

**Hearing on “Oversight of Our Nation’s Largest Employer: Reviewing the U.S. Office of
Personnel Management”**

House Committee on Oversight and Accountability

Thursday, March 9, 2023, 9:30 a.m.

Statement for the Record from Military Spouses

Federally employed military spouses are pulling double duty—they simultaneously serve our country in their own capacity and support their spouse’s military careers, especially with frequent moves and deployments. Remote work is a major employment tool to allow military spouses to successfully serve their countries in both capacities.

Military spouses experience unemployment at a rate of seven times the national average and make up less than one percent of the federal workforce. Military service members cite lack of spousal employment as the number one reason for leaving military service—making spousal employment a serious national security issue. In a recent survey, almost 50% of military spouses said their careers are incompatible with their role as a service member’s spouse.

Many military families often depend on two incomes to avoid financial insecurity. Telework and remote work flexibilities, however, often allow them to keep their jobs during moves and deployments. This is a low-cost, high reward solution that many agencies have eagerly adopted to keep military families employed.

Military families sacrifice for all of us. We should encourage the interagency to embrace a flexible, adaptable workplace which allows military spouses to keep their jobs. We can do better than forcing military families into the unfortunate choice between family separation and losing an income. We call on all federal agencies to support military spouse retention and to dedicate resources to removing barriers to a productive and fulfilling federal career. Expanding opportunities for telework and remote work is absolutely essential. We request OPM establish a military spouse coordinator position to provide support and guidance across the federal government.

(Submitted by the military spouses belonging to employee organizations across the interagency to include Department of State, U.S. Agency for International Development, and U.S. Department of Agriculture. These views are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. government)