

June 17, 2015

Opening Statement of Senator James Lankford

**Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs
and Federal Management Hearing**

**Nomination for Ms. Carol Ochoa to the position of General Services
Administration, Inspector General**

Good afternoon. Today we will consider the nomination of Carol Ochoa for the position of Inspector General of the General Services Administration.

The Offices of the Inspector General were established in 1978 by Congress to protect the integrity of the agencies they serve. Inspectors general do this by rooting out and reporting on waste, fraud and mismanagement, so that agencies may effectively carry out their responsibilities and fulfill their missions in service to the American people.

As frontline watchdogs for the hard working taxpayer, inspectors general play a critical role in congressional oversight. Earlier this month, we stressed the importance of efficiently nominating and confirming competent inspectors general at a Committee hearing. The Committee and my Subcommittee take inspector general nominations incredibly seriously, and so we are pleased to have a strong nominee before us.

Oversight of the General Services Administration requires particular competencies and poses unique challenges. GSA currently oversees \$240 million in taxpayer dollars to provide real estate, acquisition, and technology services to the federal government and American people. If confirmed by the Senate, Ms. Ochoa would be responsible for oversight of several high-profile issues at the agency, including strategic sourcing, federal procurement, management of the agency's real property portfolio, and a variety of IT initiatives.

As we have learned through previous IG investigations including the infamous 2010 GSA Las Vegas conference, oversight of this vast administrative bureaucracy requires an Inspector General that is intelligent, tenacious, objective, and independent. We have found Ms. Ochoa to be exceptionally qualified for the position in these respects.

Ms. Ochoa is a native of Youngstown, Ohio. She received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Miami University, and a law degree from the George Washington University School of Law. After graduation, Ms. Ochoa clerked for Chief Judge Charles Clark on the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. After working as a litigation associate at Covington & Burling, Ms. Ochoa served in the United States Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, as well as for James McKay's Office of Independent Counsel.

In 2002, Ms. Ochoa joined the Department of Justice's Office of the Inspector General, where she served as the Director of the Office's Oversight and Review Division, before her promotion to the position of Assistant Inspector General in the Office's Oversight and Review Division. She has served as the Assistant Inspector General since 2005.

In addition to her impressive resume, Ms. Ochoa exhibits integrity befitting an Inspector General. Subcommittee staff reached out to a variety of Ms. Ochoa's colleagues, who spoke highly of her. They ascribed to Ms. Ochoa characteristics that will serve her, and Congress, well in her position as GSA's Inspector General: intelligence, studiousness, impartiality, objectivity, and a skilled managing style.

Staff from both sides of the aisle had the opportunity to interview Ms. Ochoa on an array of issues, ranging from her past accomplishments to her future priorities at GSA were she to be confirmed as Inspector General. She thoughtfully and competently answered each question to the Committee's satisfaction.

Given that the Committee has found Ms. Ochoa to be eminently qualified to be GSA's Inspector General, I look forward to speaking with her a bit more today on her accomplishments and ideas on how to improve the GSA Office of the Inspector General, as well as GSA at large.