

EXAMINING FEDERAL MANAGERS' ROLE IN HIRING

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL
MANAGEMENT

OF THE

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HOMELAND SECURITY AND
GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
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EXAMINING FEDERAL MANAGERS' ROLE IN HIRING

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 2018

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY,
AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT,
OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10 a.m., in room 342, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James Lankford, Chairman of the Subcommittee, presiding.

Present: Senators Lankford, Daines, Heitkamp, Carper, Hassan, and Harris.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR LANKFORD¹

Senator LANKFORD. Good morning, everyone. Welcome to today's Subcommittee hearing entitled Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring. In the 115th Congress, this Subcommittee continues to look to find bipartisan solutions to the broadly recognized challenges which prevent the Federal workforce from more effectively serving the American people through hiring process.

We are here today to address the problems associated in Federal employees to fill vacancies left by a growing number of retiring Federal employees. The strain on agencies hinders their ability to accomplish their core missions and to serve the American people.

In order to help alleviate this problem we will recognize the role that managers play in the hiring process and identify the ways they can be empowered to cut the time to hire a new employee. The hallmark of the American civil service has always been that we are able to draw our best and brightest to serve our country.

As we sit here this morning, I am concerned that this may no longer be the case. The Federal Government is facing a hiring crisis. In 2013, the governmentwide average time to hire a new Federal employees was an unsatisfactory 90 days. However, the number has steadily risen to 106 days in 2017. Each year it has just gone up a little bit.

This is not sustainable. The American economy continues to improve and jobs are becoming easier and easier to find in the private sector. For the American civil service to continue to recruit the best and brightest American talent, a vacancy cannot be open for 106 days, nor can someone in the process wait that long to get an an-

¹ The prepared statement of Senator Lankford appears in the Appendix on page 37.

swer. The best and brightest candidates will not wait around 3½ months and our strategy cannot rely on just hoping that they will.

So that is why we are here today. It is a simple question: where can we cut the days in time-to-hire? What do agencies need to do to drive down the time-to-hire a new employee? What bottlenecks can be removed? What can we do to ensure that managers have the competence and resources they need to quickly bring the best and brightest on board? What can agencies do to prioritize this issue and ensure they are not losing qualified candidates to government inefficiency in the hiring process?

We have here today three Federal agencies: Office of Personnel Management (OPM), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and the Department of Commerce (DOC), which are on the front line of all these issues. I thank all of you for being here today and I look forward to discussing with our participants ideas to improve the way agencies manage personnel, and thus better enabling them to deliver a more effective Federal workforce for the American people.

With that I recognize Senator Heidi Heitkamp for an opening statement.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HEITKAMP

Senator HEITKAMP. Thank you, Senator and Chairman Lankford. As many of you already know, I have felt strongly about improving supervisory training across the Federal Government for some time, and I am thrilled that we are going to have a chance to talk about that in length today.

I think it is also important, however, to make note about the administration's proposed fiscal year (FY) 2019 budget and the grave impact it would have on Federal employees if it were implement, and, consequently, the grave impact it would have on recruitment of Federal employees.

The proposed threats to Federal employees in the budget are numerous, from pay to retirement to health care and student loan forgiveness benefits to collective bargaining and due process rights. There are proposals that treat Federal employees, I think, in a way that is less than fair.

Federal employees are absolutely a critical part of the Federal Government and they make North Dakota and our country a better place to live every single day. In fact, I was just with one of our ranchers who was talking about the failure to have scientists out on the grasslands and the rangelands has really slows down a lot of innovation in terms of management, and I asked him, "Is that because of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) not being fully staffed?" He said it is a real problem in western North Dakota.

And so it is really interesting to hear, people that you would think are maybe more conservative who would otherwise be very critical of, as people would expect, Federal employees, recognizing that we need to have these folks in these roles so that they can get their job done.

So I look forward to diving into this critical problem, but I think we cannot talk about our lack of success in recruiting millennials, and I know I get in trouble when I talk about age, but recruiting

new employees into the Federal system without looking at how we are treating current employees and whether—like any other recruitment tool, the best recruitment we have are people who are always sitting in those desks who say, “You ought to do this. It is really interesting work. I am treated really well at work. I am respected at work.” And when you do not have an army of people out there recruiting because they do not feel valued at work, they do not feel like there is a future, we are going to have more and more problems with recruitment.

And so it is really important that we talk about supervisory training so we improve the morale of the people who are there, but that we also talk about the broader public policy issues relative to how we are treating Federal employees today and how that is going to affect our recruitment for tomorrow.

So thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I look forward to this hearing.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you. At this time we will proceed with testimony from our witnesses. Mark Reinhold is the Associate Director for Employee Services at OPM. Mr. Reinhold is responsible for designing, developing, and implementing governmentwide human resources (HR) policy and programs for strategic workforce planning. He previously served as OPM’s Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) and has more than 25 years of human resources experience in the Federal Government, and is no stranger to that table right there, as we have tapped on your insight before, so thank you.

Angela Bailey is the Chief Human Capital Officer at U.S. Department of Homeland Security, where she has served since January 2016. Prior to DHS, Ms. Bailey worked at OPM as the Chief Operating Officer (COO), Deputy Associate Director for Recruitment and Hiring, and the Chief Human Capital. Thank you for being here.

Kevin Mahoney is the Chief Human Capital Officer at the U.S. Department of Commerce, where he has served since March 2013. Prior to his current role, Mr. Mahoney has served as the Chief Human Capital Officer for the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the Associate Director for OPM’s Human Capital Leadership and Merit System Accountability Division. Thank you for being here as well.

I think we should all clarify for everyone, before we throw it around, what a CHCO is a Chief Human Capital Officer because that term will probably get thrown around. So there is our legend for the hearing today.

I do want to thank all the witnesses for being here and I appreciate it very much.

It is a custom of this Subcommittee to swear in all the witnesses before you testify, so if you would please stand and raise your right hand.

Do you swear that the testimony you are about to give before this Subcommittee is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you, God?

Mr. REINHOLD. I do.

Ms. BAILEY. I do.

Mr. MAHONEY. I do.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you. You may be seated. Let the record reflect all three witnesses answered in the affirmative.

We are using a timing system today, and unfortunately we do have votes that are coming up around 11:30, so we will be a little bit tight on time to be able to get it all in, but we want to make sure we get everything in. So as you give your testimony you will see a countdown clock there and then we will open this up for dialogue immediately after that.

Mr. Reinhold, you are first up.

**TESTIMONY OF MARK REINHOLD,¹ ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
EMPLOYEE SERVICES, OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

Mr. REINHOLD. Chairman Lankford and Ranking Member Heitkamp, thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss the important topics of hiring and supervisory training and development.

The day-to-day operational aspects of the hiring process are carried out by Federal agencies but OPM plays an important role in promulgating regulations and guidance necessary to execute Federal civil service laws. OPM also provides oversight, leadership, tools, and assistance to help agencies in meeting their hiring needs and their responsibilities to establish and operate training programs for supervisory and leadership positions. As the Associate Director for Employee Services at OPM I appreciate the opportunity to discuss how OPM is working with agencies in this important areas.

OPM recognizes the laws and regulations governing hiring are complex and in need of reform, and we are proactively working with agencies to simplify and improve hiring practices. We have to take a fresh look at how the system can be improved to better meet the needs of a 21st Century government. We can also do better and we continue to strive to do better.

A few highlights of OPM's recent work just this year to help support improved hiring in agencies include hosting technical training classes for agency HR staff who provide staffing services, issuing a comprehensive question-and-answer guide on how to share certificates between agencies, new streamlined templates agencies can use to request approval to offer higher amounts of recruiting and retention incentives, a fast facts guide on Federal hiring authorities and flexibility, and approval of an extensive direct hire authority to help support an agency's critical need to address severe recruiting difficulties.

OPM developed a number of legislative proposals that were delivered to Congress last year that will better enable agencies to recruit highly talented individuals. The administration continues to support these proposals and we would like to thank Chairman Lankford for sponsoring some of them. OPM also appreciate Ranking Member Heitkamp and the full Committee's work in advancing these proposals and we look forward to continuing our work with the Committee to ensure their enactment.

The average time-to-hire for fiscal year 2017 is just under 106 days. This is an improvement from the 122 baseline established in

¹ The prepared statement of Mr. Reinhold appears in the Appendix on page 39.

2009, but disappointing considering the 87-day average that agencies achieved overall in fiscal year 2012. The average time-to-hire has increased each year since 2012.

The 80-day end-to-end hiring model identifies the key components of the hiring process. Many of the core elements and steps in the Federal hiring process are not unlike the hiring process in other sectors. However, there are additional elements of the Federal hiring process that differ from common practice in other sectors, such as providing preference to veterans who served our country and selection rules based on the merit system principles.

We recognize that time-to-hire is not a perfect metric for success. We must also look at the quality of the hire, and we must make sure that we are hiring people with the skill sets that are fully aligned with agency mission needs.

As part of OPM's goal to support improvements in agency hiring programs, this year OPM launched the Federal Human Resources Institute to offer a robust training curriculum for HR professionals. OPM is also launching a new interagency developmental program through which OPM will host HR professionals in various OPM policy offices to enable these professionals to develop highly needed expertise.

OPM is also looking at ways to provide tools to agencies that can help them improve the way they assess applications. USA Hire is a professionally designed library of off-the-shelf assessment solutions to produce higher quality candidate referral lists. These assessments can help reduce time-to-hire because they are scored automatically and reduce the burden involved in administering traditional assessments.

OPM is continuing to work to improve the applicant experience. This includes regular improvements to USA jobs, which are guided by customer feedback.

In addition to OPM's work to help improve agencies' ability to execute the hiring process in a timely and efficient way, OPM is also working to support agency heads in meeting their responsibilities to establish and operate training programs for their employees in supervisory and leadership positions. While agencies are required to provide training for new supervisors on a specific set of topics, agencies have discretion in how they implement that training. It is important for each agency to conduct a needs assessment to determine what their workforce will benefit from and tailor programs to meet those needs.

Hiring the best available talent must be a management priority, administered through a modern system that enables trained and engaged managers to fill jobs with top candidates. With your support, we can get there.

OPM looks forward to working with you on these efforts. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I welcome any questions you have.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you. Ms. Bailey.

**TESTIMONY OF ANGELA BAILEY,¹ CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL
OFFICER, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

Ms. BAILEY. Good morning, Chairman Lankford, Ranking Member Heitkamp, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to address the manager's role in hiring and our efforts to improve time-to-hire, along with supervisor training at the Department of Homeland Security.

As the Chief Human Capital Officer for DHS, among some of my top priorities are addressing our hiring process, including the time it takes to hire, ensuring our managers are involved in the hiring process, and providing our supervisors with the training needed to accomplish this important role.

The reason these priorities are so important is because our men and women within DHS work incredibly hard safeguarding the homeland. They carry out their missions with pride, courage, and dedication, and do so under some of the most extreme conditions. The least we can do is ensure we have our positions filled in a timely manner, equip our managers with the necessary tools to not only hire the right folks, but also to engage and encourage their workforce to help stem unplanned attrition.

I take this responsibility very seriously and have made it my mission to uncover unnecessary steps in the hiring process, streamline and automate our processes and procedures, and identify ways, both traditional and non-traditional, to educate our managers in not only the basics of supervision but also leadership development. I am fortunate in that within DHS I have excellent leadership who fully support me. They have resourced an increase in the number of human resource specialists across DHS, recognizing you must have HR specialists on board if you are going to get any of this accomplished.

That also includes investing it in HR Academy. They have invested in Human Resources Information Technology (HRIT) and hiring innovation and transformation, where I co-lead these efforts with the Chief Information Officer (CIO) and each component and line of business is a voting member on the executive steering committee. In other words, we are all vested in improving HR processes and procedures, including automation.

And finally, to tie this all together, the leadership team, from top to bottom, is engaged in Leadership Year, a year in which we are devoting our time and energy to ensure our supervisors and managers have not only the basics to do their job but are also developed into the leaders we want and our employees deserve.

At the end of the day, we do all of this so we can ensure our employees are able to carry out their missions, by ensuring we get our positions filled with quality people, where we need them most, and in advance of the need.

Thank you again for supporting our employees who protect us and our great nation. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you. Mr. Mahoney.

¹ The prepared statement of Ms. Bailey appears in the Appendix on page 61.

**TESTIMONY OF KEVIN MAHONEY,¹ CHIEF HUMAN CAPITAL
OFFICER, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

Mr. MAHONEY. Good morning. I would like to thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for inviting the Department of Commerce to share its view on this very important topic of management involvement in hiring and workforce planning. I would also like to thank my colleagues from the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Homeland Security for their dedication to advancing effective human resource management in the Federal Government.

The Department of Commerce has one overarching purpose: helping the American economy grow. The Department is a diverse agency comprised of 12 Bureaus, employing nearly 47,000 employees domestically and internationally. The Department is placing an increased emphasis on the commercial opportunities of space exploration and aquaculture. Our scientists are conducting foundational research in areas ranging from artificial intelligence to quantum computing. Our patent professionals are working to improve the protection of intellectual property.

The Department is enforcing trade laws to ensure trade is free, fair, and reciprocal. The Department is also working to conduct the most accurate, secure, and technologically advanced decennial census. Finally, Department teams are working to keep Americans safe by predicting extreme weather events earlier and deploying a nationwide broadband network that allows better coordination of first responders.

With that as a backdrop, I would like to discuss four areas where the Department is working hard to improve: time-to-hire, enterprise services, maximizing employee performance, and workforce planning.

With respect to time-to-hire, for fiscal year 2017 that just ended, the Department's time-to-hire was 105 days, clearly one day under the governmentwide average but well above the 80-day model. The Department follows OPM's 80-day model and we track performance across all the 11 steps in the model. The Department has been a participant in OPM's HRStat review from its inception and we report those results quarterly with our principal human resource directors and senior management in the Department.

The Department constantly monitors all the 11 steps in the 80-day model. We require managers to check in regularly as to their progress, and, in some cases, ask for permission to extend a deadline. When a problem is identified, it is escalated through the appropriate management channels.

With respect to training, training for managers and supervisors for hiring varies by each of our Bureaus, but each Bureau annually conducts mandatory training for Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA), veterans' employment training, and disability hiring. Beyond that, the Bureaus offer a variety of courses in interviewing, job analysis, classification, special hiring authorities, and merit system principles, just to name a few. Our goal, over time, is to standardize training so that a consistent

¹ The prepared statement of Mr. Mahoney appears in the Appendix on page 70.

message is being given to managers and supervisors on the hiring process.

We conduct training through a variety of channels, which include computer-based training, instructor-led training, subject matter experts, and informal events like brown bag lunches.

I would like to turn now to enterprises services. Our mission-enabling services such as acquisitions, financial management, human resources, and information technology (IT) provide the underpinning on which agencies accomplish their mission. Over the last 2 years, the Department has worked to identify the transactional aspects of back office and support services. Our goal is to achieve economies of scale, standardize the process, and reduce the transactional work so that our mission-enabling employees can spend more time on strategic work with the Bureaus. To effectively manage this transition, the Department created the Enterprise Services Organization.

With respect to employee performance, we are following the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) memo M-17-22, which requires agencies to develop a plan to maximize employee performance and design a workforce that meets the needs of today and the future. The Department is developing a plan that, when completed, will ensure, first, updated policies are in place to address poor performance; second, performance standards are comprehensive and ensure alignment between employees, qualifications, and position duties and responsibilities; third, performance management training exists to maintain high standards; and fourth, management and supervisory workforces are equipped and supported to execute performance management responsibilities.

The first step that we took in this process was to conduct an inventory across all of our 12 Bureaus on the topics related to performance management, and as we suspected, we are doing an awful lot of work in this area but we are all doing it somewhat differently. We also surveyed nearly 7,000 managers and supervisors on performance management. The results of this survey will guide us in developing a new training program for performance management.

On workforce management, the Department is committed to ensuring we have a long-term plan for the workforce of the 21st Century, and over the next 10 years the government will transition fully from the baby boomer generation to the millennial and gen X generations. Our goal is to focus on what people, technology, and acquisitions the Department needs to accomplish its various missions and identify gaps and develop a strategy to close them.

Again, I want to thank you for inviting Commerce to be part of this important discussion and I look forward to your questions.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you. We are going to ask Ranking Member Heitkamp for opening questions.

Senator HEITKAMP. Thank you so much. Stronger supervisory training is something that I have advocated for since coming on this Committee, and I am pleased that Senator Lankford is working with our office and working with me to try and design a bipartisan bill that we can advance, for looking at supervisory training.

And so I am just going to spend some time here visiting with you all about how the system currently grades and trains and works

with supervisors. And rather than kind of getting into the proficiencies and the substantive area—which I think frequently supervisors have great proficiency. That is why they end up being supervisors. The problem is that they do not have the soft skills that they need to inspire teams, to inspire the workforce to come together and achieve results.

So when you look at the 2017 study that Deloitte did with the Senior Executive Association (SEA), I was struck by their evaluation that only 35 percent of career senior executives that responded felt that career senior leaders were selected because of their ability to inspire teams.

I am wondering how these soft skills, these kind of interpersonal skills that are hard to quantify in a multiple choice test, how do you evaluate those soft skills? How do you evaluate a supervisor's ability to inspire teams and achieve results and create a positive workforce, with high morale?

And so maybe we could start with you, Angela. We know that DHS has, over the years, gotten beat up pretty bad for low morale, and I know how hard you have been working. We are grateful that you have taken on this challenge, and we will talk a little bit more about that as we get another chance here.

And so I am wondering, when you look at supervisory training and you look at supervisory evaluation, how do you deal with this intangible that I am talking about?

Ms. BAILEY. I think that is a great question and it is almost like the age of time that we have been dealing with this, right? And over the course of the years, I think it is absolutely true that what we have done is we have promoted folks based on their technical skills, and I think we have put this whole idea of soft skills as being something on a side burner.

But it really has come to light, and I think within DHS, with our Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), and looking at this and really examining it, we really said to ourselves, look, I think one of the things we really need to focus in on is these particular skills.

And so one of the things that we did, we started listening tours, and it started with Secretary Kelly, and then Deputy Secretary Duke, and then our current Secretary as well, myself, our Deputy Under Secretary for Management. You name it. We go out and we actually hold listening tours.

