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STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN DANIEL K. AKAKA

Building and Maintaining an Effective Human Resource Workforce in the Federal Government

Hearing Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia, Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

Aloha and thank you all for being here today as the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia meets to examine how we can build and maintain an effective Federal human resources (HR) workforce.

As we all know, the Federal government is currently facing some of the most complex challenges in our nation's history, and doing so within serious budget constraints. As we celebrate Public Service Recognition Week, I want to take a moment to acknowledge and honor the dedicated public servants who are critical to meeting those challenges. Public servants provide so many vital services to our nation. With the Federal workforce being asked to do more with less, making sure we have a top-notch workforce is more important than ever.

So many talented, hard-working people want to dedicate their lives to serving their country and communities. But we need human resources professionals to make sure we are hiring, developing, and retaining the right people, with the right skills, for the right jobs.

Federal agencies, and stakeholders such as the Partnership for Public Service, have recognized that HR professionals currently are not fully equipped to fulfill modern Federal human resource missions. While these individuals still need to be able to perform traditional HR functions, such as hiring and benefit administration, they also need to be responsive and educated strategic partners with managers to help agencies meet their objectives.

People are the Federal government's most important asset, and we simply are not investing enough training, resources, and focus on the HR professionals who manage that critical asset. The Office of Personnel Management, the Chief Human Capital Officers Council, and individual agencies have been working together, along with private sector partners, to take on this challenge.

I am pleased to have all of our witnesses here today to tell us about these efforts and the challenges they still face as they work together to professionalize the Federal HR workforce. I thank you all, again, for being here today.

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