

**Opening Statement of  
Chairman Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Oversight Hearing  
USDA Inspector General – Ms. Phyllis Fong  
March 29, 2022**

I would like to welcome everyone to today's hearing, our first this year.

Before we get underway, I would like to welcome Dr. Harris as the Subcommittee's Acting Ranking Member, and other members on the Subcommittee.

I would also like to welcome our witnesses, Ms. Fong, Ms. Coffey, Mr. Harden, Ms. Rone, and Mr. Tyrrell, from USDA's Office of Inspector General. Thank you for appearing before us this morning. I especially want to express my appreciation for Inspector Fong for her dedicated service over the past eight months managing responsibilities at both USDA and the Federal Housing Finance Agency.

Since the budget was just transmitted yesterday, this hearing will focus more on OIG's oversight of a wide-ranging department that touches the lives of every American.

I am pleased to note that the final FY 2022 bill fully funded the President's request for OIG, which provided a very generous increase for your office.

As I stated in previous years, I have always been a big supporter of your office. Day in day out, OIG staff are truly the unsung heroes in the battle against waste, fraud, and abuse. Your work through audits, investigations, and reviews helps protect the taxpayers' interests while improving the Department's effectiveness and efficiency.

So, like previous years, I would like to hear more about your plans to conduct adequate oversight of USDA programs and the challenges you face in ensuring agreed-upon recommendations are implemented and complaints are appropriately addressed.

Now, let me ask our distinguished Acting Ranking Member, Dr. Harris, if he has any opening remarks, and I would like to recognize him at this time.