



STATEMENT OF

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FOR A HEARING ON

“Examining Federal Managers’ Role in Hiring”

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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.



Angela Bailey

Chief Human Capital Officer



Angela Bailey has dedicated more than 35 years to public service, with close to 30 of those years in human resources. Ms. Bailey was appointed as the Department of Homeland Security's Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) in January 2016. She is responsible for the Department's human capital program, which includes human resources policy, systems, and programs for strategic workforce planning, recruitment and hiring, pay and leave, performance management, employee development, executive resources, labor relations, work/life and safety and health.

She also served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) for the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) from November 2013 to January 2016. In this role, she provided overall organization management to improve OPM's performance, mission and goals through strategic and performance planning, measurement, analysis, and regular progress assessment. She was also responsible for managing OPM's human, financial, acquisition and information technology to achieve OPM's program results efficiently, economically, and effectively.

Other roles at OPM included serving as Deputy Associate Director for Recruitment and Hiring and Associate Director for Employee Services, including as the agency's CHCO. In that role, she was responsible for the design, development and implementation of government-wide human resources policy, systems, and programs for strategic workforce planning, recruitment and hiring, pay and leave, performance management, employee development, executive resources, labor relations, and work/life. In addition, she led OPM's implementation of the President's Veterans Employment Initiative, which resulted in 20-year highs in terms of the percentage of new federal employees who are veterans. As the CHCO for OPM, she also oversaw the agency's internal human resources office. Ms. Bailey also spearheaded OPM's flagship initiative on hiring reform, and the Pathways Programs for students and recent graduates, including the Presidential Management Fellows Program.

Ms. Bailey began her career with the Social Security Administration. She later worked for the Department of Defense in several different components and Defense agencies. She has served in many roles, including Budget Analyst, Labor Relations Officer, and as the Director of Human Resources for the Defense Contract Management Agency.

Ms. Bailey has a master's degree in Leadership from Bellevue University and participated in Harvard University's Kennedy School National Preparedness Leadership Initiative for Executives in 2012.