiree Manley, Chapter 3
 Diane McCary, Chapter 167
 Nancy Martel-Tulley, Chapter 275
 Lonnie Smith, Chapter 258
 Jessica Younger, Chapter 3

Congressional Circle – \$250

The following individuals or chapters donated between \$250 and \$499 to FMA-PAC.

Pauline Coleman-Sutton, Chapter 191
 Ron Gryga, Chapter 275
 Peggy Hatcher, Chapter 125
 Patricia Niehaus, Chapter 167
 Vince Stamper, Chapter 14
 Chapter 3
 Chapter 21
 Chapter 170



We at FMA-PAC are working hard and using all of our resources to make your voice heard on issues such as pay and benefits, due process, and the direction of the federal workforce. Federal law prohibits using FMA dues for political purposes, and therefore your contribution to FMA-PAC is crucial. By targeting the funds you contribute toward specific candidates, we are able to gain clout with those powerful politicians who support federal managers and sway those who are on the fence.

If you currently do not contribute, we strongly encourage you to sign up through payroll deduction. You can access the payroll deduction form at: Standard Form 1199A - Direct Deposit Sign-Up Form (fedmanagers.org).

To learn more about FMA-PAC, visit: <https://fedmanagers.org>/FMA-PAC. Contributions of any size are welcome, and even \$5 per pay period makes a big difference to FMA-PAC. Help FMA take its political clout to the next level! ●

Century Circle – \$100

The following individuals or chapters donated between \$100 and \$249 to FMA-PAC.

Carl Amos, Chapter 258
 Tim Bergeron, Chapter 6
 James Cappa, Chapter 14
 Allen Couture, Chapter 19



A close-up portrait of Latorea Wilson, a woman with long, dark, braided hair, wearing large hoop earrings and a black top. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is softly blurred.

DID YOU KNOW?

FMA BIDS FAREWELL TO LATOREA WILSON

After more than 16 years of having the pleasure to work alongside Latorea Wilson, FMA's Finance & Administration Manager, Latorea has moved on to new challenges and to continue her professional growth. Over the years, most every member has communicated with Latorea for some reason, whether it was about their membership, chapter-related communications, finance, or convention matters. Chapter leaders heard from her monthly as the author of the *Chapter Check In*.

Over the years, as FMA staff members changed, Latorea and I, and a few years later, Greg Stanford, remained a constant presence in the National Office. Our respective families grew, but we also became a family in our small office. We have learned so much from each other. Latorea was always ready, when asked, to help me understand the latest lingo and share a laugh. Together, we met the challenges of running a professional membership association, which is essentially a small business. Though she continues to assist FMA

on a part-time basis as I write this in mid-April, her daily presence and teamwork in the office are greatly missed.

On behalf of the many, many FMA members who will miss working with her, we say, "Thank you, Latorea. It has been a great ride! We wish you the absolute best of everything." ●

Todd Wells is Executive Director of the Federal Managers Association.

DID YOU KNOW?



Latorea Wilson is recognized by President Carter for her long and loyal service to the Federal Managers Association.



Latorea presents at FMA's 85th National Convention

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RETIREES

RETIREE MATTERS



By Christine Parker

Fellow FMA members, and prospective members,

Thank you for reading what I have to share with you about federal retirees and our retirement benefits. There are many topics that affect retirees. This article is by no means all-inclusive. Keep an eye on your e-mail, and the FMA website at www.fedmanagers.org. If you ever have questions on where to find information, or about pending legislation, feel free to contact me, or Greg Stanford at the National Office.

Coordinating TSP Withdrawals and Social Security Benefits for FERS Employees

Those federal employees covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) save for their retirement through elective contributions to the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) and mandatory payroll deduction to the FERS Retirement and Disability Fund and deduction for Social Security payroll (FICA) taxes. Once a FERS employee retires, the FERS annuity is paid monthly, starting the second month after the employee retires and continuing for the rest of the FERS annuitant's life.

It is entirely up to the FERS annuitant to decide when to start receiving Social Security retirement benefits and when to start making TSP withdrawals. At some point during the FERS annuitant's retirement, these two sources of retirement income will have to be tapped in order to pay expected retirement expenses.

Balancing the options can be confusing. Edward Zurdorfer has explained in his column details to assist you in educating yourself and making the best choices for you upon retirement. Here is a link to his article: "Coordinating TSP Withdrawals

& Social Security Retirement Benefits" (myfederalretirement.com).

Additionally, one of FMA's partners, GPIS Employee Benefits Specialist, offers retirement education to FMA members. There is no cost, nor commitment on the member's part. Visit "Planning for Your Retirement" (gpis4u.org) for more information, and to schedule a one-on-one consultation with a certified retirement planner.

10 Common Medicare Mistakes Federal Retirees Should Avoid

Are you close to age 65 and retired, or retiring soon? Sixty-five is the "magic" age for receiving Medicare benefits. However, you must respond to Medicare with decisions about your Medicare. Most people sign up for Part A (hospital insurance) and Part B (medical insurance) when they're first eligible, typically at age 65.

