The Honorable Donna F. Edwards (MD-4th)
"New Consolidated FBI Headquarters Building in the Washington, DC Area"
Hearing by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency Management
March 13, 2013

Chairman Barletta and Ranking Member Norton,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. The future location of the FBI headquarters is vital to the men and women of the Bureau and their mission. It is also vital to the people of Maryland's 4th Congressional District, and specifically Prince George's County, where I live and which Congressman Hoyer and I represent in this Chamber.

We are here today because it is critical the FBI consolidate its operations to optimize the agency's ability to meet its vital mission and make the best use of the taxpayer's resources.

It has been almost 40 years since the FBI moved into the Hoover Building. We know the Bureau has outgrown it, and that it can no longer provide the security, infrastructure needs, and space required of the world's premiere law enforcement agency. In addition to its responsibilities here at home, today's FBI is a key leader globally in meeting our law enforcement needs.

We know in the National Capital Region alone, the FBI occupies more than 3 million square feet of space over 21 locations, resulting in $168 million in leasing costs alone.

Yet, surprisingly, the Hoover Building only houses 52 percent of the FBI headquarters' staff. This dispersed office structure is impeding the Bureau's ability to meet its core mission due to challenges in managing its headquarters, divisions, and offices effectively, while collaborating and sharing information across functions.

The fact that the FBI continues to operate at such a high level is a testament to the commitment, dedication, and hard work of our men and women who do their jobs above and beyond the call of duty.

To comply with post-9/11 security requirements, the FBI has looked to consolidate its facilities into one headquarters. In response to a 2011 GAO study, the FBI conducted a security assessment that documented threats and analyzed building security requirements consistent with the Interagency Security Committee standards. As a critical component of our country's national security apparatus, the agency must comply with these enhanced security standards.

We are here today because our public servants deserve one consolidated facility that honors their commitment, provides the best environment to achieve their missions, and saves taxpayer money.

The Senate's prospectus requires the new headquarters to be located within 2 miles of a Metro station and 2.5 miles from the Capital Beltway, while providing Level 5 security. This language is intended to ensure a fair, competitive process that includes sites within the District of Columbia and the nearby National Capital Region. Our taxpayers deserve such a process and I support it whole heartedly.

Let me say why I believe Prince George's County offers the most competitive combination to effectively meet the needs of the FBI, the Senate-approved Committee Resolution, and taxpayer value, with the finest location and access to world class facilities.

Joint Base Andrews, the President's airport, in Camp Springs in Prince George's County, would provide the FBI with a secure facility from which to depart anywhere in the world.

Fort Meade, home to the National Security Agency and the nation's leader in cyber security and its intelligence gathering apparatus, is another secure facility located nearby in Anne Arundel County, a part of which I also have the honor of representing.

The University of Maryland, in College Park in Prince George's County, has nationally ranked disciplines in criminal justice, computer forensics, biological sciences, language, homeland, cyber, and national security. It is also home to the Department of Homeland Security's Center of Excellence in Terrorism Studies, a national consortium of leading terrorism studies programs in the country.

Prince George's County is home to 15 Metro stops – the most in our region. It provides easy access to the White House and downtown Washington, DC, the Capital Beltway, the Department of Homeland Security's new campus at Saint Elizabeth's and our region's airports, while having the lowest prices of real estate near Metro facilities throughout our region.

In addition, over 67,000 federal employees reside in Prince George's County and the County has shown a strong commitment to attracting economic development and providing an affordable high-quality of life for its residents. Prince George's County is right for the FBI, and it will do right *by* the FBI.

If a consolidated FBI Headquarters becomes a reality anywhere within the parameters set by the Senate Committee Resolution, the District of Columbia still stands to gain.

The Hoover Building on Pennsylvania Avenue would free up a block on the most important street in America - allowing the District of Columbia to have a tax-generating tenant and a building that adds to the aesthetic value of Pennsylvania Avenue. That would complement the soon to be developed Old Post office site that was championed by this Committee in the last Congress.

Again, Chairman Barletta and Ranking Member Norton, thank you for allowing me to testify. I look forward to continue working with both of you in passing a Transportation and

Infrastructure Committee Resolution that establishes an open and fair competitive process to consolidate the FBI headquarters into one facility a reality.