



Chairman Ander Crenshaw

*Subcommittee on Financial Services and General
Government, House Committee on Appropriations*

FY 2015 Budget Hearing – General Services Administration April 8, 2014 Opening Statement As Prepared

The hearing will come to order. Administrator Tangherlini, welcome to the hearing today.

The General Services Administration is often referred to as the landlord of the Federal Government, but GSA's mission goes beyond providing office space and managing property.

Agencies across the Federal Government rely on GSA to assist in their procurement and acquisition needs, and deliver effective and economical technology solutions.

In a time of shrinking budgets and scarce resources, GSA's role is all the more important and we on the Committee expect you to be a leader, finding savings and driving efficiency in your own budget.

Only a few years ago Congress and the American people learned of the terrible abuses and excesses that took place during a time when the General Services Administration was flush with money and short on integrity.

Administrator Tangherlini, we appreciate the reforms you have attempted to implement since joining the agency, but we here in Congress and the American taxpayer must be convinced that the culture at GSA has changed.

For that reason, the Committee included several reporting requirements in the 2014 omnibus bill regarding spending, training and bonuses. We look forward to reviewing those reports.

This Subcommittee has pressed GSA to make better use of its existing portfolio of buildings and shrink the Federal footprint through a reduction to GSA's inventory of leased and owned space.

In the last several years we have seen a reduction in staffing across the Federal Government and so it follows, we should see reductions in space requirements.

The fiscal year 2014 Omnibus provided GSA with \$70 million for space consolidation activities and I look forward to hearing from you today on how you intend to use that funding to shrink the GSA building inventory, particularly in regards to the thousands of vacant and underused buildings in your portfolio.

GSA's fiscal year 2015 request proposes something you call "zero net budget authority" which would allow GSA to spend at the level of rent collections you take in from agencies across the Federal Government. I'm skeptical of this approach to budgeting.

Shouldn't GSA only budget for the highest priority projects and not merely match its budget to the level of rent you collect? The Federal Government is your customer and your job is to be a good steward of tax payer dollars. If you're collecting more than is needed, perhaps GSA should charge agencies less.

You've inherited a mess and I appreciate your efforts to instill a culture of transparency and accountability at GSA and restore the American public's trust in this agency.

Once again, welcome, Administrator Tangherlini. I appreciate your service and look forward to your testimony.

#####