It's important to sign up promptly to avoid gaps in coverage or late enrollment penalties. However, if you're already covered through an employer group health plan, it might make sense to sign up for Medicare later or delay Part B.

If you are age 65 or older and receive Social Security benefits, you will be automatically enrolled in Part A. More detailed information is available on the Social Security Administration page at: [Plan for Medicare](#).

Missing Medicare enrollment deadlines, delaying Medicare enrollment and choosing the wrong type of Medicare enrollment (Original Medicare versus Medicare Advantage) can potentially cost a federal retiree a lot of money when it comes to



Medicare. Also, be mindful that many insurance companies would like to sell Medicare supplemental plans to you. This might not be in your best interest. Do your homework and make your best choices. The column at the link below presents a list of 10 common mistakes that federal retirees can make with respect to Medicare and how they can avoid these mistakes. See: "10 Common Medicare Mistakes Federal Retirees Should Avoid" (myfederalretirement.com).

Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP)

The GPO reduces the dependent/survivor benefit. The WEP penalizes those who have had two jobs; one that earned a Social Security retirement benefit, and one that entitled them to a separate pension. FMA supports full repeal of GPO and WEP, and believes Congress should repeal both of these unfair and harmful laws. The Social

continued on next page

Security Government Pension Offset law prevents government retirees who receive a government pension, but did not pay into Social Security, from collecting both a government annuity based on their own work, and Social Security benefits based on their spouse's work record. This is unfair to many spouses, especially widows, who often lose the Social Security protection their spouse provided for them. Under current law, a Social Security widow's benefit is reduced by \$2 for every \$3 earned if the widow is eligible for a pension based on a public sector job that was not covered by Social Security. A total of 465,000 Social Security beneficiaries are affected by the GPO, seventy-five percent of whom are women and over forty percent are widowed. No offset affects spouses receiving pensions from private sector employers.

The Windfall Elimination Provision is another inequity that disadvantages many federal retirees receiving Social Security benefits and a federal pension which did not require payment into Social Security. It reduces the Social Security benefits federal retirees receive based on the

number of years they served in a federal position that did not require their payment of Social Security taxes. Nearly one million Social Security beneficiaries are affected, and roughly twenty percent paid into Social Security for more than twenty years. FMA supports the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82 / S. 597), legislation introduced early in the 118th Congress that would fully repeal GPO and WEP. The House version has more than 300 cosponsors and received a field hearing in the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security in November 2023. More than one half of the Senate has cosponsored that chamber's bill. We urge a vote on the bill in the current session. While a full repeal is our preferred position, FMA also supports partial repeal bills, such as the Public Servants Protection and Fairness Act (H.R. 4260). This bipartisan bill would create a new formula for the WEP, calculating benefits by taking into account the actual wage and work history of public sector employees. To ask your Congress person to support the repeal of GPO and WEP, you may use the link on the FMA site to craft a letter to those elected officials. The wording is already there – just tailor it to your situation. If you need help, just let me know and I'll guide you through the process. Here is the link: (fedmanagers.org/Action-Letters.)

What is the Best Time to Retire from Federal Civil Service?

For federal employees, retirement isn't just about trading spreadsheets for seashells. It's a strategic game of maximizing benefits, minimizing taxes, and ensuring a smooth transition into "No More Mondays." Finding the best date to retire for each calendar year can be tricky. So, when is the best date to retire? Well, it depends on a few factors. Typically, many

people retire on December 31 since the first payout for FERS or CSRS pensions begins the first day of the month after the federal employee retires. In the case of December 31, the first payment would be January 2 since January 1 is a holiday.

Other than the end of the month, federal employees should consider retirement at the end of a pay period. The goal is to maximize your benefits including accrued pay. The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has provided information on navigating the best retirement date for you. The entire file is at this link: "[Best Dates to Retire24-0315.pdf](#)."

This is an election year, and with it comes a barrage of information. Additionally, we continue to witness unprecedented changes in our nation. Continue to stay informed on FMA's legislative issues, and engage with your Congress people. Don't be a bystander. Bystanders, even "innocent" bystanders, get left behind and too often lose out on opportunity.

Make Your Voice Heard!

Use your vocal freedom as a retiree to speak up and get involved. Check out the Legislative Action Center on the FMA website. Take the time to send Action Letters to your Representative and Senators – the effects are worth it. Use the FMA website to easily send your communication to Capitol Hill: <https://fedmanagers.org/Action-Letters>. And make sure to visit your elected representatives at their local offices or schedule a virtual meeting.

As always, I welcome your feedback, questions, and input for articles. I very much want your input. Please send your thoughts or questions to FMA121Parker@gmail.com. ●

Christine Parker is FMA's Retiree Conference Chair and National Treasurer.

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