

RAFM Hearing – *The Challenges and Opportunities of the Proposed Government
Reorganization on OPM and GSA*
Thursday, July 26, 2018

Opening Statement of Ranking Member Heidi Heitkamp
As Prepared for Delivery

Thank you, Chairman Lankford for holding this hearing. And thank you to Ms. Murphy and Dr. Pon for joining us today.

I think everyone in this room today, as well as every member of Congress from both parties, could agree that we want a better federal government. The federal government can always do better. It can be more efficient, more effective, and do a better job of connecting with its citizens.

That's why looking at ways to improve federal agencies is always a good idea. Congress, the Administration and the public should always be exploring ways to work together, come up with ideas and execute on them.

With that in mind, I look forward to today's conversation.

The Administration has proposed some bold and interesting ideas in its government-wide reorganization proposal. One of the key proposals is the focus of today's hearing – merging most of OPM's functions with GSA and creating a new agency.

Last week, the full committee got a chance to explore the full scope of the Administration's reorganization proposal. Today, we get down in the weeds and learn more about one specific proposal – what it will mean and how it could be executed.

I am not afraid of big ideas, and Congress shouldn't be reflexively dismissive of a proposal simply because it changes the status quo. However, Congress needs more information and more analysis about this reorganization.

I am sure the witnesses are aware of the discussion from last week's hearing. I was disappointed in some of the answers I got and the Administration's reluctance and inability to provide analysis of its reorganization proposals or information about what it has the ability to execute on right now. I hope that today's witnesses will be forthcoming when we ask them to convince us that this OPM-GSA proposal would work and that it is a good idea. I hope they will share their analysis proving their assertions and details about how this proposal would actually work.

Congress needs that information so that we can fulfil our oversight duties, and also protect federal workers. Federal employees are an absolutely critical part of the federal government. We can't have the government our nation and citizens need without a strong, focused, and vibrant federal workforce. Congress needs to know how this proposal will ensure that strong workforce. Thank you and I look forward to the testimony and discussion.