OPM Responses for Chairman Connolly and Congresswoman Norton

Connolly Q1. In May, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) announced a significant shift to skills-based hiring, which, you have been quoted as saying, allows the government to focus "on what an applicant can do—and not where they learned to do it." How will job applicants experience this change in policy? What are you doing to help agencies understand this shift and to message this change to would-be civil servants?

Response: OPM continues to take steps to improve the hiring process to ensure that qualified candidates with the right skillsets make it to hiring managers for review. Improved hiring processes mean better service for the American people and a better experience for candidates. On May 19, 2022, OPM issued Guidance Release - E.O. 13932; Modernizing and Reforming the Assessment and Hiring of Federal Job Candidates | CHCOC to guide agencies' efforts to improve skills-based hiring practices. The policy guidance included updates to qualifications policy, a new guide on improving assessments, and additional guidance for agencies' implementation of the Executive Order. In addition to the policy guidance, OPM is working with agency talent teams to drive change management activities aligned with agencies' talent acquisition strategic goals and is highlighting best practices of early adopters. OPM is working to expand staff capacity to deliver training to assist agencies with the transition and build capabilities within agencies to use robust assessments to improve hiring.

These efforts will make it easier for individuals without a college degree to demonstrate that they have the skills to compete for Federal jobs, thereby expanding the pools of potential applicants and helping to remove any barriers and to increase diversity in hiring talent. Applicants will have a clearer understanding of job requirements and how their skills align with jobs in the Federal government. This shift will be evident in agency job postings and the way in which applicants are assessed for Federal jobs. OPM will also communicate with job applicants through USAJOBs and other communication strategies, including targeted outreach activities to would-be civil servants.

Connolly Q2. The federal government has a collection of incredible programs, authorities, and innovative hiring structures like the Scholarship for Service, the U.S. Digital Corps, the U.S. Digital Service, stints with 18F, Intergovernmental Personnel Act rotations, and the governmentwide direct hire authority for cyber-related positions—to name a few. But it is unclear how these flexibilities and opportunities are communicated to those who might benefit from them. Cybercareers.gov, for example, appears to filter the jobs posted on USAjobs.gov, but can OPM create a comprehensive website that walks potential federal hires or detailees through their options and opportunities to serve at all skill levels and career points?

Response: We agree that there are numerous talent and recruitment programs across the government, and one of the challenges is that they are governed by different agencies and hiring authorities, including the ones you list in your question. For example, OPM has established a Cybersecurity Hiring Resource Hub, a one-stop shop for available hiring flexibilities and information on compensation that is aimed at hiring managers and HR professionals, but also provides useful basic information for cybersecurity job seekers (https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/future-of-work/cybersecurity-hiring-resource-hub/).

OPM works with agencies to communicate special hiring programs, hiring flexibilities, and opportunities to job seekers, mostly thorough USAJOBS. As you know, USAJOBS is an important platform that supports agencies in attracting and acquiring new talent, facilitates the movement of talent throughout

government, and enables agencies to provide developmental opportunities for current staff. USAJOBS also offers the flexibility for agencies to recruit using different hiring authorities and has created capabilities that allow agencies and government-wide programs to leverage external recruitment resources and platforms. Finally, as OPM works to revamp its website, we plan to further consolidate recruitment programs as much as possible.

I.   **Additional Background on USAJOBS**
USAJOBS is the Federal Government's official employment site, connecting applicants with federal employment opportunities across the United States and around the world. The primary purpose of USAJOBS is to deliver, jointly with Federal agencies, a work force that effectively serves the public. USAJOBS is universally recognized as the front door to federal hiring by a diverse community of job seekers including members of the public, current federal employees, veterans, military spouses, students, individuals with disabilities, and industry professionals.