Senator HEITKAMP. With who?

Ms. BAILEY. Not only with the employees but with the supervisors as well.

Senator HEITKAMP. OK.

Ms. BAILEY. And to really sit down and understand, at the ground level, what is it that they are really dealing with? What are the struggles that they are having? How can we help them, and prepare them to be able to deal with some of the things that they are facing on a daily basis? Because I do not think anybody wakes up in the morning and says, "I think I am going to go in and just be a real jerk to my employees." I think, instead, they are struggling to be both the supervisor that we want them to be, and then also try to carry out their technical responsibilities at the same time.

And so this year of leadership that we have created I think is an excellent opportunity. We are not only giving them the skills that help them be able to understand how to recruit better, understanding our hiring authorities, understanding how to have a difficult conversation, understanding how to take those actions that ultimately, at the end of the day, they may have to take that is pretty darn tough.

But then we also intersperse that with actual leadership development as well. Just next week, in fact, we are having a Women in Leadership panel, where, myself, I serve on the panel along with some other folks, to really have a conversation with not only our supervisors but our employees as well, with regard to what it is like to be a woman in a leadership position. What are some of the things that we bring to the table that might be different from our male counterparts and how do we, in essence lead from where we are, regardless of whether we have the supervisor moniker or not.

And so we have also introduced some things that are kind of non-traditional. Just this week, in fact, we pulled all of our Senior Executive Service (SES) within the Management Directorate, so it was over 60 of us, into a conversation around Henry the Fifth, and what he went through with regard to inspiring his troops, and how to go ahead and, get England to be able to win a battle within France. And you may say, "Well, what the heck does that have to do with real employee engagement?" But to a person, every SES walked out of there and said, "I just learned something. I learned something about myself. I learned something about what I gravitate to. I learned something about how to inspire folks, to get them to actually be motivated and want to do the job that we need them to do."

Senator HEITKAMP. So how do you—Angela, though, I mean, doing all those things—

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. And getting people to think different about their role as—

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. Not just supervisors but leaders—

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. How do you then evaluate that? How do you, I think a lot of times—

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. People see it coming, OK, now I get it, and then slide back to what is familiar.

Ms. BAILEY. Right. Exactly. So one of the things we have started to do is the FEVS is great but it is a once-a-year annual survey. By the time we get it, it is almost time to take it all over again. So we have started doing poll surveys, where we actually send out, to the groups, and just a few questions. We do not make it burdensome on them.

But we send out these little poll surveys to say, hey, we had this kind of training. Did it really have an impact? Did you notice that the communications actually improved? Did you notice that your supervisor seemed to be a little bit more interested in how your day was going and not just simply telling you where to head for

the next shift? And then we use that to evaluate whether or not that kind of training or that kind of educational experience was really even having any impact that we wanted to.

So we do not want to get stuck on just doing something for the sake of doing it—because that is how it has always been done. Instead, I think, what we are doing is seeing this as being very fluid. Nothing is etched in stone. If it did not work then we will try something different.

Senator HEITKAMP. Well, I am curious because as we look at supervisory training and this challenge that we have between the tangible and the intangible—and I really see a lot of these traits as intangible—

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. And difficult to apply baseline metrics, but you know it when you see it, kind of thing.

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator HEITKAMP. What advice can you give to us, in terms of our supervisory role, our oversight role, on building better leadership and better supervision?

Ms. BAILEY. Sometimes it is like we struggle between this line of legislating behavior, right, versus, like, how do we ensure that we have the kinds of resources that we need, dedicated, quite frankly, to these kinds of programs. Sometimes what happens, I think, is that when cuts need to come for resourcing and stuff, one of the first things that we have a tendency to cut would be training programs. At least that has been my experience throughout my entire career.

And I think the military often says that you train the way you fight and you fight the way you train. And I think that we, in the civilian agencies, need to have that same kind of mindset, where training is something that is absolutely seen as a crucial part of what we do.

Senator HEITKAMP. Yes. I do not think you can have culture change without training.

Ms. BAILEY. Correct.

Senator HEITKAMP. I think that is the lesson from the military—

Ms. BAILEY. Exactly.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. That when you train together and when you train with a common purpose you achieve culture change—

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. Within organizations. And I think, in many cases, as we look at the challenges going forward, that culture change, especially at DHS—

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. Number one, we need to appreciate them more for what they do.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP. But I think that we have a big job—

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. That has been ignored for 15 years. I know you are celebrating 15 years of the agency. We just were talking about authorization for DHS—

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. Very difficult to get kind of a sense of prioritization from Congress when you have 100 committees——

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. Telling you what to do——

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. And coming at you, and mostly critical.

And so, I mean, I think we do not want to just bring out the stick. We want to know what that carrot is, and we want to work with you, Angela. But I think you are kind of a case study for me in supervisory training, and that is why I think it is interesting what you are doing.

Ms. BAILEY. Thank you.

Senator LANKFORD. Can I press on that a little bit as well? You mentioned, in your testimony, about an HR Academy. Tell us a little bit about that.

Ms. BAILEY. Sure.

Senator LANKFORD. What is that?

Ms. BAILEY. Well, one of the things, whenever I first came on board at DHS and I had the opportunity to work with our Deputy Under Secretary at the time—well, he is still there—Chip Fulghum, first of all, he is just a really incredibly strong supporter of the programs that we have within HR. And one of the things we recognized is, number one, we needed the resources. So we went after that, meaning get HR specialists on board.

But then, number two, we said to ourselves, but once they are on board, and to include the current folks, by the way—they really need to have career paths so that they understand how their career is going to be progressing. They need to understand that they are part of a really noble profession and it is not just this one-off thing that anybody can do, which often is what happens with the HR field.

And so we created this idea of having an HR Academy, and what we mean by that is, first of all, we are using the good work that OPM is doing with their Human Resource Institute, and we are taking all of those courses. So it will be heavily influenced by the courses that OPM is doing.

But we decided that we are actually going to do this by DHS, for DHS. And I need to tell you, I was actually at Transportation Security Administration (TSA). When I said that to the HR community they actually clapped about that, which really send a message to me to say that they are just clamoring to be a part of a profession and to have somebody—to know that there is a career path for them, to know that we are going to have coaching for them, that we are going to have rotational experiences for them, that we are going to make sure that they get joint duty kinds of experiences, that they are going to get not only the traditional but the non-traditional kind of education and training as well, to go in this whole package called an HR Academy.

So it is not brick and mortar. Right now, it is a virtual thing. It is being done on the backs of—internally, within the Office of the CHCO, and just some excellent detailees that have come in from

the components. They are so excited about building something for their own community.

Senator LANKFORD. So what is the model for this? You are modeling it off of what? You are making it look like, or you have seen it somewhere else and said, "That seems to really work," or are you starting from scratch?

Ms. BAILEY. I think the model, really, for me, because coming out of Defense, I would say that the model for me is really when you look at the acquisition corps. And so the acquisition corps really professionalized themselves. They have career paths that they have built that are very clearly defined. They have intermixed it with Defense Acquisition Workforce Improvement Act (DAWIA) requirements and Defense Acquisition University (DAU). And so that all just kind of played in my head.

I also, of course, coming out of OPM, you have Joseph Kennedy's group that does all of the HR training, Federal Executive Institute (FEI) and stuff. So it is this conglomeration of pooling together just probably 36 years of, like, watching different things go on, and kind of pool it together but say, what is in the best interest for DHS, right? It cannot be the DAU model, that is necessarily acquisition and that is specifically for Defense. I do not think it is necessarily just the OPM model. I think it is what is in the best interest of us.

Senator LANKFORD. So how do you measure it? Look out 5 years from now, as you are looking back at it. Is it working? Not working? What are you going to look for?

Ms. BAILEY. Well, that is a great question. I would think that the way that we are—and we have not really defined yet, completely, how we are going to measure everything. But I think at the end of the day the outcomes has to be that we have a professionalized HR workforce that understands the nuances of the hiring authorities, that understands all the different things that they need to do to be able to deliver to the hiring managers and help coach those hiring managers through some of this as well.

And it has become a partnership, actually, with the hiring managers, to be able to deliver and fill our positions, stem some of the unplanned attrition, do all the things that are actually the outcome of all of this, is not just for the HR community but the outcome is that the mission for DHS is actually delivered in a better fashion—more efficient and certainly more effective.

Senator LANKFORD. Yes. Mr. Reinhold, who else is doing a model like this? What are your initial thoughts on it?

Mr. REINHOLD. Well, so I can tell you that OPM has invested a lot of effort in looking at the HR workforce. We have done extensive work over the past few years, because this is identified as one of the governmentwide, mission-critical skills gap.

So we have put our best talent on it. We have a set of professional psychologists that have done extensive competency analysis, to really hone in on what are the key competencies and skills required of an HR specialist, and we have worked very closely with our colleagues in our HR Solutions Division to now build a curriculum that reflects those competencies.

And as Angie mentioned, it is through our Federal Human Resources Institute—this year we have begun to launch this institute,

starting with the staffing function, because we have found that that is a critical pain point across government. We have a 22-course curriculum that includes both technical training and the soft skill training. So far, about 18 of those courses have been launched, and the remaining 4 will be live by the end of this fiscal year. And then moving into 2019, we are looking at building additional curricula for the other specialty areas within the HR discipline—performance management, benefits administration.

And one of the things that we believe in is that as Angie mentioned, there is a huge appetite for this out in the Federal Government, and depending on where you go for your training it is going to be better or not as good. But what we have found is that there is a huge appetite for OPM to establish some leadership here, or take some leadership here, and I think we have done that. And by having a robust set of courses and curricula, that has the Good Housekeeping seal of approval on it, from OPM, we believe will pay off in the long run.

Senator LANKFORD. So let me just bring this up, then I am going to go to Senator Daines for his questions as well. But this is my concern, because I want to go back to what else needs to change. As we have all talked about before, it if is 106 days to hiring right now, you are not going to achieve it by finding one area to be able to cut and change. You are probably going to define five areas that you are going to cut 3 or 4 days off of each, to be able to get down to, as Mr. Mahoney mentioned, this 80-day model, and trying to figure out how to be able to get there.

But I had my team just pull the last 10 years, just grab the last 10 years, some of the initiatives. So in 2008, the End-to-End Hiring Roadmap initiative. In 2010, the President's Hiring Reform piece. Also in 2010, the Veterans Finding Federal Jobs piece. In 2011, OPM had the Students Finding Federal Jobs. In 2015, the Recruitment, Engagement, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy to improve the hiring process. In 2016, the Hiring Excellence Campaign (HEC).

This is not to be critical. This is something we have all known about for a while and there is a little piece edit, and I hope we are making progress on it, a little bit at a time, to be able to chip away on it. Not every program is going to be a success. Some we are going to try it and it is not going to work.

What I am trying to figure out is, for the HR folks that are out there that are trying to figure out what do we do, how can the process get better, how can I get greater connection to the people that are actually my customers, which piece of it do you look at over the last 10 years and say, "That has made the greatest progress on it but this is what is still missing?"

Mr. REINHOLD. Yes. So that is a fair point about the number of initiatives that are rolled out.

I will say that one of the things that we see is that with every initiative comes visibility and prioritization, and I think that as you look at each of these initiatives there are things that you can point to say, "Oh, wow, that did drive some visibility and attention to it."

For example, the time-to-hire and hiring model. The initial results were that agencies got on board and they drove down time-

to-hire. I think one of the things that we found, though, is that it is not just about speed of hiring. It is also about quality of hiring. And I think, this all kind of works on a model of continuous improvement, where if we squeeze the balloon here and focus on speed of hiring and that is all we care about, then the balloon bulges somewhere else.

So that is one of the reasons why you will see some of this evolution of the thinking and, for example, a focus on quality of hire, and, some of the things that OPM had engaged in to really drive things that contribute to quality, like engagement of hiring managers, and collaboration with HR.

One of the things that we have found in a lot of our data was that supervisors and HR people do not talk to each other, and that is not going to lead to a great hiring outcome. So that is one of the reasons why we began to work with agencies to really drive home the idea that collaboration between HR and hiring managers is important, and that was reflected in our Hiring Excellence initiative.

So, again, I think, in sum, I think it is kind of a continuum or a range of continuous improvement that there is not one perfect solution.

Senator LANKFORD. No, there is not, and we will come back to that. I want to be able to drill down on a couple of things specifically on that as well. Senator Daines.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR DAINES

Senator DAINES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank you all for testifying before this Committee.

President Trump began his term by emphasizing the government needs to provide better customer service. I could not agree more. In fact, I tell my team oftentimes that we are in the customer service business. I spent 28 years in the private sector before coming to Capitol Hill. We need to provide better customer service to the American people. One of the best ways to bring about better customer service is to start by hiring, certainly, better employees.

The President also recognized, in the State of the Union address, that hiring good employees also means you need to fire bad ones, and particularly in places like the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). When I was leading organizations for Procter and Gamble (P&G) for 13 years, in fact, my first job at the age of 21 years old at P&G, I was managing a team of 30 people right out of college. They had a management development program. They said, "Steve, here is a team of 30 people. Go get them." I was 21. So you learn a lot by trial and error.

But later on in my career, when I would teach and train new managers and more experienced managers about what is the most important thing about management, I would say the three most important things about management, your highest priorities, number one is hiring, number two is hiring, number three is hiring, because when you hire well, it makes all the difference in terms of outcomes in organizations.

But with an average time-to-hire, as was noted, of 106 days in fiscal year 2017, we know the agencies are not getting as many good candidates as they could, and we see this because your best candidates cannot stand to wait when there are easier job offers

elsewhere. Your mediocre candidates and your lower-performing candidates, which we should not be trying to hire in the first place, but they will be the first ones to hang out for 106 days, because they have no other options. The best people have three or four options, and, to me, we are never going to be able to hire and retain the best people unless we can shorten up this time-to-hire.

Mr. Reinhold, the objective of successful hiring is certainly having a good, or I would even argue a great workforce. Taking this good to great analogy, we used to be required reading in organizations I used to manage, part of having a good workforce is to expeditiously fire bad employees, because when you do not do that, as we know, it demoralizes your best people when you see that bad performers are not held accountable.

We recently saw the Department of Interior, our Secretary, Ryan Zinke, take necessary steps by terminating four senior employees on the basis of workplace harassment, including sexual harassment.

My question is, what are the barriers to firing employees who are poorly performing or have engaged in misconduct?

Mr. REINHOLD. Thank you for that question. So I think there are several. I think you could point to some of the, I will call them provisions or constraints of the system, where we need to take a fresh look at the basic rules and laws and regulations that govern how we do performance management and accountability.

I think another piece of that, though, even without substantive reform, is figuring out how we execute better, making sure that managers are held accountable for being managers, and taking appropriate actions when there are—when there is misconduct or poor performance.

Senator DAINES. What incentive is there in the system to fire a poor-performing employee, if you are a manager in this system?

Mr. REINHOLD. Well, for me the incentive—I mean, I guess from my personal experience the incentive is it helps my overall organizational performance. So I may not get a bonus or accolades for it, but at the end of the day other employees notice this.

Senator DAINES. Do they stack rank performance in our—

Mr. REINHOLD. No, we do not.

Senator DAINES. And why not?

Mr. REINHOLD. Actually it is a current provision of law that requires an objective assessment of an individual's performance against their performance standards. So we are not rated against each other but we are rated against a set of performance requirements.

Senator DAINES. Yes, and that really is a controversial issue, but I tell you, I have found one of the best guidelines—and it is a guideline—is you ask your manager to stack rank your employees, because what you often find out is you are negotiating on the standards half the time with the employee and so they get into this back-and-forth.

If you have an organization of 100 people, put them in relatively populated groups here of peers, you stack rank them. Tell me who your top 20 percent are, your middle 70, and your bottom 10. It is a telling exercise, and if we cannot do it officially, we still out to do it unofficially, just to make your managers think about their or-

ganization, because your top 20 percent deliver a disproportionate share of results. Typically your top 20 percent is delivering half the results of the organization, your bottom 10 percent is taking up half of your time as a leader because you are coaching out and having to deal with poor performance. Just a comment on how we could make this place run a little better.

Can this Subcommittee count on OPM to quickly finalize guidance in order to prevent abuse and improve the government workforce so that better employees can be hired?

Mr. REINHOLD. Yes, absolutely. I mean, as others have noted, this administration has made it clear that performance management and accountability is a priority. One of the early things that was issued was the memo directing agencies to maximize employee performance. And OPM fully supports that and we are looking at ways that we can help advance the ball on that.

Senator DAINES. I just would ask, too, and it is—I realize maybe we have—I do not know if there are rules or regulations, but I would just challenge our leaders, managers across these organizations to think about, at least as an exercise, doing a stack ranking. And, what you do with the data is all the difference. I realize there are pros and cons to it. I have found it to be very instructive and informative in coaching young managers to success and to have the manager tell you what are you doing to make sure we really help those top 20 percent, to promote them, pay them more, encourage them, and what are we doing to manage the bottom 10 percent? But that is just a comment.

Ms. Bailey, the Port of Sweetgrass has about 40 employees in a given time. This is up in northern Montana, up near the Canadian border. The entire town has a population of 50. Just south of there, 7 miles, the town of Sunburst has a population of 400, and 35 miles further south is Shelby. I was in Shelby, Montana, last week. They have a population of 2,400.

The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) employees there have relayed to me that hiring retention is poor because it is difficult to hire locally. And, as a result, we will send folks up to the Sweetgrass Port with CBP as a way to get into the agency and then immediately they leave Sweetgrass. We have found when you hire more Montanans locally, and not disadvantage them in the hiring process, we get better retention rates.

A question for you is, do you believe that hiring locally can reduce turnover and increase morale?

Ms. BAILEY. Yes. I think, fundamentally, that yes, hiring locally does, in essence, keep the morale high. It also helps us retain folks in a much better way, because most of the—once you get out into the field areas a lot of the hires are local. Sometimes we are not able, to your point, to be able to fill all of our vacancies with local hires. But we also have to, I think, balance that with you cannot all have all locals either, right?

Senator DAINES. Right.

Ms. BAILEY. I think an infusion of folks from diverse backgrounds and stuff into an area is good, because, in the areas in which we are responsible for, I think we really need to be representative of all America. And so I think we just have to have a good balance.

