

Opening Statement

Of Senator James Lankford, Chairman of the Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management Subcommittee,

Thursday July 26th at 10:00 AM

“The Challenges and Opportunities of the Proposed Government Reorganization on OPM and GSA”

Good morning and welcome to today’s Subcommittee hearing titled: “The Challenges and Opportunities of the Proposed Government Reorganization on OPM and GSA.”

This hearing provides an opportunity to discuss the Administration’s proposal to transfer certain functions being handled by the Office of Personnel Management to the General Services Administration.

This particular proposal is one of many that make up the Office of Management and Budget’s Government-wide reorganization plan released on June 21, 2018.

The current Administration has echoed the sentiment of previous Administrations, that our federal government was designed and structured for the last century. Updating our government to meet the demands and challenges of the 21st Century is a vital and necessary undertaking.

The American taxpayers deserve an efficient and effective government capable of meeting their 21st century needs. And it is imperative these conversations on reform take into account the dedicated men and women who comprise our federal workforce.

The Administration’s proposals are bold. They seek to consolidate government offices, merge executive agencies, and create new initiatives.

OMB has stressed that some of these proposals can be implemented without statutory change, while others will need Congress to act.

Today, we will be examining one particular reorganization proposal, titled: “Reorganizing the U.S. Office of Personnel Management.” It identifies seven major organizational units within OPM that could be transferred to other agencies.

The proposal calls for transferring 5 of these units outside of OPM, and notes the placement of the remaining 2 units will be determined at a later date. Of the 5 units to be transferred to other specific offices, the plan proposes realigning three of them with GSA, and then renaming the General Services Administration to “Government Services Agency.”

The three functions that are candidates for transfer from OPM to GSA are, human resource management, federal retiree services and management of the federal health benefits program.

OPM functions as the personnel policy manager and chief human resources agency for the federal government.

Congress charged OPM with many important responsibilities pertaining to the federal workforce including administering Retirement and Healthcare Services for retirees and their beneficiaries.

GSA manages federal real estate and aims to provide efficient and effective acquisition solutions across agencies, and supplies federal purchasers with products and services from commercial vendors.

If these three OPM services can be transferred into GSA, it must be done to improve services to our federal workforce and to provide efficiencies from what many would equate as a merger.

In beginning this conversation, we will need more details of how these proposals can achieve these goals. I hope that today we can begin to hear some of those details which will be necessary for Congress's consideration and implementation.

With that, I recognize Ranking Member Heitkamp for her opening remarks.