II.   **Communicating Hiring Flexibilities and Job Opportunities**
Over the past 25 years, USAJOBS has evolved in response to federal agency recruitment and hiring priorities. While USAJOBS facilitates a small but vital slice of the hiring process (the announcement open-to-close time period), federal agencies have access to a variety of capabilities on USAJOBS to support recruitment and outreach activities in a dynamic federal hiring environment. Agencies can optimize their use of USAJOBS to implement recruiting and hiring authorities, prepare for hiring surges, and carry out targeted recruitment activities. Below are examples:

- **Hiring Paths**: To help applicants quickly identify job opportunity announcements that match their eligibility status, OPM incorporated Hiring Paths iconography and associated descriptions into job announcements. The Hiring Paths feature enables agencies to more specifically describe who is eligible to apply to a job announcement.
- **Custom job postings:** USAJOBS offers a "custom job posting" feature that agencies can use for certain positions. Custom job postings are stored within USAJOBS, but do not appear in a USAJOBS public search. Instead, agencies receive a unique URL to the job posting that can be shared with a targeted talent pool. This feature allows agencies to better manage their applicant pool while still leveraging USAJOBS to maintain a consistent and secure application process that allows for transparency and data analytics.
- **Resume mining and recruitment campaign feature:** Over 2 million applicants have made their resume "searchable" in USAJOBS. OPM created the Agency Talent Portal for human resources specialists and hiring managers to mine these searchable resumes to identify top talent for job opportunities. Agencies can also create recruitment campaigns for specific hiring events, for job announcements, or to simply engage potential applicants.
- **Events feature**: OPM incorporated an Events section on USAJOBS where applicants can find information on hiring events, training opportunities, and large hiring promotions (for example, the 2020 Census hiring effort). This capability helps agencies promote their mission and recruitment activities.
- **Custom career portals:** USAJOBS can create custom career portals for an agency or a government-wide program to highlight specific careers, the agency/program mission, benefits, and much more. Several agencies are using this capability, including the Department of Homeland Security (for cyber hiring), the Department of the Interior, and the Intelligence Community.

- **Tailored job announcements for special hiring authorities:** USAJOBS offers flexible options for agencies using special hiring authorities. For example, agencies recruiting for particular occupations may use special hiring flexibilities to source applications on external/third-party sites or at hiring events. USAJOBS offers a "view only" job announcement that includes specific instructions on how to apply for the job (such as submitting an application prior to a hiring fair).
- **Job announcement API:** USAJOBS makes the announcement content available through a standard data feed (Application Program Interface or API) so sites such as Google and LinkedIn can re-post federal jobs on their sites. Over 800 entities, including academia and private and government job boards use this data feed to attract candidates to federal opportunities.
- **Open Opportunities platform:** As an extension of USAJOBS, OPM hosts the Open Opportunities website (https://openopps.usajobs.gov/), which allows federal employees to search and apply for full-time and part-time details, job shadowing, coaching, and mentoring experiences. Open Opportunities enables federal employees to discover opportunities to develop new skills and experience while enabling agencies to quickly connect with employees in the federal workforce who can close immediate, short-term personnel gaps.

Given that USAJOBS is the universally recognized "front door to federal hiring," OPM will continue collaborating with agencies and prioritizing improvements to the website to ensure that applicants can use it to more easily find and apply for jobs and better understand hiring flexibilities and paths open to them.

Connolly Q3. How is OPM working to make it easier for agencies to understand when and how the recent graduate hiring flexibility should be used?

Response: To help agencies understand and facilitate use of the recent College Graduate hiring flexibility, OPM has promoted this opportunity with the President's Management Council and CHCO Council on numerous occasions, provided interactive, virtual sessions (or webinars) to agency human resources (HR) staff and hiring managers, and provides on-going technical assistance to agency HR staff. In addition, as we collect questions and feedback from agencies through our technical assistance and training sessions, we will share guidance to address common questions on the Frequently Asked Questions page of the OPM website.

The Pathways Programs' Recent Graduate (RG) authority has similar eligibility as the College Graduate authority and has been in use for over ten years. OPM provides on-going technical assistance, including one-on-one agency consultation on request and group briefings on the RG authority. OPM has also provided agencies with a variety of written guidance as well, including the Pathways Toolkit for Hiring Managers and Supervisors and the Pathways Program Handbook.