Senator DAINES. I am out of time. I would love to have a conversation and go further. Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you. Senator Harris.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HARRIS

Senator HARRIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Reinhold, talk with me a little bit about how you are using data to inform the Federal hiring process, and, in particular, how you are providing data to hiring managers and agency leaders, and how are these managers being trained to use that data?

Mr. REINHOLD. Thank you for that question, Senator Harris.

So I think there are a number of important data sources that OPM encourages agencies to use. One of the big ones is data gathered from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey. Not a perfect assessment or, a perfect measure, but there is a lot of rich data in there that we are driving into the agencies by producing unit-level results down to low-level work units. So each supervisor can get their data and have an understanding of how their employees are reacting to the items in the survey.

Beyond that, when we look more broadly at recruiting and hiring, one of the things that OPM has really worked toward is creating functionality, sources of data that agencies can use to inform hiring. And whether that be informing pools of applicants by using what we call applicant flow data, where we can survey individuals to find out where they are coming from and how they found out about the jobs; by taking data that we have in USA Jobs on millions of registrants and seeing where they are located in the country and what kinds of jobs are they applying for, and where are they actually getting selected.

So there is a whole suite of data analytics tools that are being created within USA Jobs to enable better strategic recruitment. We do not want to spend time focusing our efforts on recruiting from places that are not yielding top talent, or we are finding that there might be better sources of hiring more diverse talent.

Senator HARRIS. Do we have a timeline for when that will be completed, and are we also instructing managers and those who are in a position to hire, about which sources of data they should consult, and creating protocols for that?

Mr. REINHOLD. So I would have to circle back with you on that. USA Jobs is not actually my portfolio but I know they have done a tremendous amount of work to create kind of that analytics foundation.

Senator HARRIS. OK. If you could follow up on the timeline for when that will be complete. And also, what, if any, commitment or plan is there to have open data, meaning allowing the public to actually be able to have access to this information so they, too, can understand and even evaluate the data that is available, to give some idea of what we are doing in terms of hiring practices in the United States government?

Mr. REINHOLD. That is a great question. I am not sure I have a great answer for it. I know clearly there is an interest in looking at how we can leverage the enormous amounts of data that we have at OPM, and it is data about current Federal employees, it is data about applicants from USA Jobs, it is Federal Employee

Viewpoint Survey data. And there are many ways, as you know, that this can be used and leveraged, and even to help further some of our objectives when it comes to, how do we showcase things that might be attractive to people who might be looking for employment.

So, yes, we do not have a specific timeline, but I know, as a general commitment and a general strategy, this is something OPM is really interested in.

Senator HARRIS. If you could follow up with the Committee on what exactly the plan will be, or might be, or can be——

Mr. REINHOLD. OK.

Senator HARRIS [continuing]. For an open data initiative, again, so that the public can have this information and we can have greater transparency in our processes.

Ms. Bailey, in your testimony, you state that reducing time-to-hire and hiring is most important, and also that given that one of the first goals of the administration was for DHS to have and hire 10,000 more Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents and 5,000 more Border Patrol agents. Is there a workforce modeling that has been done to evaluate and justify such as massive increase in personnel in those two areas of the agency?

Ms. BAILEY. Yes, and actually what they have done with the workforce modeling is, what we are doing is refining that. And so it is also built on, with regard to our authorizations and what are our appropriations, and what we can actually afford each year as well.

So we are not hiring all 10,000 ICE agents this year or all 5,000 CBP officers this year as well. We have actually parsed that out. Some of that is a 5- to 7-year plan to have those folks on board.

One of the things that we are doing, first of all, though, is investing in what I will call the logistical tail that has to actually support all of these folks. So the last thing we want to do is bring on a lot of agents and not have anybody there to help do all the care and feeding.

Senator HARRIS. That is smart.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes. So we are——

Senator HARRIS. Can you provide that workforce modeling¹ to the Committee?

Ms. BAILEY. We can. Certainly.

Senator HARRIS. OK. Please do. Can you get it to us within the next month?

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HARRIS. OK. Great. And has there been an assessment that justifies the need for these increases, and where individuals would be placed, and what their duties would be, and what their priorities would be?

Ms. BAILEY. Right. So that would be all part of the modeling.

Senator HARRIS. OK.

Ms. BAILEY. It is to really fully understand at where exactly do we need the resources most.

Senator HARRIS. So that assessment has been done?

Ms. BAILEY. Yes. It is an ongoing assessment. I want to be clear about that.

¹The clarification statement submitted by Ms. Bailey appears in the Appendix on page 57.

Senator HARRIS. OK.

Ms. BAILEY. I think every time, as we move and as things are going along, it is very fluid, and understanding what that is, where do we have the need for the most impact. And so we are actually making those plans as we go along. I do not think it is just a once-and-done kind of thing. I want to make sure I am clear on that.

Senator HARRIS. So, I think so, but I just want to get more clear about the plan.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HARRIS. So we are not going to build this thing as we are flying it, right? You are going to complete the assessment before we start hiring, or are you saying that hiring will start before the assessment is complete?

Ms. BAILEY. No. An assessment has been done. What I mean is that tweaks will be done to that assessment as we go along. So we are not going to build it as we are flying. We have an assessment as to where we believe that we need our folks to be placed—

Senator HARRIS. OK.

Ms. BAILEY [continuing]. Throughout the country. Actually, throughout the world, because it is not just the United States. But what I am suggesting is that as we get our appropriations, as we get different intelligence and different things that we discover, yes, there will have to be tweaks made to that plan to ensure that our modeling makes sense. We would never want to say what we decided in 2017 is forever more, because it is just not a reality of the business that we are in.

Senator HARRIS. OK. So we have completed an assessment of the needs of the Department and whether we actually do need 10,000 in one division and 5,000 more in another?

Ms. BAILEY. To the best of my knowledge, we have completed an assessment of that and we are implementing that plan.

Senator HARRIS. OK. Well, we look forward to reading that. Thank you.

Senator LANKFORD. Senator Carper.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR CARPER

Senator CARPER. I want to say to the Chair and the Ranking Member, thank you for holding this hearing. It is not a new subject. This is like an ongoing subject and a number of our colleagues, including George Voinovich, Daniel Akaka, and others before them have tried to focus and refocus our efforts here. The folks at this table have been a part of this effort.

I just want to start out with Angela Bailey. Nice to see you. And thank you. I am going to be talking on the phone later today with Alejandro Mayorkas, who used to be, as you know, Deputy Secretary for a number of years, working with Jeh Johnson, our Secretary. And they spent every week of the time they were Secretary and Deputy Secretary focusing on this issue. Jeh Johnson said to me, repeatedly, it is an embarrassment that the Department of Homeland Security has the lowest, in terms of employee morale, the lowest in the Federal Government. We want to do something about that.

And they worked it hard. They worked it hard and I try to do a little bit. I would go to the floor every month, as you may recall,

to talk about a different person in Department of Homeland Security, and hold them up for praise, and just remind people. Every time I go through an airport I always thank the Transportation Security Administration people, tell them who I am and how much we appreciate their service. I just do not think you can thank people enough.

And the work that you are a part of and the work that Jeh Johnson and Alejandro and others have led, it is showing movement and change. We have a saying in the Navy, it is hard to turn an aircraft carrier, but if you keep at it you can actually turn an aircraft carrier.

And just talk to us about some of the efforts. Why do you think this is working? We are now seeing the fruits of all the labor that have gone on before. But what has happened here?

Ms. BAILEY. Well, first of all, I want to thank you, Senator, for all of your support, and I think it really actually does mean a lot to, like, our TSA folks whenever you thank them for a job well done, because they have some pretty tough jobs.

Senator CARPER. One guy said to me, "Well, thank you very much. No one ever thanks us for anything. Now take your shoes off." [Laughter.]

He was kidding.

Ms. BAILEY. Exactly.

Senator CARPER. A TSA agent with a sense of humor.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes. And there are many of them.

Senator CARPER. Yes, there are.

Ms. BAILEY. So you are right. Under the leadership of Secretary Johnson and Deputy Secretary Mayorkas, there was just so much tremendous effort put on employee engagement, and that has carried forward into the next administration with our—

Senator CARPER. Good.

Ms. BAILEY [continuing]. Current leadership as well.

I think one of the main things that we honestly have done is just got real and got local, because all engagement is local, and if you try to keep it at the highest levels all the time, and it is big, fancy brochures and, spiffy Web pages and stuff, it does not resonate with the folks. So we took it to the people and we said to them—we sat down, we started having, and I had mentioned it earlier, listening tours, to ask them, "What is it that you are struggling the most with? What is it that you need our help with?"

And so we then kept a record, basically, of all of those things, and then we just started actually making sure that the simplest things got implemented for them.

One of the things that also was borne out of this is the idea of leadership year, and that really came with Secretary Kelly. Whenever he went out and he listened to folks and they said, especially the supervisors, they said, "What I really want to know is that I am going to be supported whenever I need to take whatever action I need to take."

And so we really are now dedicating this whole year to making sure that our supervisors have what they need, because we fundamentally believe if we do not take care of our supervisors, it is pretty darn hard to take care of your employees if you are not tak-

ing care of yourself. And so that is one of the two-pronged efforts that we have with regard to our employee engagement.

And as you can see, the results are—I mean, last year, I think, not only was it statistically significant, historically it was the highest raising of an agency with regard to the FEVS scores. But for us it is not just about FEVS scores, right? We are not just chasing a score. We are really actually trying to learn from that.

We have an executive steering committee that is actually chaired by our Under Secretary for Management.

Senator CARPER. Who is that now?

Ms. BAILEY. That is Claire Grady. And all of our component leadership is there. We have action plans that we have put in place. We hold them accountable for the action plans. We have put it into our SES performance appraisal, or into their performance standards, this idea of having accountability for leadership, which goes beyond just the core competency of leading people. And then we share best practices, and there are a lot of good things that are actually going on.

I think some of the things we do not really kind of get credit for is some of our components, like U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), they have scores almost as high as National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and they are larger than NASA. And so I think sometimes that gets missed in all the mix of just aggregating DHS as just one agency.

Senator CARPER. Good. Well, we do a fair amount of work with social media and other ways to communicate out of our office, and we are going to make sure we tell this story. Thank you very much for your part in developing a really good turnaround. It is thrilling.

Ms. BAILEY. Good.

Senator CARPER. It is a thrill, and not a cheap thrill. It is a thrill. Good work.

Ms. BAILEY. It is for me.

Senator CARPER. There you go.

If I can, maybe one more quick question. This would be for the panel, the entire panel. We will let the guys talk for a little bit here.

But the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and others have identified the critical skill gaps in areas such as cybersecurity, auditing, human resources, and procurement, to name just a few. The two of you just take a minute and tell us how you are working to ensure that individual hiring decisions are in line with the long-term needs of your agency, including tackling those areas identified as critical skill gaps. Each of you. Mark, do you want to take it first, and then Kevin.

Mr. REINHOLD. Sure. Thank you for that question, Senator.

So I would actually like to start off by talking a little bit about some of the work OPM has done to explore the skills gap in mission-critical occupations. We have worked very closely with agencies to, first of all, identify what we mean by a mission-critical occupation, the extent to which skill gaps exist, going through a very rigorous root cause analysis process to get to the fundamental reasons why these gaps exist in government. And based on those find-

ings there are action plans and strategic plans that have been put in place for each of the mission-critical occupations.

And we have occupational leads who are basically senior folks from agencies who have stepped up to the challenge of saying, "Hey, I want to lead the acquisition efforts, or the cyber efforts." And we continue to work very closely with them to kind of drive execution of their action plans. In fact, just later this afternoon we are having our quarterly update with the group to talk about status and progress.

Senator CARPER. That is great. Thank you, Mark. Kevin.

Mr. MAHONEY. Thank you, Senator. At Commerce we are really working to identify competencies in a lot of these areas. We have tracked mission-critical occupations for a long time and report them to OPM on a regular basis.

But as we make a transition to how we are delivering HR services, we know that we have to understand what the competencies in each of these jobs are, and that is a joint effort between us in HR and the manager, to sit down and really sort of assess what are the skill sets that you need to complete your mission. And we are beginning to develop a model, a workforce planning model, that will look at those competencies and then be able to make some decisions on how we close gaps.

In my own department, we have done this because we are preparing to transition to a different way of delivering services, and we did a complete competency assessment of the staff and we have identified staff who can fill certain positions for us and staff that needs to be developed if we are going to retain them. And we are going to continue on that model throughout the agency.

Senator CARPER. OK. Good. Who is the Secretary of Commerce these days?

Mr. MAHONEY. Wilbur Ross.

Senator CARPER. Really? Everybody thinks he is the guy who made a lot of money, very successful businessperson. Did he ever work in public service for like a limited period of time?

Mr. MAHONEY. Actually, when Secretary Ross started his career he was a Census taker.

Senator CARPER. He was a kind of a numerator. He would go door to door and take the Census.

Mr. MAHONEY. Yes.

Senator CARPER. And he still has an enduring interest in the Census. And as part of the responsibility of the Department of Commerce, it is a really important thing, not just for creating congressional districts and, councilmanic districts and stuff like that for voting purposes, but it is also hugely helpful to our business community, hugely helpful in a wide variety of ways.

We currently have an acting Census Director, an acting Deputy Census Director, both of whom are career folks and both of whom are highly regarded. Is the administration—are you guys working on putting somebody like a confirmed—getting us a couple of names for us to consider? Do you want to stay with the two fellows that are there? Should we be considering them as the Senate confirmed, debate them, have them here before us for hearings? What should we do?

Mr. MAHONEY. Well, I know that the Department is actively working with the White House to identify candidates to come in and fill those positions. The two gentlemen that you have identified certainly have stepped up and done yeoman work——

Senator CARPER. That is what I hear.

Mr. MAHONEY [continuing]. And we are very pleased with the progress that we are making with the Census. But, ultimately, I think we will be getting some recommendations from the White House that we will move forward on.

Senator CARPER. Maybe one or both of them could be a nominee, or ought to be seriously considered, at least.

OK, Mr. Chairman, Senator Heitkamp, I just want to say thank you for your leadership of this Committee. I love the way these two folks work together. It is just a great example for the rest of us. Maybe it is their hair color. I do not know what it is. These are kindred spirits and very good leaders.

Thank you for your leadership in this regard, and to Angela, especially, nice to see you. When I talk to Alejandro and Jeh Johnson later this week, maybe later today, I will be sure to tell them we spoke and that you are doing great work. Thank you.

Ms. BAILEY. Thank you.

Senator LANKFORD. Thank you, Senator Carper. Let me ask a couple more questions. We have several things that we want to be able to still highlight with you, and this is one that has confounded me in the process. The final approval for a position's minimum job requirements. Who signs off on that and who should sign off on it?

So I am asking what is current practice for who is signing off on the final approval for a position's minimum job requirements. Is it in the right spot? Is it OPM? Is it HR folks? Is it down to the manager? When they are trying to establish what is the minimum job requirements for this one, how is that going?

Mr. Reinhold, do you want to attack that for me?

Mr. REINHOLD. Yes, I would be happy to start with that. So, generally speaking, for most occupations, the core qualification requirement for a particular grade level is a full year of experience doing that job at the next lower grade level. So OPM does not prescribe, in specific terms, what that means, so there is a lot of flexibility within agencies to say, OK, well, what it means for my job here in my agency is that you would have a year of experience doing X, Y, and Z, and you would have demonstrated these competencies and skills.

So, ultimately, when it comes to actually defining a position description, and issuing a job announcement, there is significant flexibility at the agency level, and, ultimately, the decision about what goes in there and how that is defined is really up to the HR specialist and the hiring manager.

Senator LANKFORD. Right. So how is it working in the agencies at this point, for establishing that, between the HR folks and actually coming to the managers and such that are going to oversee them?

Mr. MAHONEY. It works well, when both the manager and the hiring specialist can collaborate with each other.

Senator LANKFORD. Are they?

Mr. MAHONEY. They do and we are getting better at doing that. It is one of my goals to connect the HR specialist to be closer to the business. I think, if I look at my experience in the private sector and I contrast it to my experience in government, as an HR person in the private sector if I did not know the business of my customers then I was not going to be successful.

And so we are working toward that to get our specialists more involved in meetings with the Bureaus, to understand the pressure that are coming if Bureaus are getting requirements from Congress to hire more people or to move in a certain direction or to reorganize. We are spending more and more of our time understanding that so that we can better, then, when it comes to hiring, write a position description that makes sense and write, more importantly, the job assessment we use so that when we do a vacancy announcement we begin to get the kind of quality candidates that are going to be helpful to the manager.

Senator LANKFORD. Right. How is that working in DHS?

Ms. BAILEY. I think it is kind of like a mixed bag, right? We do have—absolutely—not just pockets of success, I think we have by and large success across the board. Because it is one of these things where what we have discovered is that when the hiring managers are not involved in this they end up with folks that, on their, what is called a certificate for selection, they end up with folks that they just believe are not qualified at all.

And so one of the things that we have said is, why do you not come on in, let us sit down together, let us actually talk about what is it that you are really trying to get accomplished. What are the capabilities that you need? What are some of the soft skills, meaning do you need critical thinking? Do you need decisiveness? I mean, what are some of the things that you actually need, and then let us just work together to actually put out a job announcement that collectively we think will get the right kinds of folks to apply for those positions.

It also, I think, has to do with some of the recruiting that we have going on as well, getting the managers more involved in the recruiting up front so that they can actually see some of these resumes that are coming in and get a feel for the kind of talent that is out there.

So we successfully used that when we did our joint hiring event last summer, and, actually, it might have been two summers ago. But, anyhow, we successfully used that. We literally had a table like this of HR specialists and CIO folks, and together they sat down and they looked at 2,500 resumes that walked in that door, and together they decided on who met the qualifications that they were looking for, and then they got referred to actually get interviewed. And we made close to 350 tentative job offers that day, by having that kind of relationship.

So what we need to do, though, since DHS is a huge agency, is just replicate that, that kind of back-and-forth and that kind of partnership across the components, and across the different occupations.

