

**Written Statement for the Record
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**House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
Subcommittee on Government Operations and
Subcommittee on Healthcare, Benefits, and Administrative Rules
Joint Hearing: “Regulatory Reform Task Forces Check-In”
October 24, 2017**

Chairman Meadows, Chairman Jordan, Ranking Member Connolly, Ranking Member Krishnamoorthi, and Members of the Subcommittees, it is a pleasure to appear before you today to discuss GSA’s Regulatory Reform Task Force and regulatory reform activities in accordance with Executive Order (EO) 13771, *Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs*, and Executive Order 13777, *Enforcing the Regulatory Reform Agenda*. My name is Giancarlo Brizzi and I am the U.S. General Services Administration’s (GSA) Principal Deputy Associate Administrator in the Office of Government-wide Policy.

As one of the Federal Government’s central management agencies, GSA strives through its regulations to provide a policy framework that affords agencies the flexibility to accomplish their missions in the most effective manner while adhering to laws, executive orders, Government-wide memoranda, and other applicable requirements and sound management practices. GSA accomplishes this through four comprehensive regulations: the Federal Property Management Regulation and its successor regulation, the Federal Management Regulation; the Federal Travel Regulation; and the GSA Acquisition Regulation.

Building on the intent and spirit of the Executive Orders, GSA expanded the scope of its review to include non-regulatory policies and practices. This provides an opportunity to review GSA’s day-to-day work activities that will lead to better service for customer agencies, and ultimately, the American people.

GSA is fully committed to complying with EO 13771, *Reducing Regulation and Controlling Regulatory Costs*. Since EO 13771 may exempt many GSA regulations as they are “related to agency organization, management, and personnel,” GSA has focused on the GSA Acquisition Regulation, which affects companies doing business with the Government, in implementing EO 13771. As such, GSA is currently pursuing a number of deregulatory actions that will reduce the burden on vendors doing business with the Government.

EO 13777 required GSA to appoint a Regulatory Reform Officer; establish a Regulatory Reform Task Force; and evaluate existing regulations and make recommendations to the agency head regarding their repeal, replacement, or modification, consistent with applicable law, for the reasons outlined within the Executive Order.

Accordingly, the Acting GSA Administrator, Mr. Timothy Horne, designated Mr. Michael Downing, GSA’s White House Liaison and Deputy Chief of Staff, as the Regulatory Reform Officer and Chair of the Regulatory Reform Task Force. GSA formally established its Regulatory Reform Task Force on April 26, 2017, which includes GSA’s Regulatory Policy Officer; GSA’s Senior Procurement Executive, who serves as the Senior Policy Official; and two operational subject matter experts. It was important that GSA’s Task Force had both policy and operational perspectives as we reviewed our regulations, as well as GSA’s internal policies and practices.

GSA’s Regulatory Reform Task Force established four working groups consisting of subject matter experts to review regulatory and non-regulatory policies and practices that will result in recommending proposals in alignment with the objectives of EO 13777. GSA’s Task Force working groups are organized around the agency’s primary functions and regulations:

1. The Federal Property Management Regulation and the Federal Management Regulation. These regulations govern oversight in areas such as personal and real property, aviation, transportation, and public buildings use and space.
2. The Federal Travel Regulation, which includes requirements for travel by Executive

branch civilian employees and others authorized to travel at Government expense.

3. Policies relating to the leasing of buildings, land, and worksites for the Federal Government. This includes leasing-related regulations in the Federal Management Regulation and GSA Acquisition Regulation and non-regulatory policies, such as the GSA Leasing Desk Guide.
4. Acquisition, including the GSA Acquisition Regulation and non-regulatory internal policies. It does not include the Federal Acquisition Regulation itself, which is under the purview of the Office of Management and Budget's Office of Federal Procurement Policy.

GSA's Regulatory Reform Task Force solicited reform proposals from within the agency, and in the case of travel, from 17 other Federal agencies that volunteered to contribute to the review. To ensure public engagement, each of the four working groups published a notice in the *Federal Register* on May 30, 2017, soliciting reform proposals from the public. This public comment period was originally scheduled to end 60 days after publication of the *Federal Register* notices, but GSA extended the deadline by two weeks to August 14, 2017, to accommodate extension requests from various groups and individuals who wanted to submit comments.

These activities have generated over 2,000 regulatory reform comments, including over 200 comments submitted in response to the *Federal Register* notices and nearly 1,800 proposals generated by GSA's internal working groups and other Federal agencies. The majority of the comments, approximately 1,200, are focused on the Federal Travel Regulation and were submitted by the working groups and other Federal agencies.

GSA's Task Force working groups are currently reviewing and prioritizing proposals in their respective areas. The Task Force has provided the teams with guidance for prioritizing proposals for consideration, directing them to consider whether a proposal is in alignment with the Executive Order's objectives and GSA's ability to implement the proposal, the amount of

time needed to implement the proposal, the practicality of the proposed change, and the impact of the proposal.

The Task Force received several proposals to eliminate regulatory requirements that are explicitly required by statute, meaning GSA cannot pursue these actions without legislative changes. Conversely, other proposals entail repealing, replacing, or modifying non-regulatory policies applicable to GSA's internal operations that the agency could implement on its own in a relatively short period of time.

Examples of regulatory reform efforts currently under review or being pursued include making it easier for vendors to do business with GSA. More specifically, GSA is looking at ways to remove outdated requirements in the GSA Acquisition Regulation that require contractors to submit multiple reports or redundant information. Vendors spend a great deal of time compiling, printing, mailing, and uploading information from paper copies into various systems with every applicable contract modification. With the adoption of electronic submission and automated processes for distribution of the information, the burden to industry can be greatly reduced. Other proposals under consideration are non-regulatory, but important nonetheless; include making regulations more accessible to users on mobile devices or simplifying internal forms. We are optimistic that regulatory and non-regulatory efforts such as these will in the aggregate have a significant impact on improving GSA's regulatory and operational landscape.

After the working groups finish their initial review and prioritization of comments, they may seek clarifications from the submitters to ensure full understanding. They will then make recommendations to the Task Force on which regulations to address and whether or not to propose any legislative changes. The Task Force will review the recommendations, consult with any necessary internal or external advisors, and then will make a formal recommendation to the GSA Acting Administrator.

I am very grateful for the opportunity to update the Subcommittees on GSA's Regulatory Reform Task Force and look forward to working with the Committee and Subcommittees as GSA continues its efforts. Thank you for your time today and I welcome any questions.