Connolly Q4. The Partnership for Public Service recently released its "Best Places to Work in the Federal Government Rankings." One of the insights emerging in that analysis is that federal employees aged 30-39 expressed the lowest engagement rates across all of government. Why do you think mid-career employees are among the least engaged federal employees and what steps can we take to engage them more effectively?

Response: OPM's 2016 report on the drivers behind employee engagement found several factors that had an impact on the conditions for achieving an engaged workforce

(https://www.opm.gov/fevs/reports/special-reports/summary-understanding-and-using-engagement-drivers-2016.pdf):

- Performance feedback: Emphasizes the need for ongoing employee feedback to support and sustain progress toward achieving work goals.
- Training and Development: Focuses on the need to increase employee capacity to perform, such as by providing training opportunities. Development encourages and strengthens good performance.
- Collaborative Management: Illustrates the importance of a management style that promotes and supports collaborative communication and teamwork in completing projects and accomplishing goals/objectives.
- Work/Life balance: Highlights the importance of supervisor support of employees' needs to balance work and nonwork priorities.
- Merit System Principles: Serves to ensure that Federal personnel management practices support fairness and protect employees from arbitrary actions, personnel favoritism, political coercion and reprisal.

Improving employee engagement is a critical part of the President's Management Agenda (PMA), specifically Priority One, "Strengthening and Empowering the Federal Workforce." One of the core metrics for success on that priority is creating better employee engagement through improving agency Federal Employee Viewpoint Surveys (FEVS) scores and identifying specific areas of employee engagement for improvement. The PMA agenda lays out a key focus area for agencies: targeting key gaps in FEVS engagement whether by organizational unit, position, or other demographics. We are creating a robust set of activities and support for agencies on how to best use FEVS data, emphasizing communication on how the agency is reviewing and using FEVS data and other follow-up activities by the agency. As we approach the release of FEVS 2022 data, employee engagement and FEVS-related activities are top of mind.

More specifically related to your questions, the "midcareer crisis" or "midcareer slump" is a common theme in organizational research across the public and private sectors, with many studies showing that employees in the middle of their careers experience lower satisfaction and engagement than older and younger colleagues. Sources referenced below explain several factors that can potentially impact the midcareer slump, with a common theme around the idea of many workers experiencing a lack of growth or professional development opportunities in this phase of their careers. This could be especially relevant for those who spent time advancing their careers early on but are not interested in continuing to advance into managerial/leadership positions. This is a potentially challenging phase to navigate for both employees and organizations and plans for professional growth could focus more on lateral training/skills development or other more creative activities such as mentoring programs and flexible working arrangements.

Sources:
https://hbr.org/2018/03/many-employees-have-a-mid-career-crisis-heres-how-employers-can-help
https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/hr-topics/employee-relations/pages/midcareer-crisis-.aspx
https://www.inc.com/jessica-stillman/beware-the-mid-career-slump.html
https://news.gallup.com/businessjournal/140795/muddled-middle-age.aspx

Connolly Q5. USAJOBS asks users for feedback and collects key administrative and metadata on how users engage the website and federal job postings. Are there opportunities to use the data and feedback collected from USAJOBS to improve recruitment to the federal government?

Response: OPM continually works with applicants, federal agencies, and Talent Acquisition System partners to leverage feedback and data from USAJOBS to further enhance the site and drive improvements to the recruitment and hiring process. Actions related to that effort include:

- **OPM's FY2022-2026 Strategic Plan** includes a strategic objective centered on improving the applicant experience in USAJOBS. (OPM Strategic Objective 3.2 - Create a personalized USAJOBS experience to help applicants find relevant opportunities. By FY 2026, improve applicant satisfaction to 4.1 out of 5 for the desktop platform and to 4.5 out of 5 for the mobile platform.) OPM is implementing multiple activities supporting this objective, including conducting end-to-end user research, increasing stakeholder access to USAJOBS data, and improving "voice of the customer" sourcing and support mechanisms. OPM tracks several performance measures associated with these activities, including direct applicant feedback metrics.
- **Improving strategies to advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) insights:** Federal agencies can access Applicant Flow Data (AFD) through their Talent Acquisition System (such as USA Staffing and Monster). AFD information is combined with indicators showing applicants' progress through major milestones in the hiring process. Agencies can use this information to identify and address disparities in their recruitment outreach initiatives and barriers in their application process.
- **Improving timeliness of applicant notifications**: OPM uses Verint/Foresee customer experience surveys to capture feedback from USAJOBS visitors on their job search and application experience. Based on this feedback, which is shared with the agencies, OPM has identified "applicant notifications" as an area for improvement, as survey results regularly indicate that applicants do not receive notifications on their applications in a timely manner. Additionally, OPM is building a dashboard that displays applicant notification data. This information will help better guide OPM's activities to support agency accountability with applicant notifications and share best practices.
- **Improving job announcements**: A hiring agency's job announcement is one of the first opportunities to connect with potential candidates. USAJOBS survey results regularly indicate that job announcements are difficult to understand. For example, job duties are not stated in plain language, content often includes federal jargon and acronyms, and job titles are too generic. This can result in job seekers applying for jobs for which they are not eligible and/or qualified or refraining from applying to jobs for which they are qualified. OPM shares this feedback and strategies for improving job announcements through various forums (such as written guidance and presentations) to help agencies improve the quality of their job announcements.
- **Increasing outreach**: OPM uses web analytics to measure applicant engagement and interest in job opportunity announcement content (such as number of views for a job announcement) and to track application trends (such as number of applications started). Agencies can request this data and use it to identify low applicant engagement for various jobs. For jobs that have low applicant engagement, the agency can identify recruitment strategies that would increase applicant awareness and interest. Strategies could include using USAJOBS' Agency Talent Portal to mine the USAJOBS database of searchable resumes and messaging candidates about

open jobs, posting recruitment events on the USAJOBS landing page, creating a USAJOBS-branded search page, and leveraging social media to announce open jobs.

In FY 23, OPM plans to establish a Federal Recruitment Consortium/Community of Practice comprised of HR practitioners, Federal recruiters, hiring managers, diversity specialists, and others involved in Federal recruitment to tackle Federal recruitment challenges, work collaboratively on recruitment initiatives, and share effective and innovative recruitment practices. USAJOBS data and user feedback will be used to improve the quality of job postings and improve outreach efforts to job seekers (such as quarterly webinars on navigating the Federal application process and videos).

Connolly Q6. You note in your testimony that "[f]or the federal government to attract and retain top personnel, it must effectively develop and test new ideas in workforce policy and management through smart use of demonstration projects to make long-term improvements. This effort can potentially improve recruitment, retention, and every other aspect of a federal employee's experience." How can Congress help incentivize demonstration projects and experimentation at agencies so we find and then scale successes?

Response: The current statutory Demonstration Project authority does not meet the current pace of experimentation needed to develop and test new ideas to attract and retain top personnel. Drafted in the late 1970's, the authority reflects the norms and capabilities from over 40 years ago. In contemporary practice, demonstration projects (or pilot programs) operate in more fluid and iterative environments that emphasize agility, making mid-stream course corrections, and speed to delivery. Moreover, Congress has increasingly provided certain agencies with personnel authorities that are exceptions to Title 5, completely outside of the demonstration project rubric. In so doing, it has disincentivized agencies from using the demonstration project authority, encouraging them instead to work directly with Congress. This is problematic for the Federal personnel system. A modernized demonstration project authority would allow for more experimentation that can benefit the entire system.

Additionally, to successfully develop and test new ideas and scale them across government, OPM needs to serve as a central authority regarding any research and experimentation involving Federal personnel, with agencies consulting and engaging OPM in the conduct of any research program or pilot that involves Federal HR systems. It would also position OPM as the center of excellence to align and stabilize the system of Federal Human Capital research and policy making.

With a modernized approach to, and incentivization of, demonstration projects, experimentation, and research, OPM would be better positioned to invest in efforts to identify opportunities; design effective pilots; manage and administer select pilots; provide support to partner agencies; coordinate ideation and collaboration across the enterprise; and gather, analyze, archive, and disseminate data, insights, and best practices.

OPM would appreciate the opportunity to further discuss how it can work with Congress to improve, update, and modernize demonstration project authority.