Senator LANKFORD. That is great. So, Mr. Reinhold, let me follow up on something we talked about in April 2016. You have been here multiple times. We have had lots of conversations here. We

talked to you, at that time, about the frustration that applicants feel when they are not getting feedback on the process. You and I have both expressed that and understood it well, and said that something has to change in how people are getting feedback and they are going through the job process. Otherwise they take other jobs in other places, just because they have not heard or they just get frustrated and think if it is going to be like this then I am not going to bother to be able to jump in.

How is that going, getting feedback to the applicants?

Mr. REINHOLD. So we have tried to come at it from a couple of different ways. One way is through USA Jobs, where we have created some new functionality that provides, what I will call a little bit of a dashboard, if you will, for the applicants, so they can see at critical points of the hiring process where is it now? Is it the job announcement has closed? Has a referral been issued? Has a selection been made?

There is also functionality in USA Jobs that can draw from agency inputs that will give the individual specific feedback. So, for example, beyond kind of the little timeline thing I mentioned, there are data points that agencies can feed into USA Jobs so that an applicant can go check on the status at any given time. So it is kind of both a broad, here is a general dashboard so you know where—

Senator LANKFORD. For that job opening or for them, in particular?

Mr. REINHOLD. For that specific job opening, yes.

And then, in addition to that, one of the things we have continued to emphasize through the Hiring Excellence campaign and other engagements with agencies is really the importance of keeping applicants apprised of what is going on. And we emphasize that with the HR folks and the managers. Because one of the things we have found is that, even once a selection is made and the person is waiting, perhaps, for security vetting, it is a great practice for a manager to periodically check in with the person, just to kind of make sure that, how are things going, we are still working on it, we are still interested in you, just to kind of have that reassurance that it is not just in some black hole.

So I think, like I said, we are trying to come at this from different ways, and, certainly we are continuing to look for solutions.

Senator LANKFORD. So the question is, what you just described to me on USA Jobs and such, and the hiring process, and the on-line look at that dashboard, as you described it, if I were to go look at that right now and go across multiple agencies, are all agencies putting their information in there, and so you can see that, or some doing it and some are not? What do you think?

Mr. REINHOLD. So I will say it is a mixed bag. Sometimes what we see is that agencies are so focused on just getting through the process that they do not necessarily hit the right triggers to feed data into USA Jobs. And it is not that nothing is happening. It is just that they are working on other things and they are not timely in feeding the information to USA Jobs.

So in those cases, yes, it is very reliant on agencies—

Senator LANKFORD. So give me a ballpark of what the guess is of how many people are putting information in, and I can tell you,

as a parent, for instance, looking at my child's grades online, some teachers do a great job of putting their grades in the grade book online and some of them, 9 weeks later it is not there yet.

Mr. REINHOLD. True.

Senator LANKFORD. So I get that, but—

Mr. REINHOLD. Yes. Honestly, I do not even know if I could take a swag at it. It is 50–50, maybe.

Senator LANKFORD. OK. I would encourage you to be able to follow up and just get a quick look at that and see, for us to be able to have the tools, a great tool to be able to have, to be able to know how it is used, or if it is a usable format, or if it is a pain to be able to use, to be able to input the data, the data is not going into it because it is such an additional hurdle that is slowing people down and just saying “never mind, I am not going to do it.” But let us see, if we have a good tool like that, let us just see if it is actually usable and how it is being used.

Senator HEITKAMP. I think it is important, Mark, too that, you let them know that we are asking. I mean, I think sometimes people think if it is not—I mean, there is no accountability, then why do it? I mean, it is just another step. But they need to know that we are asking, and that we expect that we are going to have this tool available to us to evaluate.

And we just have to elevate this work beyond, leave us alone and let us do what we are doing, because what we are doing is not achieving the results that we think we need, and it is creating—it is frustrating, and it is only going to get worse as the job market get more competitive. We are not in a spot where we are a preferred employer anymore. I mean, the days of my dad saying, “Oh, well, it would be great, get a government job.” No one says that anymore, that I know of. They look at it as a way to get skills that you can then get a real job someplace else.

And so we have to change how people look at employment within these agencies and it has to begin with the folks in your role impressing upon the supervisors and pressing upon the managers that this is a priority, and, we are not in this for the long term—or the short term. We are in this for the long term.

I cannot, Angela, let you leave without talking about the 5-year contract that Customs and Border Protection signed with, I think it is Accenture. I am really disturbed by this, because it seems to me that a \$40,000 payment, kind of bounty per new hire may not be the best way to recruit the best people. And I am concerned that what we are doing is simply a revolving door, I mean, because we do not seem to be able to retain.

I mean, the last time—I forget who was in front of us—they said that they had 100 transfers or departures from Customs and Border Protection, Border Patrol a month. I mean, so you add that up and you add \$40,000 to replace, at the same time that there is a lot of pressure here to add more personnel, I mean, this is something that needs to get fixed.

And so I am curious about what role DHS played in Customs and Border Protection's contract. I am curious about whether you were disappointed or whether you played a role in that, and if you did, maybe you can enlighten me on why this was a good deal.

Ms. BAILEY. OK. So with regard to the contract, we had an opportunity to sit down with CBP the other day and that includes with our——

Senator HEITKAMP. Were you involved in the beginning, Angela?

Ms. BAILEY. No. Not in the beginning. But we sat down with the Under Secretary, the Deputy Under Secretary, myself, we sat down with CBP, and we actually sat down with CBP and ICE, to understand both of their contracts, what is different about both of them so that we could really get a real feel for it, and to dig into the numbers a little bit more.

So CBP, I would say that what they are really trying to accomplish here is go at things a little bit differently, and one could say that when you go after high innovation sometimes there is high risk with that, right? So one of the first things that they are doing is they know—they get thousands and thousands of applications. What their issue is, is getting folks the whole way through, and, in particular, that extensive security background investigation. They have drug testing, physicals, medicals, and then the background investigation, and polygraphs. So people start dropping out throughout that process.

So one of the things that CBP is also investing in, with regard to this contract, which I think is a fabulous idea, is we are taking this whole idea of instead of just doing the dashboard where people have to go in and look to see where they are in the process, they are actually creating an Applicant Care Center. And what we are doing now is we are going to have people dedicated solely to doing—to literally hand-hold——

Senator HEITKAMP. But why do we need to sign a contract with someone else to do something that we would expect you guys were doing, in terms of recruitment?

Ms. BAILEY. Well, with regard, you can have your own staff do it or you can kind of augment it or supplement it a little bit with some contractors. So I think what CBP is trying to do is say, “I have a lot here on my plate that I am trying to do. How about if we at least go at this two different ways and see if we cannot get better results.” Because we all agree that they need to increase their results and get these positions filled. That is why——

Senator HEITKAMP. I think they need to look at why people are leaving——

Ms. BAILEY. I agree.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. Border Patrol.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP. So, I look at 100 and say, OK, \$40,000 for 100 people a month, that is \$40 million, or \$4 million. So what are we doing here?

Ms. BAILEY. Right. So with regard to the Border Patrol in particular, what we have really started doing with Border Patrol is looking at where are they moving to and why are they leaving. Because we have to get to the root cause of what is really going on. And, in particular, for some of the border locations, which I am sure——

Senator HEITKAMP. Right.

Ms. BAILEY [continuing]. That you are familiar with this, and with regard to some of those, they are in very desolate locations where their families—

Senator HEITKAMP. Yes, I do not mean to be argumentative, but maybe you ought to take that \$40,000 and incentivize somebody to move there. I mean, so you have somebody who is already a great employee, you are spending \$40,000 per recruit in this system, and you are losing 100 a month. So, would that not tell you that maybe instead of investing in this system, investing in trying to figure out why people are leaving—

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. And retain them would be a much bigger bang for the buck.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes. So we actually are putting money into, with regard to the retention incidents. We agree with that. Also, recruitment incentives. We just met with OPM, I think it was last week or maybe it was 2 weeks ago, to talk about some legislative proposals, as well, that we would like to put in place to actually increase the percentage of retention and recruitment bonuses that we can actually give these folks to keep them.

But we were also thinking about an idea that has to do with, like, treating these as almost like a hardship tour, like the military does. And so if you agree to take one of these locations for 3 years—

Senator HEITKAMP. I do not disagree with any of that.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP. What I disagree with is, or what I fail to understand, is why we need to hire a firm and spend \$40,000 per hire to that firm. That is what is very troubling to me, because if you multiply that out by the number of additional hires, this is not inconsequential in terms of dollars to the budget. And, we have a lot of faith in you, Angela, that you can create a system that will, in fact, respond. But, this is not being well received on this Committee, as you know. And I am deeply troubled that you say you just sat down with them to talk about this contract. It is obvious to me you did not know about this contract until it got exposed here.

Ms. BAILEY. Well, no. I knew about the contract. Once we had the proposals had come back in and we have, actually, how Accenture is going to perform the work—

Senator HEITKAMP. Did you negotiate the contract?

Ms. BAILEY. No.

Senator HEITKAMP. Why not? Would not you think that would be your role?

Ms. BAILEY. Yes, I mean, but for the components, the components actually have the authority to negotiate their own contracts, and to understand what their needs are.

I need to be clear, though, in this \$42,000, it does actually include doing the background investigations, the medical, the drug testing, the physicals, and everything. So I just want to make sure that we are clear that it covers everything. It is not just covering recruiting.

And so, as you know, background investigations can be very expensive, as well as the medicals, physicals, and etc. And then the

investment, they are also investing in business process re-engineering to see whether or not their processes are really making sense. For example, their entrance exams, does it make sense where they have it?

So this contract is intended, by CBP, to cover how——

Senator HEITKAMP. How long has it been since they signed the contract? When was the contract signed?

Ms. BAILEY. I think November.

Senator HEITKAMP. November.

Ms. BAILEY. I think November. And it is for a small portion. It is not for all of their hires. It is only for about a quarter of their hires. The rest of their hires will continue on under their current system.

Senator HEITKAMP. Yes. I mean, the jury is out on this, and, obviously, a lot of concern about the inability to retain——

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP [continuing]. Against, in a very expensive hiring process. I do not disagree with that.

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator HEITKAMP. I think it is expensive no matter how you do it. But, I look at \$40,000 and think, if I bonused somebody \$5,000 a year, that might do more in retention. I get to keep four of those guys for what it costs you to recruit a new one.

Ms. BAILEY. Right. We are absolutely doing that. We are also even pursuing, like, special salary rates as well. We did that for the polygraph examiners and also for our agriculture specialists and for our officers, like, up on the Northern Border, to try to combat some of this. So we are with you on that, with regard to putting money into the retention incentives, the relocation.

We also, so speaking of that, when they do relocate, we need to put money aside, as well, to help them pay for those moves, to go to the next place, which would be an encouragement, I think, for them. We are also thinking—and I think it is part of our proposals that we want to put forward now—is this idea—I worked on this whenever I was at OPM with the Department of Defense (DOD), a spousal preference for the military spouses. And we were thinking perhaps we could come up with a DHS spousal preference that would at least give them, in these different areas an idea.

Senator HEITKAMP. I do not want to belabor this and I am sure we are going to have ongoing discussions, but I trust you to do your job. I just do not know why we need to spend this kind of money, outside a system, when this is going to be a recurring problem. We need to have capability within the organization. I do not like off-sourcing this. I want you to be in charge of it. I want this to be a systematic, system-wide discussion without taking the short cut and hiring someone for which we have no idea whether that is going to improve retention rates at all.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes.

Senator HEITKAMP. And so, you are going to get them through the door. Is there any guarantee that they are going to stay?

Ms. BAILEY. Right. So we need—yes, right. I understand, ma'am.

Senator LANKFORD. Before I recognize Senator Hassan, can I ask a quick question on that as well? Do we know the costs of hiring when it is done through the Federal agencies? Because you talked

about it includes drug testing, it includes the background check, it includes all the onboarding. Do we have a ballpark now, if we do it through Federal entities, what is the cumulative cost to hire versus what this outside contract is?

Ms. BAILEY. Yes. We have actually looked at data, and I have seen some of the studies and I have seen anywhere from \$35,000 to, you have the \$42,000. I have seen it higher than that. So I think what I would need to do is actually get back to you on that, so that I am just, at least telling you exactly the facts, versus just trying to kind of guess.

Senator LANKFORD. That would be great. That would be very helpful. Yes, if that figure exists, because if it is an all-encompassing contract——

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator LANKFORD [continuing]. It is not just you, it is other entities as well——

Ms. BAILEY. Right.

Senator LANKFORD [continuing]. That are a part of that, and it would be good to get an apples-to-apples comparison of that.

Ms. BAILEY. Yes, and I think it would be smart to break it down by the process, because not everybody has to do a polygraph, for example——

Senator LANKFORD. Right.

Ms. BAILEY [continuing]. And different parts.

Senator LANKFORD. It would be helpful. Senator Hassan.

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR HASSAN

Senator HASSAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the witnesses for being here. And I have been at other hearings so I have a couple of questions. They may cover a little bit of territory that you have already covered, and I apologize, but I did want to get back and ask them.

And I wanted to start, Mr. Mahoney, with you, because you have worked at several agencies in similar capacities, as I understand it. So the question I have is, in your experience, would you say that most of the hiring issues at the agencies you have worked at have been specific to that agency or have the problems been government-wide, and can you provide some examples.

Mr. MAHONEY. Thank you for the question, Senator. The hiring process is the same across all agencies. It is the way the government does it.

Senator HASSAN. Yes.

Mr. MAHONEY. It does vary from place to place. When I was at Small Business Administration, our focus was usually on the field jobs, and those were different——

Senator HASSAN. Yes.

Mr. MAHONEY [continuing]. Than they are, let us say, at Census, where I am now.

So the specific jobs that we are hiring for change. The process stays the same. But we still can look at each job series or hiring series as an individual event, and if we have the opportunity to use a specific hiring authority, like, for example, something to attract people who have just left the Peace Corps——

Senator HASSAN. Right.

Mr. MAHONEY [continuing]. And bring them on board quickly, we will do that. So we can take hiring flexibilities and apply them to the jobs while still using a process that is universal across the institution.

Senator HASSAN. So you find, in different agencies, they are able to find those flexibilities, those particular fits, for instance?

Mr. MAHONEY. I think when there is a good working relationship between the hiring specialist and the hiring manager, where you could actually sit down and kind of noodle through some of these things at the beginning, then you can accomplish a great deal.

Senator HASSAN. OK. That is helpful.

And I wanted to touch a little bit more, Mr. Reinhold, on the issue of background checks. We were just talking about some of it with regard to Senator Heitkamp's line of questioning. But as I understand it, as of several weeks ago, the Office of Personnel Management had over 700,000 Federal job applicants waiting for a completed background check or security clearance, and the GAO has recently added the background check effort to its annual list of high-risk programs.

I appreciate the hard work that civil servants are doing every day to process these forms, but it is really critical that we do everything we can to improve the efficiency of this process for the sake of the whole Federal workforce, while also making sure we are giving security clearances to people who have been fully vetted.

Could you talk about the impact that this backlog is having on the length of the hiring process and what steps your agency is taking to reduce them?

Mr. REINHOLD. Yes. Thank you for that question. So we could not agree more that ensuring the integrity of the Federal workforce is a critical priority. Certainly there are various levels of sensitivity of positions across the Federal Government, and some are deemed non-sensitive, which, in those cases a security check could involve something as minimal as, things like a fingerprint check.

Senator HASSAN. Right.

Mr. REINHOLD. Certainly for higher levels of sensitivity, the investigation is much more robust, and in those situations those can certainly take more time, and in cases where there are large inventories, certainly that can have an impact on the hiring process.

Senator HASSAN. Right.

Mr. REINHOLD. I think one of the things that I would note—and this is not a program that is within my portfolio, so I will probably limit how much I speak about it—but one of the things I would note is that a large percentage of that inventory is reinvestigations of individuals who are already on board.

Senator HASSAN. OK.

Mr. REINHOLD. There are requirements for periodic reinvestigation.

Senator HASSAN. Yes, OK.

Mr. REINHOLD. So that kind of contributes to the inventory. But those are not necessarily related to new hires.

But I guess I will close by saying it is certainly an area that OPM is very focused on, and I know we are very committed to working through that inventory.

Senator HASSAN. Do we have—is it is a lack of people to do the background checks? Is it that the system could be leaned up, so to speak? I mean, is it the process for background checks? Do we need more technology? What is creating the backlog?

Mr. REINHOLD. Yes. In candor, I do not have a lot of visibility into that——

Senator HASSAN. OK.

Mr. REINHOLD [continuing]. But I think it is certainly something we would be happy to gather information and circle back with you.

Senator HASSAN. Well, I would very much like to follow up on it, because in my experience, there are times when people really have not drilled down on the process itself, and whether it can be sped up with some new techniques, whether things always have to happen sequentially or whether they can happen simultaneously. All of those kind of questions are important for us to look at, so I would look forward to working with you on that.

Mr. REINHOLD. Absolutely.

Senator HASSAN. Thank you. That is all I had, Mr. Chair.

Senator LANKFORD. OK. So I have a couple of quick questions and then we are going to wrap it up here. And I know you are excited about wrapping it all up here, and I appreciate your input on this.

Thirty-one percent of our Federal employees across Federal workforce are eligible to retire, at this point. So what we are trying to figure out, in this panel, is how is the hiring process going to be improved. We have had numerous conversations about how do we pick up a day here, a day here, a day there in the hiring process, knowing that we have the potential of having so many openings coming so quickly soon.

Give me one idea of how to improve the speed of the hiring process. Go for it.

Mr. MAHONEY. I think Senator Daines expressed it correctly, although I would say recruit, recruit, recruit. Managers who are successful in the hiring process are the managers who are always looking for talent, understanding where the talent is, knowing the skills that they are looking for. When they do that and a hiring opening occurs, it always moves a lot quicker when they have a group of candidates that they have asked to apply for a position. It does not take away from the competitive nature of what we do, but it always helps the process move forward.

So I would say, and this is not something that you have to do, as a committee. It is really a mindset that the manager has to have, to always be looking for candidates and talent.

Senator LANKFORD. OK. Ms. Bailey.

Ms. BAILEY. I would recommend that we—I think it would be helpful if we could get out of this laborious rating and ranking process that we are in, because when we get in all of these resumes we have to go through a whole lot of different rules and regulations to try to make sure that we get them in the right order, to put them on all these different certificates that some are for non-competitives, some are for competitives, some are for veterans, some are for Schedule A, and it just gets overwhelming, I think, for everybody.

