UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

**STATEMENT OF
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before the

SUBCOMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL GOVERNMENT

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

UNITED STATES SENATE

on

"THE PRESIDENT'S FY2015 FUNDING REQUEST FOR AND OVERSIGHT OF FEDERAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INVESTMENTS"

May 7, 2014

Thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing regarding oversight of information technology (IT) investments, and to testify on issues facing the Federal IT workforce. I am happy to be here with you today.

As Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), one of my goals is to build an engaged, inclusive, diverse, and well-trained workforce, not only for today's needs but also for the future. In order to meet their missions, Federal agencies must have the tools to attract, develop, and keep top talent, from all segments of society. To this end, OPM is partnering with agencies to help address government-wide and agency-specific recruitment, training, and retention needs in areas where skills are in high demand.

Anticipating cyber workforce needs and ensuring that the Federal Government is prepared to meet those needs is an important goal for OPM. The development and proper deployment of cyber will require fast-thinking, intelligent minds at the helm in order to tap into the vast potential for the skillful harnessing of cyber's possibilities. The demand for cyber skills is real – the Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that computer occupations will grow by 18 percent between 2012-2022, while all other occupations will grow by 11 percent. This is why OPM supports the government-wide development of qualified Federal cyber personnel through

workforce planning, recruitment, training and development and other initiatives. This development is informed by routine data analysis that OPM conducts to assess the needs arising out of the Federal cyber workforce, as well as agency progress toward meeting cyber workforce targets. In addition, OPM has launched the first-ever complete inventory of all cyber positions in the Federal Government, to be housed in our Enterprise Human Resources Information (EHRI) system. Agencies are currently working to populate this database with a designation code for all positions that conduct work related to cybersecurity. Through the EHRI data set, OPM and agencies will have clearer visibility on current and projected cyber workforce needs.

OPM is the lead agency to meet the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Cross Agency Priority Goal to close critical skills gaps in the Federal workforce, and has partnered with relevant interagency councils and working groups to design the most effective strategies to address cyber workforce needs. Further, OPM, in our continued support of the White House's 25 Point Implementation Plan to Reform Federal IT Management, has developed the IT Program Management Career Path Guide and recommended training curriculum for the newly established IT Program Management job title. OPM worked closely with the Chief Information Officers (CIO) Council and OMB on this project. The final product provides guidance to Federal agencies on the creation and improvement of the IT Program Management career path at each agency.

OPM continues to support the National Science Foundation's administration of the CyberCorps Scholarship for Service (SFS) program. The SFS program awards scholarships to students pursuing a degree in cybersecurity. In exchange for the scholarship, students agree to work for the government in a cybersecurity position. OPM provides program guidance, monitors student progress, hosts virtual career fairs, participates in the planning and execution of live job fairs, and markets the SFS program to students and Federal agencies. In January 2014, the annual Job Fair attracted more than 400 students, who had the opportunity to network with recruitment representatives from over 40 Federal agencies. Since 2002, more than 1500 students have graduated and gone to work for over 130 different agencies and sub-agencies in a variety of occupations such as IT Management, Computer Scientist, and Computer Engineer.

OPM realizes that agencies may need to take advantage of existing flexibilities to meet their hiring needs. To this end, OPM has partnered with the CIO Council to ensure there is a broad understanding of the various hiring and pay authorities available to attract and hire the talent needed. Over the years, OPM has provided agencies with a number of expedited hiring authorities where suitable justification has been given. This includes government-wide Direct-Hire Authority for cybersecurity professionals, at the grade 9 and above, in the Information Technology Management series (Information Security). OPM has also helped agencies cut down on the timeline of an average hire from the posting of a vacancy announcement to bringing

employees on-board. OPM is also committed to ensuring that agencies are aware of the services OPM can offer in crafting job opportunity announcements in a manner that nets them the best possible candidates. OPM, through both our public policy function and our reimbursable services offered via USA Staffing, can help agencies develop and post clear and attractive job opportunity announcements. With well-written job opportunity announcements, agencies can both find superior candidates for the job and achieve quick, timely hiring. We recommend that agencies take advantage of OPM's expertise as a resource when beginning their candidate search.

Agencies have a number of existing pay and leave flexibilities at their disposal that can be used to recruit and retain cyber personnel. This includes the ability to set pay above the minimum rate for newly-hired cyber employees with superior qualifications or who are filling a special agency need; recruitment and retention incentives; enhanced annual leave accrual rate; student loan repayments; as well as general workplace flexibilities including telework and alternative work schedules. In addition, OPM is ready to work with agencies to consider providing special rates or critical position pay. Special rates are intended to address significant or likely significant agency handicaps in recruiting or retaining qualified employees. Similarly, the critical position pay authority requires individuals to possess an extremely high level of expertise in scientific or technical fields. Agencies must show that a position being considered for higher compensation under critical position pay is critical to the agency's successful accomplishment of an important mission. Further, the critical position pay authority may only be used to the extent necessary to recruit or retain an individual exceptionally well-qualified for the position.

Overall, OPM is supporting the development of government-wide enterprise training and resource exchanges across agencies as called for in the President's FY2015 Budget. For example, OPM will develop university partnerships that increase access for Federal employees to affordable education and training that is targeted to the Federal Government's priority skills needs, such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. These partnerships will enable Federal occupational and human resources leaders to work with post-secondary institutions to target curriculum to emerging skills needs in the Federal Government.

Working with agencies to address their cyber workforce needs requires anticipating workforce challenges and creating a culture of excellence and engagement to enable higher performance. To this end, three initiatives have been identified as possible positive courses of action. While each of these initiatives can apply outside of the cyber workforce, each can appropriately be used to address agencies' cyber workforce needs. We are still in the vetting stage, but we think these ideas have promise.

The first idea is the establishment of a cross-government talent exchange program, called "GovConnect." GovConnect would be designed to help all agencies test and scale talent

exchange programs and enable employees to find project-based rotational assignments and enable managers to reach into the broader Federal workforce to fill critical skills needs. GovConnect would seek to create a more mobile and agile workforce through communities of practice that can share ideas and solutions with each other through online networking.

Secondly, OPM is working on a reimbursable learning and development resource exchange called "GovU." GovU would be modeled off OPM's Human Resources University (HRU). HRU has, at its core, a collaborative model for the sharing of training and development resources across the Federal Government. OPM hopes to continue in this model with GovU by enabling agencies to share training and development resources to meet common needs. To facilitate this, OPM is collaborating with the Chief Human Capital Officers' Council and the Chief Learning Officers' Council to create an operational project plan.

Finally, training and development resources are critical tools in employee growth, and OPM is reviewing these resources to ensure they are consistently excellent and easily accessible government-wide. Further, through increased training and development comes greater accountability from and higher performance expectations for Federal employees. As capabilities and credibility are enhanced, efforts are needed to incorporate continuous improvement in the education opportunities and tools available to Federal employees.

OPM will continue to work with agencies, and with our labor partners, and other stakeholders to utilize existing recruitment and retention tools and to explore whether additional flexibilities are warranted to address IT workforce needs. OPM will continue to help agencies enhance the management and performance of their workforce by sharing best practices and leadership development resources. These efforts will help ensure that we build and develop a Federal IT workforce that is engaged, inclusive, and high performing in order to meet the challenges of both today and tomorrow.

Thank you for inviting me here today, and I am happy to address any questions you may have.