Connolly Q7. During the hearing, we addressed the subject of the OPM backlog of unprocessed retirement claims for federal retirees. Please submit a detailed analysis of the issue: an assessment of the problem, what steps are being taken to address it, and a timeline for resolution.

Response: As of September 1, 2022, the inventory of unprocessed retirement claims is 29,237.

Three conditions affect current inventory levels:

1. The retirement process is largely paper based. The process to submit a retirement application begins with the employee's HR office, which obtains a completed application from the retiring employee and certifies other crucial information. The retirement application package is then forwarded to the employee's servicing payroll office, which certifies additional information OPM needs to calculate the retirement benefit. Only then is the retirement application package sent to OPM for processing, at which time OPM often must spend time addressing application errors before the package can move forward. We are diligently working with agencies to address ongoing high error rates.

   The COVID-19 pandemic impacted these handoffs between HR offices, payroll centers, and OPM. Many government agencies, mindful of the need to balance employee safety with service to the public, adjusted on-site work requirements. Some government offices were closed intermittently, and some, like OPM, required employees to work a hybrid schedule with reductions in on-site staff. These changes disrupted the well-defined processes previously used to process retirement applications. Staff disruptions also led to an increase in the number of retirement packages sent to OPM that were missing vital information and could not be processed, as mentioned above. Finally, OPM, like other agencies, was faced with staff shortages due to illness and quarantine restrictions.

2. Due to cuts in the OPM budget in prior years, Retirement Services was, for more than a year, unable to fill the vacancies that resulted from employees retiring or resigning. This delay in hiring impacted processing capacity and downstream effects that we are still managing today. Hiring shortfalls are compounded by the complex nature of the work and the significant amount of training and on-the-job-experience required before an adjudicator is fully qualified.

3. The number of new retirement claims received by Retirement Services increased in 2021 and 2022 (which represented a nine percent increase from FY21 to FY22).

To reduce the current inventory and improve processing timeframes, Retirement Services has done the following:

- Expanded processing capacity by hiring twenty-five new employees, all of whom completed training in April 2022. We appreciate the increase in our budget to do so.
- Redirected resources to focus on unprocessed retirement claims. For example, we increased the amount of overtime spending devoted to inventory reduction. We continuously review and adjust the retirement process to ensure that we resolve any bottlenecks and impediments to the workflow.
- Increased outreach to our agency partners, including senior leadership, to track and address common errors that prevent us from processing the retirement claim.
- Created a variety of educational webinars, hosted virtual Benefits Officer training events, and provided detailed feedback about individual retirement errors to agencies on a monthly basis.
- Reviewed and amended our procedures and guidance to accept digital signatures on many of the required forms that make up the retirement application package.

- Initiated several projects that we believe will strengthen the customer experience. For instance, Retirement Services is reorganizing its web site, instituting plain language content, updating FAQ's, and generally reorienting the website to focus on customer needs. Retirement Services is also developing a "retirement guide" to help customers better prepare for retirement and provide useful information about the retirement process.
- Finally, in the longer term, Retirement Services continues to work toward implementation of an online retirement application. We are also developing a digital retirement booklet with individualized retirement information.

Despite the increase in new retirement claims, processing of retirement applications increased by 18 percent over FY2021. The inventory decreased from a high of almost 36,000 in March of this year to 29,237 as of September 1, 2022.

Retirement Services is confident that, absent an unanticipated surge in retirements or loss of staff, and with steady progress on incremental IT improvements, our current efforts will continue to reduce inventory.

Connolly Q8. The length of time it takes to hire someone has always been an issue for the federal government. What lessons did you learn from the recent hiring surge for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law that might be ready for scale across government?

Response: Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) agencies are hiring in less time than government-wide averages. OPM acted aggressively in response to the hiring surge we anticipated would result from enactment of the BIL. Starting in December 2021, OPM took several steps to assist agencies with their BIL -related hiring needs, including issuing two hiring-related tools: the "Talent Surge Executive Playbook" ("Playbook") and the "Talent Surge Hiring Authorities Fact Sheet: Empowering Agencies to Meet Their Workforce Needs" ("Fact Sheet"). The "Playbook" is a user-friendly compilation of information on HR flexibilities, authorities, actions, and other resources. It will assist agencies to strategically plan, recruit, and hire staff needed to rebuild their workforce and deliver on diverse and complex agency missions while offering improved customer services for the American people. The "Fact Sheet" is a one-stop-shop for agencies where we outline all of the current hiring authorities and flexibilities that are available to Title 5 agencies for their immediate use.