My recommendation would be that the agencies be given the authority, especially whenever they are at these recruiting events, that they have the authority that when they get the resumes in that they can actually look at these folks, they can qualify them on the spot, they can interview them on the spot, and they can make tentative job offers on the spot. And I think you would cut out at least 6 weeks of all of this back-and-forth that goes on with regard to the hiring process if we could just have the authority to actually interview people and make decisions.

Senator LANKFORD. Why does that not happen now?

Ms. BAILEY. Because of the way Title 5 in the competitive process is actually regulated. Right now we cannot. You might call it direct hire authority, right, but I want to be careful just calling it direct hire authority, because I think that that kind of gets away—if we call it just direct hire authority then you have to meet all these rules with regard to that the folks—there is either a severe shortage or a critical need, or whatever, and you have to prove mountains worth of paperwork just to prove that.

We were so successful at our joint hiring events because, yes, we did have direct hire authority, but we could bring people together, not only our HR specialists and our hiring managers but we brought security in there too. We lost the vast majority of our people whenever they have to go to the Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) system and start filling out the background investigation paperwork. They give up.

And so having somebody there, at that time, to say not only do we like you, we have interviewed you, now we are going to walk you down, we are going to fingerprint you, we are going to help you get into the background investigation system, we are going to help you set up your medicals and your physicals and everything else that you need to do. We cut out, literally, 6 weeks out of that process by doing that.

So that is the one thing that I think would be hugely advantageous to the agencies if we had the ability to do that.

Senator LANKFORD. Mr. Reinhold, why can we not do that?

Mr. REINHOLD. Well, so, I would like to make a half a dozen points but I will just pick one. I think there are huge gains to be made if we invest in tools and technology, and a prime example here is in the area of assessments. If we focus on applying good, robust assessments that hone in on the kinds of skills and competencies we are looking for, and facilitate it, enabled through technology, a lot of this can be done, it can help us cull through large numbers of applicants. And there are cases where we have thousands of people applying, and if you are using a manual process to look at those, or an unsophisticated assessment, it is really hard to make distinctions and really sort out who are the best from the rest.

So I would say assessments enabled by tools and technology.

Senator LANKFORD. OK. What about the direct hire question? What would prohibit—we have had this conversation before between agencies given the ability to be able to hire, and a standard to say, at the end of the year, we are going to ask you, have you met this criteria, for whatever that criteria may be for your hiring, to be able to make sure that you are within range for every set of

criteria that you have, but you have direct hire authority to be able to expedite that process.

Mr. REINHOLD. So I guess I would say direct hire authority is really important flexibility, and I think there is certainly a willingness to engage in dialogue to see how we can take a fresh look at the rules.

When it comes to things like direct hire authority, as you know there are many equities in the Federal hiring process and there are long-standing principles that we honor, things like honoring the service of our military veterans. And when it comes to things like direct hire authority, some of those principles apply to different extents. So we just have to make sure that we are taking all those things into consideration, that we are really taking a holistic look at, not just creating a flexibility at the expense of something else, but making sure that we are looking at it holistically and, responding to many different interests and equities.

Senator LANKFORD. So here is my request. There are things that all of you are doing currently to be able to help in this process, and I appreciate the partnership very much and we are glad to be able to partner with you. Anything that we can do to be able to help.

We need to know what we need to do to help. You see it, and to think we would be able to do this faster, better, have a better employee, have a better process on probation, have a better process on oversight and training. All of those things, you see it but you also see we would do this but here is the part that prevents us from this, here is something else that prevents us from this. We need to know that so we can have that dialogues.

So legislative proposals or questions that you have, if you know of solutions already to say this, we believe, would be a good process except for this, we need to hear it. And so as much as we can get specific ideas and proposals back from you to allow us to be able to have this ongoing debate here, we are glad to have it, and we are glad to be able to sit down and be able to work through the process. We probably cannot get through everything but I bet we can get through several things. But we have to be able to hear it from you.

So I want you to hear from us. We want your legislative proposals and ideas, because you see where the barriers are more than we do, because you have to live with it day to day.

Any other final questions? I know we are running close on time. Any thoughts that you all have that you want to be able to share?

[No response.]

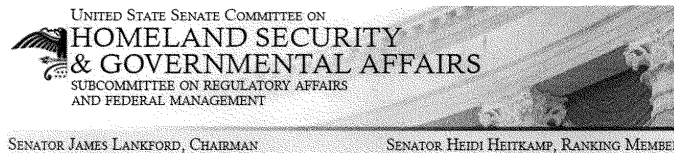
OK. Let me make a quick closing statement. I will let you all get out of here and actually get lunch or something.

I do want to thank the witnesses for their testimony. I do appreciate you coming very much and your preparation for this. The hearing record will remain open for 15 days until the close of business on March 16, for the submission of statements and questions for the record.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:47 a.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X



SENATOR JAMES LANKFORD, CHAIRMAN

SENATOR HEIDI HEITKAMP, RANKING MEMBER

Opening Statement

Hearing before the Regulatory Affairs and

Federal Management Subcommittee

Thursday, March 1st at 10:00 AM

"Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring."

Good morning and welcome to today's Subcommittee hearing titled "Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring." In the 115th Congress, this Subcommittee continues to look to find bipartisan solutions to the broadly recognized challenges which prevent the federal workforce from more effectively serving the American people.

We are here today to address the hiring crisis in federal government—it takes too long to fill vacancies left by a growing number of retiring federal employees.

This strain on agencies hinders their ability to accomplish their core missions and to serve the American people.

In order to begin to solve this problem, we must recognize the role that managers play in the hiring process and identify the ways they can be empowered to cut the time to hire a new employee.

The hallmark of the American civil service has always been that we are able to draw the best and the brightest to serve our country.

As we sit here this morning, I am concerned that this is no longer the case.

The federal government is facing a hiring crisis: In 2013, the government-wide average time to hire a new federal employee was an unsatisfactory 90 days.

However, the number has steadily risen to 105.8 days in 2017.

This is not sustainable.

The American economy continues to improve and jobs are becoming easier and easier to find.

For the American civil service to continue to recruit the best and brightest American talent, a vacancy cannot wait 105.8 days.

The best and the brightest candidates will not wait around for three and a half months and our strategy cannot rely on hoping that they do.

So that's why we're here today—to answer a simple question: where can we cut days?

What do agencies need to do to drive down the time to hire a new employee? What bottlenecks can be removed?

What can we do to ensure that managers have the competence and resources they need to quickly bring the best and the brightest on board?

What can agencies do to prioritize this issue and ensure that they aren't losing great candidates to government inefficiency?

We have here, today, three federal agencies—the Office of Personnel Management, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Commerce—which are on the front line of these issues.

I look forward to discussing with our participants ideas to improve the way agencies manage personnel and thus better enabling them to deliver a more effective federal workforce for the American people.

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



**UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT
STATEMENT OF
MARK REINHOLD
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
EMPLOYEE SERVICES
U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT**

before the

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY AFFAIRS AND FEDERAL MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES SENATE**

on

“Examining Federal Managers’ Role in Hiring”

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March 1, 2018

Chairman Lankford, Ranking Member Heitkamp, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to be here today to discuss the important topics of hiring and supervisory training and development. The day-to-day operational aspects of the hiring process are carried out by Federal agencies, but the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) plays an important role in promulgating regulations and issuing guidance necessary to execute Federal civil service laws. OPM also provides oversight, leadership, tools, and assistance to help agencies in meeting their hiring needs in the most effective, efficient, and timely way possible. Agency heads look to OPM to help with meeting their statutory responsibilities to establish and operate training programs for their employees, including those in supervisory and leadership positions. As the Associate Director for Employee Services at OPM, I appreciate the opportunity to discuss how OPM is working with agencies to help them address challenges and to execute their responsibilities in these important areas.

Hiring is often cited as an area of challenge both by Federal agencies and members of the public seeking Federal employment. OPM recognizes that the laws and regulations governing hiring are complex and in need of reform, and we are proactively working with agencies to simplify hiring practices. This will allow agencies to bring on employees best aligned with the agency mission, allowing the agency to best serve the American public. We have to take a fresh look at how the system can be improved to better meet the needs of a 21st century Government. Federal jobs can sometimes take more than a year to fill, and job announcements are often confusing to applicants, creating impediments that can deter applicants from considering Federal employment. Federal hiring managers are often frustrated by layers of rules, cumbersome and inefficient

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U.S. Office of Personnel Management
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processes, and desire improved support for their hiring responsibilities. We can always do better, and we continue to strive to do better. We aim to meet our goal of improving the hiring process by: helping agencies strengthen Human Resources (HR) support and service to hiring managers; leveraging tools to identify and select the best talent; and addressing hiring barriers through advancing substantive reforms. A few highlights of OPM's recent work just this year to help support improved hiring in agencies include: hosting four multi-day technical training classes for agency HR staff who provide staffing services; issuing a comprehensive Question and Answer guide on how to share certificates between agencies; new streamlined templates agencies can use to request approval to offer higher amounts of recruitment and retention incentives; a "Fast Facts" guide on Federal hiring authorities/flexibilities; and approval of an extensive Direct Hire Authority to help support an agency's critical need to address severe recruiting difficulties. We are focused on both proactively assisting agencies with hiring top talent to serve the American public and improving the applicant experience through better communication. OPM also recognizes the tension applicants face between accepting jobs in the private sector and Federal sector when the hiring process is cumbersome and lengthy. We must continue to work with agencies to bring America's best and brightest into public service with a renewed effort to highlight the importance of serving the American public.

OPM developed a number of legislative proposals that were delivered to Congress last year that we believe will better enable agencies to recruit highly talented individuals to meet their workforce needs. The Administration continues to support these Government-wide policy proposals, and would like to thank Chairman Lankford for sponsoring some of these proposals. OPM also appreciates Chairman Lankford, Ranking Member Heitkamp, and the full Committee's work in advancing the proposals that Chairman Lankford sponsored. We look forward to continuing our work with the Committee to ensure their enactment.

In 2010, OPM and the 24 Chief Financial Officers Act agencies initiated a concerted effort to improve the Federal hiring process. Today we are reinforcing our efforts with our full acknowledgement of the importance this has to our Federal Government. The initiative was prominently focused on improving agency execution of the hiring process, with particular emphasis on shortening the time required to hire and reducing the burden on applicants. OPM led efforts to map the hiring process and developed an end-to-end 80-day hiring model, and worked with agencies to begin measuring and collecting time-to-hire data to help track agency progress. The average time-to-hire for FY 2017 is just under 106 days, which includes all hires where a job announcement was posted on USAJOBS. This is an improvement from the 122-day baseline established in 2009, but disappointing considering the 87-day average that agencies achieved overall in FY 2012. The average time-to-hire has increased each year since 2012. We are committed to aiding agencies in surpassing their previous reductions and realizing a system of hiring that meets the needs of the Federal Government.

The 80-day end-to-end hiring model identifies the key components of the hiring process from pre-planning through onboarding, along with aggressive target timeframes for accomplishing each step – in accordance with the Merit System principles our Government has long depended on for the civil service. Many of the core elements and steps in the Federal hiring process are not

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unlike the hiring process in other sectors and include: identifying job duties and qualifications sought; recruiting and advertising the job opening to solicit applications; narrowing the pool of finalists through interviews or other assessments; making a job offer; and, finally, onboarding the employee as the culmination of the process. Additional elements of the Federal hiring process that differ from common practice in other sectors include: a background investigation process; adherence to veterans preference in accordance with longstanding statutory requirements; prescriptive selection rules designed to promote hiring based on merit and help protect against political influence, nepotism, or public perceptions of impropriety; and requirements for public notice of Federal job openings to further the objective of a fair and open process in which members of the public who are interested in such opportunities can find out about and apply for openings

More specifically, the 80-day end-to-end hiring model includes planning and administrative elements that are not visible to applicants, such as time for the hiring manager to review the hiring need against staffing and budget plans and to initiate the action to fill the job; and time for HR in collaboration with the hiring manager to review the job description, confirm the qualification requirements and assessment/evaluation strategy, and create and post a job opportunity announcement (JOA). Once the JOA has been posted, HR receives applications, evaluates candidates to identify those whose qualifications best match the job being filled, issues a referral list of top candidates, and notifies candidates on the disposition of their application. Next, hiring managers review applications, schedule and conduct interviews, check references, and notify HR of their selection. At this point, HR extends a tentative job offer and the candidate indicates acceptance. Fingerprinting is then completed and the candidate's background investigation is initiated. As for the last steps, a final offer is made, which the candidate decides to accept or not, and the candidate reports to duty following a traditional two week notice. Under this model, about 30 days of the 80-day model are on the candidate's radar screen beginning with the close of the JOA until a selection is made.

We recognize that time-to-hire is not a perfect metric for success. We must also look at the quality of the hire, and we must make sure that we are hiring people with skill sets that are fully aligned with agencies' current and projected mission needs. As agencies began to demonstrate that reducing time-to-hire was achievable, the hiring improvement initiative was expanded to assure attention not only to the speed of hiring, but also the quality of the hire. Informed by various data sources such as management satisfaction with the quality of referred job candidates, OPM expanded efforts to help drive broader improvements to the quality of hiring. We continue to focus on these efforts, and are putting tools in place to enable HR professionals and managers to achieve these multi-dimensional goals, and further the Administration's goal of reducing burdens in the hiring process. Proactive measures include investing in better tools and technology to support hiring, such as: more robust applicant assessment tools; development of a technology based "wizard" to offer managers direct input into hiring activities; building the capacity of the HR workforce through training and institutionalizing HR capabilities across Government; and empowering managers to actively participate in the hiring process.

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As part of OPM's goal to support improvements in agency hiring programs, OPM has been leading efforts to help grow the capability of the Federal HR workforce. This year, OPM launched the Federal Human Resources Institute. The Institute will soon offer more robust training than was previously available and develop curricula that will provide a standard and comprehensive framework for how HR professionals are trained to deliver important HR services such as staffing, position classification, employee performance management and accountability, and other functional areas. A 22-course staffing specialist curricula is being rolled out and will be fully available by the end of FY 2018, with the launch of additional curricula for other specialty areas planned for 2019. OPM is also launching a new interagency developmental program through which OPM will host HR professionals for 9 to 12 months in various OPM policy offices. The goal of the program will be to enable HR professionals to develop highly needed expertise in important policy areas, broaden organizational experience, build Government-wide networks to improve participants' abilities to assume Human Capital leadership roles, and develop critical strategic consultative skills.

OPM is also looking at ways to provide tools to agencies that can help them improve the way they assess hundreds of thousands of applications for Federal jobs. USA HireSM is a professionally-designed library of more than 900 off-the-shelf assessment solutions created to target specific competencies, occupations, and/or job families. These assessments cover more than 75 occupational series. The assessments' use of cutting-edge techniques like online simulations and avatar-based assessment items are realistic and engaging to job applicants. In addition to providing refined competency measurements to produce higher quality candidates, the assessments can help reduce time-to-hire because they are scored automatically and reduce the burden involved in administering more traditional assessments, particularly in cases where large numbers of applicants must be evaluated. Our scoring system efficiently screens out unqualified applicants at the outset, and then reduces the applicant pool to the most qualified job candidates in a particularly effective and efficient way. Reactions from applicants who have used USA HireSM have been overwhelmingly favorable, with 97 percent of applicants reporting the process is user-friendly and over 90 percent reporting satisfaction with the assessment process.

Another effort to support better hiring was OPM's Hiring Excellence Campaign (HEC), an evidence-based initiative designed to focus on proven practices and approaches that support improved hiring outcomes. The HEC honed in on key components of the hiring process and enablers of quality hiring, including the need for collaboration between hiring managers and HR professionals to maximize the full range of recruitment and hiring tools to attract and hire top talent. Through the HEC, the three main successes were – (1) human resources officers and managers have seen the importance of collaborating early and often in the hiring process; (2) improvements have been made to workforce planning for strategic recruits; and (3) agencies are now reporting that they are aware of better options for assessments in order to attract the best talent. OPM will continue to work with agencies to leverage this information and use it to implement the joint goals of hiring qualified candidates while reducing overall time to hire.

OPM is also working to educate agencies on the full range of hiring authorities currently available to support their hiring needs. As members of this Subcommittee are aware, there is a

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multitude of hiring authorities available, some of which are only available to certain agencies, not well-understood, or not leveraged due to individual agency cultures or preference. This can be confusing for both human resources and hiring managers on the front lines.

These authorities include Excepted Service hiring authorities used to provide alternatives when regular competitive hiring procedures are impractical (for example, an emergency short-term hiring need) or to address special needs (for example, special appointments for veterans, people with severe disabilities, or groups such as students and recent graduates who may be disadvantaged in a competitive hiring process that favors applicants with job experience).

Direct Hire Authority is another type of appointing authority OPM can provide to Federal agencies for filling competitive service vacancies when either a severe shortage of candidates or other critical hiring need exists. Because Direct Hire Authority eliminates obligations that would otherwise apply in a normal competitive hiring process (such as the requirement to provide veterans preference, or to rate and rank all candidates based on their qualifications and select the “best qualified”), supporting evidence is needed to demonstrate that such an exception is warranted and meets statutory and regulatory criteria. While Direct Hire Authority still requires public notice of job openings and most other elements/activities laid out in the 80-day end-to-end hiring model, it may reduce time-to-hire because agencies are not required to assess each candidate’s relative degree of the requisite qualifications to determine the best qualified and may essentially hire anyone who meets the needs of the agency and the minimum qualifications. Other special hiring authorities are provided in statute, such as provisions for non-competitive appointment of military spouses, former Peace Corps personnel, and certain National Guard Technicians, to name a few. These authorities may help reduce time-to-hire because job openings do not need to meet regular public notice requirements, which often results in smaller and limited applicant pools, and consequently requires less time to review applications.

