

Opening Statement by Senator Scott P. Brown

June 9th, 2011

Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security

U.S. Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee

**“Federal Asset Management: Eliminating Waste by Disposing of Unneeded Federal Real Property”**

Thank you, Chairman Carper, for holding this important hearing. At a time when our nation is in a perilous financial position, the role of this Subcommittee in maximizing our valuable tax dollars is crucial, and I appreciate your partnership in this pursuit.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) estimates that the Federal Government owns over 45,000 underutilized and excess properties which cost the government approximately \$1.7 billion dollars annually to operate and maintain. Now more than ever we simply cannot afford to waste precious taxpayer dollars keeping the lights on in these underutilized properties. Just as a business would, we must ensure that we strategically manage our assets to ensure that we maximize our return on investment and operate the government in an efficient manner. The current property disposal process, like many government programs, is mired with conflicting priorities that complicate what should be a simple goal of maximizing the return on the selling of excess properties. I am interested in hearing how the President specifically intends to streamline the current process to enable the government to meet its overarching goal of reducing its enormous debt. The President’s proposal for a Civilian Property Realignment Commission (CPRC), based on the military BRAC process, has promise, but I am concerned that any process that does not focus on the goal of making the

tough decisions needed to maximizing taxpayer dollars in an efficient process, is simply a waste of time. There can be no "sacred cows", or carve-outs, and any reforms to the process should encourage the strategic management of government assets.

I came to Washington to address our nation's fiscal challenges. We have to stop avoiding making these difficult decisions, so I welcome the opportunity to talk with the witnesses about the President's initiative and other proposals.