OPM also formed and prioritized an enterprise-wide BIL response effort comprised of several OPM program offices aimed at meeting urgent customer agency needs. We formed agency specific "tiger teams" to help agencies identify their most urgent BIL hiring challenges and needs. OPM surveyed agencies on their staffing needs for implementing the BIL; authorized direct hire authority for HR professionals and launched a multi-agency job announcement for HR; authorized specific hiring flexibilities to address discrete agency critical hiring needs related to BIL implementation; and launched a special BIL jobs page on USAJOBS.

More recently, on February 1, 2022, OPM issued an excepted service Schedule A hiring authority to address the need for hiring staff in support of the BIL. This authority may reduce the time to hire because it does not require public notice before filling a time-limited position.

Collectively, these efforts have helped reduce the time-to-hire with respect to this hiring surge and early research has identified several drivers that influence this decrease in time.

1. BIL agencies may use more non-competitive hiring authorities, which streamline the rating and ranking process.
2. When new hiring needs are validated, BIL agencies reduce the time for planning and hiring by leveraging existing certificates of eligible people (vetted lists of qualified candidates for hiring managers to consider) and making greater numbers of selections from those lists.
3. The security review process is averaging 25 days for BIL agencies (compared to the government average of 36 days). However, it is taking another 22 days from security clearance completed to employee start date due to new hire requirements, such as providing notice to former employer.

Where applicable, we are exploring the application of these methods and approaches across government to meet other agency hiring needs.

Connolly Q9. Limitations on General Schedule (GS) pay that correspond to Executive Schedule pay rates prevent some employees from receiving pay adjustments to which they would otherwise be entitled. By law, base pay and locality pay combined cannot exceed the pay rate for Level IV of the Executive Schedule. As annual adjustments to base and locality pay are provided and this limitation prevents raises from taking effect at the top of the scale—referred to as "pay compression"—employees paid at an increasing number of GS step levels have reached this cap. How many federal employees are affected by pay compression? In what localities? How has pay compression impacted hiring and retention of senior federal employees?

Response: OPM estimates that around 27,900 General Schedule employees have a locality rate of pay limited by the statutory EX-IV pay cap of $176,300 in 2022. The EX-IV cap affects payable GS-15 salaries in 30 of the 54 locality pay areas at various steps and the GS-14, step 10, salary in the San Jose-San Francisco locality pay area. It should be noted that of the 27,900 employees, around 22,000 are stationed in the Washington-Baltimore locality pay area. We also note that special salary rates established under 5 U.S.C. 5305 are also subject to the EX-IV cap, and around 400 employees receiving GS special rates are affected by the pay cap. We do not have data on the effect of the pay cap on hiring because the cap mostly affects employees who are quite advanced in their careers. Anecdotally, though, through our CHCO Council and other agency engagement efforts and projects, we often hear about agencies losing candidates to the private sector or agencies with higher pay schedules. Moreover, the CHCO Council has discussed the challenges of recruiting federal employees into SES because of pay compression. When looking at quit rates as a proxy for retention, we see that the average annual quit rate of 1.04 percent for GS-15 positions is below the average level for GS positions of 2.65 percent.