OPM is also continuing to work to improve the applicant experience. This includes regular improvements to USAJOBS which are guided by customer feedback. While USAJOBS does not fall under my immediate jurisdiction, I am pleased to highlight a few efforts OPM has made in this area. More than 14,000 Federal job opportunities are available every day on USAJOBS, and each year, 1 billion job searches are conducted on the website and 22 million applications are started. OPM has invested in improving the design, features, and tools to make USAJOBS more user-friendly and to evolve the site from a job board to a full-featured career site. This has included working with stakeholders across the Federal Government, convening work groups, and receiving user feedback through interviews and focus groups. This feedback has resulted in the implementation of user-friendly updates including a mobile-friendly website; a revised application process; improved search and tools; a new help center; a “hiring paths” feature that allows candidates to explore a variety of hiring paths that may be applicable to individuals with certain backgrounds or qualifications such as students, people with disabilities, or those who have never worked in the Federal Government; and an urgent hiring needs page that showcases high demand occupations such as cybersecurity and engineering. Expanded tools, like résumé mining, allow applicants to opt in to have their résumé included in a searchable database where hiring managers can search for candidates with specific skills, educational credentials, or

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certifications, and invite them to apply for openings. Currently more than 1.5 million applicants have opted in to include their résumé in the résumé mining database.

In addition to OPM's work to help improve agencies' ability to execute the hiring process in a timely and efficient way, OPM is also working to provide guidance, tools, and leadership that supports agency heads in meeting their responsibilities to establish and operate training programs for their employees in supervisory and leadership positions. Managers and supervisors in the Federal Government face a great many responsibilities, and agencies benefit from preparing these individuals with the tools necessary to effectively manage and lead employees to carry out each agency's mission. While OPM does, via regulation, require agencies to provide for the development of managers, supervisors, and executives, as well as those who may be identified in agency succession plans as potential candidates for these positions, more attention can be given to this need. Currently, agencies are required to provide training for new supervisors on a specific set of topics including performance management, mentoring, improving performance and productivity, and conducting performance appraisals and dealing with unacceptable performance, with refresher training every three years. Agencies have discretion in how they implement their training, and whether they provide training for other topics. It is important for each agency to conduct a needs assessment to determine what their workforce will benefit from and tailor programs to meet those needs. However, these minimum training requirements, while helpful, do not address the full spectrum of skills and competencies a supervisor needs to be effective.

In order to provide consistency and a standard approach across the Federal Government, OPM has established a Government-wide framework and common standards for supervisory, managerial, and executive development – including required competencies and developmental/learning objectives. OPM's *Federal Supervisory and Managerial Framework* helps provide direction covering both mandatory training and recommended training on leadership competencies and human resources technical knowledge (such as recruitment and selection, workforce planning, and interview skills) important for supervisory and managerial success. The Framework is organized around various stages of the supervisory/managerial progression – from aspiring leader to senior manager – and includes OPM-developed definitions for competencies that should be targeted for development, learning objectives for each competency at each stage of development, suggested learning and developmental activities, and evaluation materials to assist agencies in evaluating the effectiveness of their supervisory and managerial development programs. Through better supervisor training, managers will be better able to assess how their staff contribute to the broader mission and will be better informed and prepared to recruit and retain high-performing employees with critical skill sets.

Hiring the best available talent must be a management priority, administered through a modern system that enables trained and engaged managers to fill jobs with top candidates who meet the current needs of agencies and will excel in their public service to our Nation. With your support, we can get there. Congress can play an important role in these investments, and OPM looks forward to working with you on these efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I welcome any questions you may have.



STATEMENT OF

ANGELA BAILEY

Chief Human Capital Officer
U.S. Department of Homeland Security

FOR A HEARING ON

“Examining Federal Managers’ Role in Hiring”

BEFORE THE

United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs,
Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management

March 1, 2018

Introduction

Chairman Lankford, Ranking Member Heitkamp, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to address our efforts at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS or the Department) to improve time-to-hire and supervisor training.

I am Angela Bailey, the Department's Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO). I joined DHS in January of 2016 as a career federal executive with more than 35 years of service, 30 of those in human resources.

DHS is a large, complex organization. Each of our Components has its own mission, its own history, and its own culture. However, we all come together with one overarching vision: "With honor and integrity, we will safeguard the American people, our homeland, and our values."

Our employees, many of whom are on the front lines, conduct difficult work under challenging circumstances. Every day, they interact with the American public and people from around the world to prevent terrorism and enhance security, secure and manage our borders, enforce and administer our immigration laws, safeguard and secure cyberspace and travel, provide relief during disasters, and train those who protect the homeland. In short, our employees do important work and are our greatest strength.

One of my top priorities is to streamline current cumbersome and lengthy hiring processes so that the dedicated men and women of DHS aren't needlessly performing multiple jobs for long periods of time. To guarantee we have the workforce necessary to execute our mission, it is critically important that we efficiently fill our vacant positions by reducing our time-to-hire – the time between validating a need for a job and an employee's first day of work.

Reducing time-to-hire is increasingly more important given that one of the first goals of the new Administration was for the Department to hire as many as 10,000 additional Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Officers, 5,000 additional Border Patrol Agents, and commensurate mission support staff in support of the Presidential Executive Orders.

In 2014, the average time-to-hire across the Department was 163 days, which was 69 days higher than the government-wide average. Many of our mission critical positions, such as Border Patrol Agents in Customs and Border Protection (CBP); Special Agents and Uniformed Division in the U.S. Secret Service (USSS), and Cybersecurity professionals Department-wide experienced a 300-400 day time-to-hire. While the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) identified 14 steps in the hiring process and put an 80-day time-to-hire goal in place, we identified a minimum of 18 distinct steps in many of our mission critical occupations, including medical examinations, drug testing, polygraphs, physical fitness tests, and extensive background investigations. Rather than accept the process is hard and cumbersome, in 2015, we embarked on a comprehensive review of existing processes to find ways to reduce time-to-hire, cost-to-hire, and improve the applicant experience.

During our review, we discovered a number of ways to streamline our processes, and shave off 60 days reducing our average time-to-hire across the Department to 103 days (as of first quarter 2018) compared to the most recent government-wide average of 105 days. As a result of these

initiatives, mission critical occupations saw modest improvements. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and ICE saw the most gains through innovative approaches to hiring—both are below the Office of Personnel Management goal of 80-days to fill their positions. Based on our review, here are a few examples of successful practices we implemented to reduce time-to-hire:

Recruitment

Joint Recruiting and Special Hiring Events – The Department held successful joint cybersecurity, veterans, intern, and recent graduate events that brought together multiple Components to a single location enabling onsite interviews and on-the-spot tentative job offers the day of the event. As a direct result of these events, the Department was able to hire nearly 700 new employees and reduce time-to-hire for these new employees by close to six weeks. The Department plans to hold a Women in Law Enforcement event in June 2018 in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas and a cybersecurity event later this year in Washington, D.C., drawing on the successes of our earlier events.

Résumé Mining – The Department has coupled résumé mining with joint hiring events. Résumé mining allows Hiring Managers to identify high-potential applicants, in particular veterans, and actively engage candidates who we believe will contribute positively to the mission. Components like ICE, USSS, and CBP have embraced this initiative and plan to expand the concept to commercial job boards.

Enhanced Transitioning Military and Reserve Component Recruiting – In a focused effort to target critical Law Enforcement occupations, the Department developed Memorandums of Understanding with the Department of Defense Military Transition Assistance Program and the Office of the Chief Army Reserve. Both of these agreements provide direct access to military installations that tap a pipeline for recruiting and hiring Reserve Component personnel and transitioning military service members. Our efforts seek to increase the number of military and veteran applicants, and assist with filling mission critical occupation positions. CBP and ICE use these agreements to their full advantage, cutting time to hire for transitioning military members with current physicals, medicals, and TS/SCI clearances, by eliminating these steps in the process.

Enhanced Recruitment Data Analytics – DHS uses all available data to assess the return on investment for our hundreds of recruiting and outreach events. We can slice the data numerous ways to determine if we are focused on the right geographic/demographic areas, and then target our recruitment toward specific areas where we have the highest potential of applicants that can pass our numerous tests and examinations.

Hiring

Hiring Hubs – The Department developed and piloted a hiring hub initiative as part of an end-to-end reengineering of frontline hiring processes. The program reduced time-to-hire for qualified applicants, allowing for identification and removal of unqualified applicants more quickly. Hiring hubs bundle multiple hiring steps that normally require several months to complete, condensing the process into just a few days. Streamlining processes also increased the applicant to entry-on-duty rate (time-to-hire), reducing the number of qualified candidates who drop out due to process fatigue or acceptance of more timely job offers elsewhere.

Ready Pool – Components can post open continuous announcements, collect résumés throughout the year, and perform several pre-employment screening steps before placing candidates into a “ready pool,” from which applicants are drawn as a hiring need is validated. Criminal investigators within ICE, for example, saw the most improvement, dropping from a 334-day average time-to-hire in 2016 to 40 days in 2017. TSA Transportation Security Officers led the way with the “ready pool” concept, and have consistently seen time-to-hire within the 40 day range.

USA Hire Applicant Assessment Tools – The Department implemented USA Hire applicant assessment tools and educated hiring managers on the availability and value of using this method versus traditional applicant scoring methods to improve candidate quality, thereby ensuring those who are hired are a good “fit,” helping to reduce our attrition in key occupations.

Human Capital Operational Plan and HRstat – DHS has a very robust Human Resources planning process that begins with a Human Capital Operational Plan developed by human capital leaders across the Department. This plan includes initiatives to monitor the process monthly through our HRstat program. This process ensures we hold ourselves accountable for delivering innovative approaches to human capital initiatives across the Department. We consistently achieve over 80% of all initiatives each year, and OPM indicated we have a model HRstat program.

Hiring Innovation and Transformation Team (HITT) – DHS implemented a Department-wide team to examine services offered by our two talent acquisition systems and work with our providers (currently OPM and Monster) to innovate and deliver services in a consistent, cost effective manner across the Department. Working with both vendors resulted in a savings of over \$400,000. Additionally, we implemented several efficiencies, such as onboarding features, with the goal of reducing time-to-hire by up to 10 days while improving the applicant’s experience in the process.

The HITT is also undertaking a Hiring Revamp initiative that will study all facets of the hiring process, develop improvement strategies and policies, and implement processes to streamline the hiring process to improve the quality of candidates, increase fill rates, and achieve reductions in time-to-hire. The study will evaluate the feasibility of creating joint hiring hubs for certain mission critical positions that have similar hiring steps, to create a shared applicant ready pool for Components to draw from once the hiring need has been validated. Another area being looked at is expanding the use of open continuous announcements for mission support positions to decrease the need for job re-advertisements and redoing the pre-announcement hiring steps, which can add to the overall time-to-hire.

Background Investigations and Polygraphs

Reciprocity – DHS promotes the use of reciprocity by recognizing security clearances from other government agencies, including within the Department itself. OCHCO and the Office of the Chief Security Officer (OCSO) issued a joint policy memorandum to the Personnel Security and Human Resources Communities to reiterate federal reciprocity requirements and establish standard procedures across the Department. On average, in fiscal year (FY) 2018, we approved between 75-80 percent of the applicable cases considered under reciprocal guidelines and processes. Those not approved are due to factors such as the investigation being out-of-scope, an

exception to the standards is present, or the individual has not held a clearance or the required level of access. Reciprocity cases for federal employees average about 10 days, which is on par with other government intelligence agencies.

Withdrawing Offers – The Department also issued guidance regarding when and how an offer of employment may be withdrawn if the applicant is deemed highly unlikely to be able to finalize his/her background investigation. By implementing this guidance, the Department no longer has to wait in excess of 400-500 days to find out if an applicant can pass a background investigation and can instead, withdraw the offer and move to the next candidate.

Connecting Hiring and Security Systems – The Department has an initiative underway to build a bridge or connection between our hiring and security systems. This new connectivity will eliminate manual entry saving an average of five days in the hiring process. We anticipate having this connection available across the Department by summer 2018.

Polygraphs – CBP collaborated with the National Center for Credibility Assessment to develop the Test for Espionage and Sabotage–Corruption, an alternative to the Law Enforcement Pre-employment Examination Test (LEPET) in use since the inception of our polygraph testing. The new test retains all critical test topics contained in the LEPET, but in a more streamlined format that maintains high integrity standards. The program has been administered over 6,300 times and is currently in use in over 90% of polygraph examinations. Preliminary analysis indicates an improved pass rate, lower average exam duration, and fewer applicants requiring a retest, which will further reduce time-to-hire.

In addition to the above, the Department is undertaking numerous Human Resources Information Technology (HRIT) initiatives. The following is a brief overview of the comprehensive improvement strategy we are implementing over the next 3-5 years.

Human Resources Information Technology (HRIT)

Position Classification and Position Management – DHS continues to develop a process through which positions are assigned to our pay system, series, title, and grade or band, based on consistent application of position classification standards or job grading standards. Position management is carefully designed to meet our structure and blend employee skills and assignments with strategic mission and objectives of the organization. We intend to accomplish this by automating data interchanges to capture vacant positions and additional position management data fields in the Human Capital Enterprise Information Environment by spring 2018 and develop and incorporate a manpower model registry into position documentation by summer 2019.

Talent Acquisition Management – The Department continues to align the workforce plan to business unit strategies and resource needs, by identifying the job and assessments, undertaking position designations, recruiting and announcing the job, accepting and reviewing applications, assessing applicants, certifying eligible candidates, making selections, and auditing the hiring action/record keeping. We intend to accomplish this by establishing single contract vehicles for our talent acquisition management systems and identifying enhancements for both vendors to optimize our use of these solutions by spring 2018.

Applicant Screening, Reciprocity, and Investigation Request – The Department focused on screening applicants, reciprocity, and investigation requests, including: screening applicants for potential issues of suitability and validating the need for an investigation or adjudication in light of law or policy that background investigations and adjudications shall be mutually and reciprocally accepted by agencies. If an agency determines an investigation must be conducted, it is initiated in the Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) system and forwarded to the National Background Investigations Bureau (NBIB) for investigation. OCHCO will automate the information exchange between HR systems and OCSO's Integrated Security Management System, expected by summer 2018, to reduce our time-to-hire and increase data integrity. We will also leverage the e-Adjudication application to electronically evaluate clean background investigations at the Investigative Tiers 1-3 (supporting moderate public trust and Secret level positions), which will reduce adjudicative timelines. We will pilot this effort with the U.S. Coast Guard in the near future. Additionally, a new e-Application for use government-wide will replace the e-QIP system in late 2018 or early 2019, to further improve the timeliness of completing background investigations.

New Hire In-Processing and Onboarding – The Department is implementing a new hire in-processing program that includes hiring a candidate, and managing and automating in-processing forms. Onboarding in this manner allows us to integrate new employees and consistently equip them to become successful and productive. Automated information exchange between HR systems and Access Lifecycle Management for onboarding to improve new employee readiness is scheduled to be online by the summer of 2018.

Workforce and Performance Analytics – We recognize the value of Workforce and Performance Analytics, in that they provide evidence-based metrics allowing leadership to enhance recruitment, staffing, training and development, facilitating compensation and benefits modeling. Additionally, the program includes applications for statistical models on such human resources issues like retention rates, time to on-board, retirement trends, and employee engagement. We continue to analyze alternatives for database technology, with full implementation slated for 2022.

Workforce Performance Reporting – We continue to make significant progress reporting organizational composition, resource utilization, and achievements data to leadership to inform overall agency strategic goal creation and drive positive change. By summer 2018, we will have automated time-to-hire reports, eliminating data calls and providing timely data to support decisions about the hiring process.

Training and Education

Human Resources and Hiring Manager Training – Hiring managers play a vital role, as they are responsible for many steps in the hiring process that directly impacts time-to-hire. DHS has bolstered education of hiring managers and human resources staff on a full range of hiring flexibilities. For example, the Department offers formal training through its HR Essentials course that covers Classification, Staffing, and Employee and Labor Relations responsibilities.

Web-based training for hiring managers is available on USA Staffing to educate hiring managers on effective use and navigation of automated hiring systems needed to effectively recruit and hire. In accordance with the Federal Supervisor Training Act of 2016, this training is reinforced by the requirement for every supervisor to have an Individual Development Plan (IDP) or

Executive Development Plan (EDP) that incorporates management training practices. Furthermore, we are building an HR Academy to provide our Human Resource professionals with both formal and informal training, rotational and internship opportunities. The first course in data analytics rolled out in the fall of 2017. We anticipate delivering career path guides by the summer 2018.

Listening Tours – DHS leadership embarked on several listening tours across the Department designed to understand the issues and concerns of our employees and hiring managers. We do so by going to the front lines and visiting with people who successfully carry out our mission every day. These listening tours have resulted in the stand up of a Joint Chief Financial Officer/Human Capital Leadership Council that meets regularly to discuss our recruiting and hiring needs, including budgets established to support incentive programs, hiring goals, and reduce attrition. It also resulted in the Department standing up an Employee and Family Readiness program designed to help employees who are on the front line, often away from their families for long periods of time, successfully deal with issues that arise for both themselves and their families. The recent addition of the Workforce Health and Safety Division to OCHCO has enabled us to expand and enhance the Employee and Family Readiness program creating synergies that previously did not exist.

Deep Dives – Building on outcomes from the Listening Tours, we execute Deep Dive sessions with Component human capital leadership and mission operators to address specific trends or issues impacting mission critical occupations. We harness the power of data analytics focused on current recruitment, hiring, and retention statistics. This data serves as the basis for conducting in-depth discussions regarding underlying issues in order to expand solutions across the Department.

Finally, none of this would be possible without leadership engagement. DHS has robust leadership councils that hold themselves accountable for achieving overall human capital success. For example, the Under Secretary for Management, Chief Human Capital Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Components hold monthly reviews of mission critical occupation fill rates, attrition, and overall HR management, to ensure timely senior leadership attention to these critical issues.

Human Capital Leadership Council (HCLC) – The HCLC is comprised of Department-wide HR leaders and their deputies. This Council is responsible for setting the human capital strategic direction, included in our operational plans. Successful practices are shared during these council meetings by the Components, as well as guests from OPM, other agencies, and the private sector. This Council is chaired by the Chief Human Capital Officer.

Human Resources Information Technology Executive Steering Committee – This committee is co-chaired by the Chief Human Capital Officer and the Chief Information Officer and has full responsibility for strategic direction and implementation of all associated HR services, in particular Information Technology. This council is made up of voting members from the Components, the Chief Security Officer, Chief Procurement Officer, and Chief Financial Officer.

