



May 21, 2019

The Honorable Gerry Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations
2238 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mark Meadows
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Government Operations
2160 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Connolly, Ranking Member Meadows, and members of the Subcommittee:

On behalf of the managers and supervisors currently serving our nation in the federal government and whose interests are represented by the Federal Managers Association (FMA), I write to express concerns we have with the Administration's proposal concerning the future of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), particularly the restructuring of the office into the General Services Administration (GSA) and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Department of Defense (DOD). We appreciate your important hearing to examine the proposal.

The Administration outlined reorganization plans with the April 2017 memo, M-17-22, culminating with the release of "Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century: Reform Plan and Reorganization Recommendations," in June 2018. Included as part of the President's Management Agenda, and the focus of this hearing, is the dissolution of OPM, moving many of its functions to GSA and OMB. From the outset of the Administration's reorganization plans, FMA has consistently expressed an open mind about potential benefits. FMA fully supports the notion of making the federal government as efficient and effective as possible, and we know change can be necessary and good, including when it comes to civil service reform.

Regrettably, the fact that the proposal politicizes human resources functions within the federal government, makes everything else unacceptable. Dating back to the early 1880s, the nation has strived to eschew the 'spoils system,' in favor of a politically impartial, merit-based federal civil service. The career civil service is expected – and required by law – to work without regard to their own political affiliations or leanings. They work solely based on their technical merit and prowess, unaffected by which political party is in the White House. This is why OPM was created as an independent establishment in the civil service reform act of 1978. Rolling these functions into GSA, which functions "subject to the direction and control of the President," creates a serious and intolerable conflict. FMA argues transferring these roles into the GSA would negatively impact the non-partisan standing of the career civil service, and most importantly, threatens the output of services to the American people.

We recognize the business case OPM Acting Director Weichert has outlined, as well as nominee Dale Cabaniss' testimony during her confirmation hearing before the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee. Components of the proposal have merit toward making government function more effectively and efficiently. However, FMA's concerns with removing OPM's status as an independent establishment outweigh the benefits. We appreciate this hearing as a necessary first step at evaluating the proposal.

Thank you for your continued support of the men and women in the public sector. Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact FMA's Government Affairs Director Greg Stanford at or (703) 683-8700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Renee M. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Renee M. Johnson
National President