Locality Pay Area	GS Employees at EX-IV Cap
AK-ALASKA	40
AT-ATLANTA--ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY--SANDY	412
BO-BOSTON-WORCESTER-PROVIDENCE, MA-RI-N	240
BU-BUFFALO-CHEEKTOWAGA, NY	8
CH-CHICAGO-NAPERVILLE, IL-IN-WI	262
CI-CINCINNATI-WILMINGTON-MAYSVILLE, OH-	39
CL-CLEVELAND-AKRON-CANTON, OH	109
CO-COLUMBUS-MARION-ZANESVILLE, OH	21
DA-DALLAS-FORT WORTH, TX-OK	163
DN-DENVER-AURORA, CO	324

DT-DETROIT-WARREN-ANN ARBOR, MI	75
HA-HARTFORD-WEST HARTFORD, CT-MA	39
HI-HAWAII	49
HO-HOUSTON-THE WOODLANDS, TX	688
HU-HUNTSVILLE-DECATUR-ALBERTVILLE, AL	172
LA-LOS ANGELES-LONG BEACH, CA	306
MI-MIAMI-FORT LAUDERDALE-PORT ST. LUCIE	73
ML-MILWAUKEE-RACINE-WAUKESHA, WI	13
MN-MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL, MN-WI	27
NY-NEW YORK-NEWARK, NY-NJ-CT-PA	584
PH-PHILADELPHIA-READING-CAMDEN, PA-NJ-D	266
PO-PORTLAND-VANCOUVER-SALEM, OR-WA	96
PX-PHOENIX-MESA-SCOTTSDALE, AZ	36
RA-RALEIGH-DURHAM-CHAPEL HILL, NC	102
RI-RICHMOND, VA	32
SA-SACRAMENTO-ROSEVILLE, CA-NV	51
SD-SAN DIEGO-CARLSBAD, CA	167
SJ-SAN JOSE-SAN FRANCISCO-OAKLAND, CA	1,307
ST-SEATTLE-TACOMA, WA	162
WA-WASHINGTON-BALTIMORE-ARLINGTON, DC-M	21,977

Norton Q1. My office has previously asked for a list of the reports that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is required to provide Congress on maintaining a fully staffed and qualified federal workforce. This question is, of course, particularly important with the retirement of the baby boomers. I am, once again, requesting the list of reports.

Response: The following is a list of some of the reports that OPM is required to provide Congress that relate to the federal workforce. Please note that we are not aware of any that specifically indicate that the sole purpose is about determining whether a fully staffed and qualified federal workforce is maintained:

- Federal Equal Opportunity Program (5 U.S.C. 7201(e))
- Federal Telework Report (5 U.S.C. 6506)
- Federal Government Hiring Process and USAJOBS (H.RPT 116-122)
- Report on Veterans Employment in the Federal Government (38 U.S.C. 4214 (e)(1))
- Cybersecurity Recruitment in the Federal Government (R.CMT.PRT. 116-68)
- Non-Competitive Hiring of Military Spouses (PL 115-232)
- Nondiscrimination Report (House Report 116-456)
- Federal Viewpoint Survey (R.CMT.PRT. 116-68)
- Federal Government Hiring Process (R.CMT.PRT. 116-68)
- Employment of People with Disabilities in the Federal Executive Branch Report (Executive Order 13548)
- Political Appointees to Civil Service Positions
- Federal Government Hiring Process (PL 117-103)
- Report to Congress on Pay for Critical Positions (PL 108-411)
- Student Loan Repayment Report (5 U.S.C. 5379)

Norton Q2. What is OPM doing to recruit prospective employees to replace employees who are known to be retiring imminently?

Response: OPM offers a full range of resources to support agency hiring activities. This includes support to agencies in implementing their strategic workforce plans; public outreach efforts to attract and retain a diverse workforce throughout the Federal government; and providing agencies with critical guidance in the form of policy question and answer fact sheets, presentations and webinars for HR professionals, hiring managers, and various interest groups.

OPM also provides recruiting and hiring support for Federal agencies in field locations through ongoing partnerships with Federal Executive Boards and conducts engagement activities and maintains partnerships with academic institutions, including minority-serving institutions (such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, and Asian American and Pacific Islanders-Serving Institutions), to enable recruiting and outreach activities with colleges and universities.

To support agencies in hiring students and recent graduates, OPM issued regulations for the Post-Secondary Students hiring authority on August 18, 2021, and the College Graduate hiring authority on November 5, 2021. OPM also intends to issue updated regulations for Pathways Programs to bolster the government's ability to compete with other sectors to close skills gaps and hire needed early career talent, many of whom have the rapidly evolving skills agencies need.