Joint Chief Financial Officer/Human Capital Leadership Council—this Department-wide council is co-chaired by the Chief Financial Officer and the Chief Human Capital Officer. Discussions around how best to use our scarce resources to effectively implement our human capital needs are typical topics of interest.

Conclusion

Despite our efforts, work clearly remains. We recognize some of the process is out of our control – lengthy background investigations, medical examinations, and physical fitness testing all take time and can leave applicants frustrated. These challenges also present opportunities to turn our attention to applicants. We are in the middle of implementing an Applicant Care program within CBP. The intent is to provide applicants access to a recruiter that serves as a resource for questions regarding job responsibilities, a career with the Department, and most importantly addresses questions regarding the hiring process. We are confident this high touch approach will prove successful and we are already discussing ways to roll this out Department-wide.

As mentioned above—our folks have tough jobs. Our goal within the Department, especially human resources, is to do everything we can think of to lessen the burden on our employees, to include getting our positions filled with the right people at the right time. We have no intention of slowing down or stopping our efforts. We will continue to identify every efficiency possible and implement those smartly across the Department.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. The Department would not be successful without your support and the support of our brave men and women that sacrifice each day to make our country safe. I look forward to your questions.

STATEMENT OF
Kevin E. Mahoney
Director of Human Resources and
Chief Human Capital Officer
U.S. Department of Commerce

before the

The United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
Regulatory Affairs and Federal Management Subcommittee

March 1, 2018

Good morning. I would like to thank the Chairman and the Ranking Member for inviting the Department of Commerce to share its views on the very important topic of management involvement in hiring and workforce planning. I would also like to thank my colleagues from the Office of Personnel Management and the Department of Homeland Security for their dedication to advancing effective human resource management in the Federal government.

The Department of Commerce (DOC) has one overarching purpose: Helping the American Economy Grow! The DOC is a diverse agency comprised of 12 Bureaus employing nearly 47,000 employees domestically and internationally.

DOC is placing an increased emphasis on the commercial opportunities of space exploration and aquaculture. Our scientists are conducting foundational research in areas ranging from artificial intelligence to quantum computing. Our patent professionals are working to improve the protection of intellectual property. DOC is enforcing our trade laws to ensure trade is free, fair and reciprocal. DOC is working to conduct the most accurate, secure and technologically advanced decennial census. Finally, DOC teams are working to keep Americans safe by predicting extreme weather events earlier and deploying a nationwide broadband network that allows better coordination among first responders.

With that as a backdrop, I would like to discuss three areas where the DOC is working hard to improve: time-to-hire; maximizing employee performance and workforce planning.

Time-to-Hire:

For FY 17, the DOC time-to hire was 105 days. DOC follows OPM's 80 day hiring model, which is implemented through an 11-step process during which performance is tracked.¹ DOC has been

¹ While OPM has identified 14 individual steps to the 80-day model, see, OPM, *The End-to-End Hiring Initiative*, at 27, online at <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/human-capital-management/talent-management/end-to-end-hiring-initiative.pdf>. OPM also acknowledges that agencies "may have more, fewer, or a different order of steps." <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/human-capital-management/hiring-reform/hiring-process-analysis-tool/>. The DOC's 11-steps incorporate all of the elements of OPM's 80-day model.

a participant in OPM's HR Stat review from its inception and we report those results quarterly with the Principal Human Resources Directors and other senior management.

There are three steps in the 80 day hiring model where DOC can improve: 1) the rating and ranking of applications. This is the step where the pool of applicants is narrowed down to the best qualified applicants to be referred to the hiring manager. It's also the step where applicants are informed of the Department's continued interest; 2) the management review and interview of applicants and the job offer. In this step the hiring manager makes the decision on which candidate to hire and works with the staffing specialist to extend a tentative offer. References are checked and compensation is decided at this point; 3) the security clearance process. The background investigation is the most sensitive part of the hiring process, because it will determine whether the applicant is suitable for federal service. All three of these areas require the applicant, the manager and the hiring specialist to work together in a timely fashion to complete and submit the required documents. Delays in any of these three steps can result in losing qualified candidates, especially those who are in mission critical occupations (MCOs) which can directly impact mission accomplishment.

DOC constantly monitors all of the 11 steps in the 80 day hiring model, but pays particular attention to the three mentioned above. Managers are required to check in regularly as to their progress and in some cases ask for permission to extend a deadline. When a problem is identified, it is escalated through the appropriate management channels.

There are approximately 120 different hiring flexibilities, some of which apply to specific job series. DOC tailors its use of these flexibilities to the type of position the manager is trying to hire. In some cases, we'll use 'superior qualifications' to match compensation; we may increase leave if an applicant's private sector experience qualifies for more than 4 hours per pay period, etc.

Training for managers and supervisors for hiring varies by Bureau. Each Bureau annually conducts mandatory training in: 1) Uniformed Services Employment and Recemployment Rights Act (USERRA); 2) Veteran's Employment Training and 3) A Roadmap to Success: Hiring, Retaining, and Including People with Disabilities. Beyond that, Bureaus offer a variety of courses in interviewing, job analysis, special hiring authorities and merit system principles, just to name a few. DOC's goal is to standardize training so that a consistent message is being given to managers and supervisors on the hiring process.

Training is conducted through several channels which include: computer based training, instructor led training, subject matter expert panels and informal events like brown bag lunches.

Enterprise Services:

One important new tool for increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of human resource management at DOC is our Enterprise Services office. Our goal is to standardize and streamline transactional tasks currently performed in each Bureau through the adoption of Department-wide shared services.

Early on, DOC made the decision to seek out a third-party provider, and 18 months ago Enterprise Services awarded a contract to outsource our transactional work. Initially, we transferred our strategic sourcing program (large purchase items, such as, laptops, monitors, phones, etc.) to Enterprise Services. An Enterprise Services vendor subsequently took over responsibility for personnel action requests (PARs) such as promotions, reassignments, and awards. With respect to the transactional work for personnel actions, there has been a learning curve – as there is for most new enterprises – but we have been working closely with the vendor to improve the process and that collaboration has recently begun to show results. The next scheduled transition is for compensation and benefits in the spring of this year, followed by recruiting and hiring actions.

Maximizing Employee Performance:

Last April, OMB released M-17-22, which requires agencies to develop a plan to maximize employee performance and design a workforce to meet the needs of today and the future. DOC is developing a plan, that when completed, will ensure:

- Updated policies are in place to address poor performance
- Performance standards are comprehensive and ensure alignment between employee qualifications and position duties and responsibilities
- Performance management training exists to maintain high standards
- Management and supervisory workforces are equipped and supported to execute performance management responsibilities.

The first step DOC took was to conduct an inventory across all 12 Bureaus on topics related to performance management. The result of this inventory indicated that the Department is fully engaged in managing employee performance. DOC does this through its Administrative Orders, HR policies and bulletins, performance management systems for GS, SES, SISL/ST and the Alternative Personnel systems. Many Bureaus have developed toolkits to assist managers, supervisors and employees and the DOC issues mid-year and end-of-year guidance. DOC also surveyed nearly 7000 managers and supervisors on performance management. With a 34% response rate, we found: an understanding of the performance management process; managers and supervisors know the difference between performance and conduct issues; understand the criteria for the performance improvement process and understand the rules around the probationary process. DOC also found that managers and supervisors felt the process for implementing a PIP or a conduct based action took too much of their time. They also requested more training on motivating staff through the performance management process, and the development of effective performance plans/reviews.

The survey results will guide DOC in developing a new training program for performance management.

Workforce Management:

DOC is committed to ensuring we have a long-term plan for the workforce of the 21st Century. Over the next ten years, the government will transition fully from the ‘baby boom’ generation of

civil servants to the 'millennial' generation. To address this change, DOC is working with its Bureaus in the five key areas outlined in OMB's M-17-22: governance – the approval mechanism for the DOC workforce planning model and change management methodology; human capital management – the collection and analysis of workforce data as it applies to mission critical occupations and vacant positions; policy creation – policy review and recommendations to the governance body; workforce planning and budget integration – alignment with the FY 18 and 19 budget submission for DOC.

Our goal is to focus on what people, technology and acquisitions the Department needs to accomplish its various missions and identify where the gaps are and develop a strategy to close them. This is particularly important where there is a gap in competencies needed to perform work and our current workforce. Our first step is to identify emerging skillsets and competencies and then conduct a gap analysis. This analysis will lead to a model for workforce planning that DOC can use agency-wide.

Again, thank you for inviting Commerce to be part of this important discussion and I look forward to your questions.

RAFM 3/1/18 Hearing: Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
DHS Insert for the Record

Presidential Executive Orders require the Department to take all appropriate action to hire an additional 10,000 ICE Agents and 5,000 Border Patrol Officers, to the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of appropriations. Our internal workforce model is not intended to justify the Administration's requirement but rather provides a road map to achieve these hiring goals over a five- to seven-year period. This plan will change[s] over time, adapting to availability of funds and actual hiring outcomes.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
“Examining Federal Managers’ Role in Hiring”
From Senator Kamala Harris
For Mr. Mark Reinhold

1. During the RAHM hearing on March 1, 2018, you committed to provide my office a timeline for the completion of “a whole suite of data analytics tools that are being created within USAJOBS to enable better strategic recruitment.”

a. Would you please provide that timeline?

USAJOBS is currently in the process of revamping its data warehouse. Once completed, we will build capabilities in the USAJOBS Agency Talent Portal that will assist hiring managers, human resource (HR) specialists and recruiters to proactively build talent pipelines and measure their effectiveness. These capabilities will include tools such as a Job Opportunity Announcement analytics dashboard that can help measure the effectiveness of recruitment efforts, including insights such as the number of visitors over the open period, a map view of their locations, how the visitor learned about the job opening (e.g., through external career sites, LinkedIn, etc.), and other useful data points. This functionality is scheduled to be available by the end of this calendar year. USAJOBS is also developing additional capabilities to support more effective use of our resume mining functionality. Through resume mining, agencies can currently mine approximately 1.5 million resumes and build campaigns to recruit those whose qualifications appear to be a good match to the job being filled, as part of the overall recruiting plan, and in accordance with merit system principles. The product was moved out of the pilot stage at the end of fiscal year (FY)17, so efforts to create greater awareness about the product and how to use it within the context of a compliant recruitment and selection process are underway this fiscal year. In addition, USAJOBS continues to build additional features to support the sourcing, relationship management and data analytics capabilities to enrich the resume mining program.

b. Further, would you also provide details on OPM’s plan regarding its open data initiative?

USAJOBS currently provides an open data application programming interface for job announcements and historical job announcements (<https://developer.usajobs.gov/API-Reference>). The program intends to conduct Government-wide longitudinal studies that will publish results beginning in FY19. The intent is to answer agency and public research questions based upon the data collected through the USAJOBS experience. USAJOBS can provide aggregate data that will describe who is looking for Federal jobs, where they are coming from, where they are interested in working, what skills they bring, how do we source them (social media, recruitment events, academia, etc.), and other recruitment-related questions about the talent pool and their interests.

2. The President’s FY19 budget request targets the federal workforce, instituting a pay freeze and cutting a wide variety of benefits. This, combined with years of hiring freezes, pay

freezes and cuts, furloughs, sequesters, and recent roll back on workers' collective bargaining rights have contributed to poor working conditions and morale. Federal hiring managers are a crucial part of hiring a talented federal workforce, but so is creating a working environment with pay, benefits, and conditions that can attract qualified workers and make the public sector competitive with private business.

- a. Has an analysis been done on the impact that cuts and working conditions as described above have had on agency recruiting, hiring and retention? If so, please provide this.**

While the U.S. Government Accountability Office has done some work to study various management challenges related to sequestration and budget uncertainties, we are not aware of any comprehensive studies covering the issues described. We note, however, that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), through efforts like the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS), works with agencies in order to help them understand and monitor key drivers of employee engagement and satisfaction, and use FEVS data to help inform action plans and strategies to address the needs of their workforce.

- b. Do you believe these issues impact the ability of hiring managers to recruit, hire and retain the best talent?**

Through Executive Order 13781, "Comprehensive Plan for Reorganizing the Executive Branch" and his FY19 Budget, the President has tasked the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Director with providing a plan to reorganize the Executive Branch in order to promote efficiency of service, strengthen the effectiveness of our workforce, and advance accountability. OPM supports our Administration partners in this effort.

As part of the President's Management Agenda, OPM will focus on supporting efforts to meet the needs of the Federal Government not just for today, but into the future. OPM is leading, with OMB and the Department of Defense, the Federal Government's work to realize the Cross-Agency Priority goal of developing a workforce for the 21st Century. Although OPM must also be mindful of its oversight role, OPM has been charged with making our personnel systems focus more on prioritizing results and customer service while aligning our workforce to meet emerging needs. Bad actors and poor performers must be addressed, and the Federal Government should honor high performers and those with mission-critical skills through creative, innovative mechanisms like the President's Management Council Workforce Fund outlined in the President's FY19 Budget.

- c. Speaking of these conditions, while OMB lifted the administration's ordered hiring freeze for agencies, it has been reported that large parts of several agencies are still effectively experiencing hiring freezes because of major cuts to their budgets. Are you aware of agencies, or certain areas of agencies, that are under a hiring freeze? If so, please provide this information.**

Since the lifting of the administration's hiring freeze for agencies, workforce structuring decisions, including any agency-specific hiring freeze, are best addressed by agencies themselves. OPM does not gather information or maintain a central list of such Government-wide agency workforce operations.

3. In 2011, President Obama issued Executive Order 13583, titled, "Establishing a Coordinated Government-Wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce." This type of initiative is absolutely crucial given the disproportionate under-representation of minority groups across the federal workforce, and especially in the Senior Executive Service (SES). At this leadership level, Latinos, African Americans, Asians, and Native Americans make up only 20% of the SES combined; and just 34% of the SES are women.¹ In July 2016, OPM issued the second part of its strategic plan around diversity and inclusion. In it, they included three goals: 1) Diversifying the federal workforce through active engagement of leadership; 2) Including and engaging everyone in the workplace; and 3) Optimizing inclusive diversity efforts using data-driven approaches.

a. Are you still working towards these three goals?

OPM and other Federal agencies are committed to fulfilling our responsibilities under applicable executive orders, including Executive Order 13583, "Establishing a Coordinated Government-wide Initiative to Promote Diversity and Inclusion in the Federal Workforce." We continue to build upon the goals identified in the Government-wide Inclusive Diversity Strategic Plan issued by OPM in 2016, which outlines the second phase of implementation of the Executive Order.

b. What are the evaluation benchmarks by which success is measured? And what are the timelines by which these benchmarks will be met?

In 2011, OPM, OMB, and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission conducted a series of Feedback Assistance Roundtables (FAR) with 57 departments and independent agencies. One of the conclusions of the FARs is that there is no widely accepted method to measure or identify inclusion or inclusive behaviors within Federal Government agencies.

However, through the submission of their agency-specific Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plans for recruiting, hiring, training, developing, advancing, promoting, and retaining a diverse workforce, agencies have identified and shared best practices in furtherance of addressing the directives of the Executive Order. In support of these efforts, OPM has, through reports submitted each year pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 7201 and associated regulations, reported data and collected and published best agency practices.

¹ <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/senior-executive-service/facts-figures/#url=Demographics>

Question#:	1
Topic:	Workforce Modeling
Hearing:	Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
Primary:	The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: During the March 1, 2018 hearing, you committed to provide workforce modeling for the administration efforts to hire 10,000 ICE officers and 5,000 Border Patrol agents to HSGAC within the month.

Would you please provide detailed workforce modeling that includes a cost/benefit analysis of such hires, justifications for these increases, where such hires will be placed, and what their priorities and responsibilities will be?

Response: ICE: Using a combination of workforce forecasting and modeling, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) developed a plan to hire 10,000 Officers and Agents: 8,500 ICE Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO) Officers (primarily Deportation Officers in series 1801); 1,500 ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Agents in series 1811; and 6,596 associated support staff. These support staff numbers reflect current support staffing ratios for current frontline occupations (0.266 per deportation officer, 0.433 per criminal investigator, 0.539 per attorney, and 0.069 in general management/mission support functions per law enforcement officer.

By leveraging the methodology outlined in the Workforce Staffing and Enterprise Planning Models, ICE has determined that 16,596 additional Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) personnel will be needed to support the Executive Orders. Productive time is calculated through a combination of time entry data and subject matter expert estimates to determine the time an FTE is available to perform mission related activities which are tracked in ICE workload data systems.

Based on the results of these models, ICE ERO must accommodate additional workload to support increases to average detention population (+1,018), U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Border Patrol activity (+434), detainer non-compliance (+60) and southwest border fugitive operations (+5,151), while filling 1,837 existing vacancies, requiring a total increase of 8,500 FTE. ICE HSI must fill 1,119 domestic and 295 overseas vacancies, and model results indicate that increases in CBP activity will increase their staffing needs by 86, for a total of 1,500 FTE. Model results have determined that the ICE Office of the Principal Legal Advisor (OPLA) requires an additional 1,716 FTE to provide legal support to accommodate increased ICE ERO and ICE HSI workload.

Finally, ICE used its Enterprise Planning Model, which incorporates three years of payroll data, to determine that 4,880 FTE are required to perform operational support functions within the ICE ERO and ICE HSI program offices, and in mission support offices responsible for human resources, finance, information technology, procurement,

Question#:	1
Topic:	Workforce Modeling
Hearing:	Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
Primary:	The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

and facilities to support increases in the ICE ERO, ICE HSI, and ICE OPLA frontline offices, yielding a grand total of 16,596 FTE.

CBP: U.S. Customs and Border Protection is developing the Personnel Requirements Determination (PRD) – a repeatable, transparent, and operationally justified staffing methodology to determine Border Patrol Agent (BPA) staffing needs. The PRD will serve as a decision-support tool; providing the business intelligence to enable decision-makers to visualize the relevant factors that drive workload and make risk-informed staffing decisions. Although Executive Order 13767 directed the 5,000-agent increase (similar to the 6,000-agents increase directed in the mid-2000s), that number may differ somewhat when the PRD models are complete and results are computed.

CBP will validate placement and staffing levels of agents based on operational requirements to meet the active threat environments. The PRD process will leverage BPA operational expertise to evolve agent staffing requirements from “one size fits all” standardization to a methodology that will integrate the key workload indicators, environmental and other factors. Similarly, increases in agent population will drive increases to a multitude of Border Patrol and CBP-wide mission support functions, such as human capital, finance, information technology, procurement facilities, and security.

Work hour data collection recording has been re-engineered to allow hourly time spent performing essential mission functions to be captured using the Border Patrol Enterprise Reporting Tool and the CBP time and attendance system. Capturing greater than 3 million rows of data per quarter for both systems, preliminary work force FTE analysis has been conducted that reveal additional staffing is required. However, to avoid conjecture, no work force levels have been set utilizing the staffing model while under development.

Currently, the PRD Team has completed the Patrol Border Group (alpha version) tool. This model incorporates preliminary analysis and results to examine five priority workload factors (Apprehensions, Apprehension Events, Drug Events, Drug Seizure Pounds, and Felony Apprehensions) with current Agent levels to identify the Sectors, which have the greatest relative staffing needs. The second stage beta testing of the staffing model is scheduled to commence in late summer 2018 with a limited number of test participants. While the estimate of a total number of Agents and supervisory staff will be provided in aggregate, a major benefit of the system is to show the relative staffing levels of these operational entities so that staffing may be adjusted based upon the available number of onboard Agents and operational conditions. Finally, the staffing model will aid in staffing Sectors by providing estimates of the number of Agents needed by Sector and Station incorporating deployment requirements. As previously mentioned,

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the staffing model will incorporate algorithms derived from the work study data analysis that help to assess the complexity of conditions, workload and staffing relationships for each of the 11 Patrol Border Group essential mission functions (Patrol Border Operations, Off Road/ATV Patrol, K-9 patrol, Horse Patrol, Bike Patrol, Boat Patrol, Traffic Checks, Transportation Checks, Detainee Processing, Task Force/Liaison and Supplemental Air Crew). The full rollout of the completed staffing model/tool is scheduled in September 2019.

Question#:	2
Topic:	Training and Promotion Opportunities
Hearing:	Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
Primary:	The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: Human capital management is a crucial practice for the federal government, now more so than ever. According to a May 18, 2017 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, 34.3% of federal employees government-wide will be eligible to retire by fiscal year 2020. Further, the federal workforce continues to suffer from mission-critical skills gaps that “pose a high risk to the nation,” including across six government-wide occupational areas: cybersecurity, acquisition, human resources, auditing, economists, and the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) functional area. To close these skills gaps, federal agencies need to both recruit qualified talent, AND cultivate existing talent by training the men and women already working in the federal workforce.

In your capacities as Chief Human Capital Officers of your respective Departments, how do you work to provide training and opportunities to your workers, including opportunities for management positions, like becoming a hiring manager?

Response: The DHS Leader Development Program (LDP) functions as the Department’s strategic framework for promoting consistent investment in leaders at all levels-- team member through executive. The LDP architecture includes a DHS-specific Leader Competency Model and Framework, and best practices by leader level. Through our development program for all levels of the workforce, we are increasing the abilities of our employees to assume leadership positions. For example, we provide development activities focused on the role of supervisors as hiring managers, including how to identify, select, and retain talent. Several of our occupations, such as human resources, acquisition and financial management have career paths as well. We are also exploring career paths for our law enforcement occupations.

In the mission training domain, which covers priority areas such as law enforcement, screening, domain awareness, cybersecurity, and incident management, we offer robust training and development through our network of training academies. In FY 16, we delivered over 930 courses across the United States in 186 training locations, representing 91,740 course completions.

Question#:	3
Topic:	Diversity
Hearing:	Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
Primary:	The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: While both of your departments have issued strategic plans to increase diversity in your workforces, there are still areas for improvement. DHS' workforce is only 33% female, while Commerce's is only 4% Hispanic.

How are you working to equip hiring managers in your Departments with the training and skills required to recruit and retain diverse talent?

Response: DHS implemented the New Inclusion Quotient (IQ) training, which provides the latest research on diversity and inclusion with the goal of improving employee engagement and morale. It also provides hiring managers with tools to communicate more effectively with staff and reflect inward on possible implicit biases in workplace. In FY18, the Department is creating implicit bias training for hiring managers to bring awareness to biases against such factors as race, gender, education level, marital status, etc. and how each step of the employee lifecycle process (resume review, interviews, selection, awards/promotions, and terminations) can be vulnerable to these biases.

Hiring managers are also heavily involved in the Department's joint hiring events. The Department has held successful joint cybersecurity, veterans, intern, and recent graduate hiring events that brought together multiple Components to a single location enabling onsite interviews and on-the-spot tentative job offers the day of the event. The Department plans to hold a Women in Law Enforcement hiring event in June 2018 in Dallas/Fort Worth, Texas, and a cybersecurity hiring event later this year in Washington, D.C.

While our workforce is 33 percent female, this is reflective of our large population of law enforcement officers and agents. Within our non-law enforcement positions, women comprise 46 percent, compared to 43 percent in the federal workforce.

Question: What are the benchmarks for success, and how are you measuring meeting them?

Response: The Department monitors demographic representation on a quarterly basis via diversity scorecards. These scorecards keep leadership informed of underrepresentation within the new hire and onboard populations. This information is also used as a basis for focused recruitment strategies to ensure a diverse pipeline of talent. The Department also monitors veteran new hires and individuals with disability new hires in accordance with the Office of Personnel Management and Equal Employment Opportunity Commission annual hiring goals, respectively.

Question#:	3
Topic:	Diversity
Hearing:	Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
Primary:	The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

The Department also uses the Inclusion Index (New IQ scores), one of the indexes from the Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to gauge how inclusive we are as an agency. The Inclusion Index (a subset of 20 questions from FEVS), showed marked improvement for DHS from 45 percent to 51 percent from FY 2015 to FY 2017. Our FY 2018 goals are to increase the Inclusion Index by 2 percent over FY 2017, and increase the Partnership for Public Service's Support for Diversity Index by 2 percent over FY 2017.

Question#:	4
Topic:	Hiring Managers Involvement
Hearing:	Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
Primary:	The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Question: There are many steps involved in finding the best candidates for a particular job. Agencies need to identify what skills are necessary to do the job competently. They need to write a job description that will attract the right candidates. They need to recruit widely and across many different backgrounds in order to find candidates who would be able to match that job description. Finally, agencies need to take the candidates deemed qualified by USA Jobs and interview them. Often, hiring managers only get involved at the very end of this process, after USA Jobs has spit out the applications of a few candidates.

Ms. Bailey and Mr. Mahoney, when do hiring managers get involved in the hiring process in your Departments?

Response: Hiring managers are involved very early in the hiring process, including identifying staffing needs and developing hiring plans by prioritizing their recruitment needs over the next year. When hiring managers validate the need to fill a vacant position or create a new one, they collaborate with human resources specialists to verify, edit or create the position descriptions, which encompass the major duties and job-related factors of the position. They also are involved in reviewing resumes for technical qualifications, and finally during the selection process.

Question: Are they involved in every step, including writing job descriptions, recruitment, selection, and assessment?

Response: Yes, Human Resources (HR) Specialists remain in constant communication with the hiring managers during the hiring steps. Hiring managers are involved in verifying job descriptions are accurate, making necessary edits, and drafting new ones. Hiring managers collaborate with HR Specialists on developing recruitment strategies and identifying appropriate assessment questionnaires in relation to the position to be filled. HR Specialists partner with hiring managers to develop the job analysis, assessments, and announcements; review resumes for technical qualifications; and conduct the final selection process. In addition, some hiring managers directly participate in hiring events across the country to recruit and select candidates for their job opportunities.

Question: How are you providing training and resources to hiring managers to ensure this happens?

Question#:	4
Topic:	Hiring Managers Involvement
Hearing:	Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
Primary:	The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Response: Through our Leader Development Program, every new supervisory employee is required to take an orientation course within their first 90 days on the job, and an extensive Core Development program within their first 11 months.

During the orientation course, hiring managers learn about the hiring process and their important role of being involved at every step of the way, including position management, recruitment, staffing, and the interview process. This provides them with an overview, sets the expectation of their involvement in hiring, and ensures that they know who to contact for on-the-job consultation and training.

In addition to the formal training, in their initial year and annually thereafter, we also provide numerous informal methods of educating hiring managers about their role in the hiring process. We produce newsletters and checklists, and host virtual “lunch and learn” sessions. These products are available to, and designed for, anyone across the Department, but focus on helping hiring managers become more knowledgeable and participative in the process. For instance, our Leadership Matters e-news provides thought-provoking and skill building exercises and resources to help supervisory leaders increase their knowledge and skill in recruiting, developing and managing employees. Additionally, we offer a “Bits and Bytes” newsletter tailored specifically for the cyber community’s hiring managers, helping them to leverage hiring flexibilities, and conduct the hiring process in the best way possible to recruit the most qualified cyber workforce.

Question: How are you tracking how hiring managers are involved in this process?

Response: The Department adopted OPM’s 14-step hiring model, which identifies in detail the roles hiring managers and HR Specialists play during each step. DHS developed and uses a Hiring Manager Checklist that identifies key steps from the initial workforce planning, to the actual on-boarding of the new hire. This checklist provides general guidelines, and outlines actions hiring managers should take to prepare for the hiring process. HR Specialists consult with hiring managers at the beginning of the process to engage in recruitment strategies and discuss the hiring timeline to fill the positions. Recruitment consultation forms are used to establish a cooperative partnership between human resources offices and managers, for the delivery of human resources hiring services. Many of our Component HR offices often hold weekly/bi-weekly meetings with program offices to prioritize recruitment actions and provide hiring status updates to managers. We use business analytics to track the number of days it takes to complete each step in the hiring process, including how long it takes hiring managers to complete their actions.

Question: How are you measuring success?

Question#:	4
Topic:	Hiring Managers Involvement
Hearing:	Examining Federal Managers' Role in Hiring
Primary:	The Honorable Kamala D. Harris
Committee:	HOMELAND SECURITY (SENATE)

Response: Success is measured through several data points. On a recurring basis, HR offices report on hiring metrics that track how long it takes to bring candidates onboard (time-to-hire), current job announcements in process, total number of certificates issued, and overall staffing levels of each office to name a few. We also measure success by analyzing usage rates on certificates of eligible candidates, attrition rates, onboarding numbers, and quality of hires.

DHS gathers feedback from hiring managers and others involved in the hiring process through the Manager Satisfaction Survey (MSS) and the Applicant Satisfaction Survey (AS). DHS requires that Components send the MSS to hiring managers, as well analyze the MSS and AS data to make hiring process improvements. The survey is maintained by OPM, and data is provided to agencies on a quarterly basis for analysis. We also use data analytics to track progress for the Department's Priority Mission Critical Occupations; capturing key data, including: time-to-hire, types of hiring authorities used, fill rates, recruitment and diversity information, intra-DHS employee movements, attrition, and types of separations. We use this data to inform our strategic planning, including: recruitment strategies, human capital policy development and assessing the need for additional hiring authorities.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
“Examining Federal Managers’ Role in Hiring”
From Senator Thomas R. Carper
For Mr. Kevin Mahoney

Over 250 days have elapsed since the Census Bureau had a Senate-confirmed appointee leading the agency. Please provide an update on the status of the nomination of a Director and Deputy Director for the Census Bureau. When can Congress expect to receive a nomination for the Director position?

Response:

The Secretary has total confidence in the long-term career leadership who are now performing the non-exclusive duties of the Director and Deputy Director of the Census Bureau. Between them, they have a combined 52 years of experience with the Census Bureau. Additionally, Undersecretary for Economic Affairs Karen Dunn Kelley, who is performing the non-exclusive duties of the Deputy Secretary, is very closely involved with the Census Bureau and the execution of the 2020 Decennial Census.

The Department of Commerce continues to work with the White House Office of Personnel to identify candidates for the Director and Deputy Director of the Census Bureau. The Department will keep the Committee informed of any developments with respect to filling these two very important positions.

Post-Hearing Questions for the Record
“Examining Federal Managers’ Role in Hiring”
From Senator Kamala Harris
For Ms. Angela Bailey and Mr. Kevin Mahoney

1. Human capital management is a crucial practice for the federal government, now more so than ever. According to a May 18, 2017 Government Accountability Office (GAO) report, 34.3% of federal employees government-wide will be eligible to retire by fiscal year 2020.¹ Further, the federal workforce continues to suffer from mission-critical skills gaps that “pose a high risk to the nation,” including across six government-wide occupational areas: cybersecurity, acquisition, human resources, auditing, economists, and the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) functional area.² To close these skills gaps, federal agencies need to both recruit qualified talent, AND cultivate existing talent by training the men and women already working in the federal workforce.

- a. **In your capacities as Chief Human Capital Officers of your respective Departments, how do you work to provide training and opportunities to your workers, including opportunities for management positions, like becoming a hiring manager?**

The Department of Commerce (DOC) provides numerous training opportunities for employees. Much of our training, for staff and managers, is delivered through the Commerce Learning Center (CLC), an on-line portal. Through the CLC, mandatory training is provided in areas such as: disability hiring, veterans hiring flexibilities, cybersecurity, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and thousands of technical courses, such as those used by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Weather Service. Popular courses for hiring managers include: “Hiring a New Employee,” “Aligning Recruitment to Job Requirements,” and others. We also offer in-person training courses, at our headquarters as well as at bureau offices.

The Department sponsors three leadership development opportunities: Aspiring Leaders (GS9 to GS11); Executive Leadership (GS12 to GS14); and the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (GS14 and GS15). All three are designed to provide training and developmental activities for future leaders in DOC. DOC bureaus also

¹ <https://www.gao.gov/assets/690/684709.pdf>

² <https://www.gao.gov/assets/690/682765.pdf>

provide management training; for example, the National Institute of Standards and Technology conducts a New Leaders Development Program for managers with one to three years of management experience.

The Department is also developing a new course for supervisors and managers for maximizing employee performance. This course is based on feedback received from a survey of supervisors and managers on how to manage employee performance.

2. While both of your departments have issued strategic plans to increase diversity in your workforces, there are still areas for improvement. DHS' workforce is only 33% female³, while Commerce's is only 4% Hispanic.⁴

- a. **How are you working to equip hiring managers in your Departments with the training and skills required to recruit and retain diverse talent?**

The Department provides information to each bureau on their workforce: race, national origin, gender, disability status, etc. This information helps both the hiring manager and the staffing specialist design a recruiting strategy to ensure a diverse pool of applicants. Additionally, DOC has a robust special emphasis program that celebrates the different communities in the Department. The Department also informs our various affinity groups, such as Blacks in Government or DOC Veterans, when positions become available. In addition, the Department have offered New IQ and Unconscious Bias Awareness trainings to help address underlying issues that can hinder diverse recruitment.

As an example of our efforts to recruit and retain diverse talent, the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office hosts an annual Community Day. This annual event promotes equal employment opportunity by demonstrating the agency's commitment to a workforce drawn from all segments of society.

- b. **What are the benchmarks for success, and how are you measuring meeting them?**

The Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is the designated office responsible for implementing the Department's overall continuing affirmative employment program to promote equal employment opportunity (EEO) and to identify and eliminate discriminatory practices and policies while

³ <https://www.dhs.gov/dhs-diversity-planning>

⁴ http://www.osec.doc.gov/ocr/CivilRights/Workforce%20Data/2017/Q2/QuarterlyMetrics_FY2017.pptx

ensuring that each organization is free of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or reprisal. Throughout the year, OCR collaborates with the bureau-level EEO/Civil Rights and Human Resources offices, as well as key stakeholders, to review and analyze various workforce data, including leadership data; recruitment, selection, and retention data; awards and recognition data; EEO complaints data; applicant flow data; and Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results.

OCR compares the Department's workforce data against expected benchmark levels in the broader civilian labor force and occupation-specific labor forces. When the Department's workforce participation rates (broken out by race, ethnicity, gender, and disability status) fall below a benchmark, OCR conducts further analysis to identify any barrier in the Department's policies, practices, or procedures which may be preventing equal employment opportunity. The Department can then implement a variety of data-driven corrective strategies. All such barriers and corrective actions are identified in the Department's annual EEO Program Status Report to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

3. There are many steps involved in finding the best candidates for a particular job. Agencies need to identify what skills are necessary to do the job competently. They need to write a job description that will attract the right candidates. They need to recruit widely and across many different backgrounds in order to find candidates who would be able to match that job description. Finally, agencies need to take the candidates deemed qualified by USA Jobs and interview them. Often, hiring managers only get involved at the very end of this process, after USA Jobs has spit out the applications of a few candidates.

- a. **Ms. Bailey and Mr. Mahoney, when do hiring managers get involved in the hiring process in your Departments? Are they involved in every step, including writing job descriptions, recruitment, selection, and assessment?**

At DOC, managers are the most important component of the hiring process and they are included and consulted during every step of the hiring process. Their expertise is needed in the development of the position description, job analysis, recruitment strategy, and selection.

Once a manager informs her staffing specialist of her intent to fill a position, a meeting is scheduled with the hiring manager to understand what she is looking for in terms of skills, competencies and technical knowledge. This is invaluable information for the

staffing specialist as he reviews candidates' background for consideration.

One point of clarification: agencies rate and rank applicants who submit their qualifications through USA Jobs. Agency staff use the combination of applicants' professional experience and their responses to the job assessment to determine whether they are deemed qualified. USA Jobs does not determine whether an applicant is qualified.

b. How are you providing training and resources to hiring managers to ensure this happens?

Training for managers and supervisors for hiring varies by bureau. Bureaus offer a variety of courses in interviewing, job analysis, special hiring authorities, and merit system principles. Training is conducted through several channels, which include computer based training, instructor led training, subject matter expert panels, and informal events like brown bag lunches. DOC's goal is to standardize training at the bureau and department levels so that a consistent message is being given to managers and supervisors on the hiring process.

In addition, as part of the Department's response to OMB's Memorandum M-17-22, DOC is developing a new workforce planning model that will focus on competencies needed for mission accomplishment. By better understanding what competencies are needed, managers will be able to target their hiring to get the best candidates possible. The workforce planning model will inform how we develop training and resources for managers in the future.

c. How are you tracking how hiring managers are involved in this process? How are you measuring success?

DOC tracks hiring using the OPM 80-day model. DOC can track the involvement of managers at each step, as well as measuring how long each step takes to complete. Each quarter, DOC reports these numbers to OPM and internally to measure performance.