

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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April 17, 2020

The Honorable Michael Rigas
Acting Director
Office of Personnel Management
1900 E Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20405

Dear Acting Director Rigas:

The Subcommittee is writing in support of the decision by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to delay the government-wide Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) to July. The Subcommittee also believes that, as Acting Director of OPM and therefore Acting Chair of the Chief Human Capital Officers Council (CHCOC), you have a unique opportunity to collect information on federal agency leadership and management practices during the coronavirus crisis.

On March 31, OPM postponed the 2020 FEVS commencement to July 13, 2020, in order to support “critical agency missions as well as maximize employee participation in the survey.”¹ Given the essential and urgent role of federal workers in responding to this pandemic, we recognize the need to delay the FEVS by two months from its planned start.

However, this year, OPM has a unique opportunity to collect information that the federal government currently lacks: data on how agencies lead and manage during a crisis. Federal employees have continued to work and deliver critical services to the public while combating an unprecedented global health crisis. An examination of the efficacy of agency leadership is more important now than ever before.

Federal agencies are required by law to conduct an annual survey that assesses employee satisfaction and leadership and management practices that contribute to agency performance. In addition, OPM is required to specify standardized survey questions to allow comparison of leadership and engagement scores across agencies.²

¹ Memorandum from Michael J. Rigas, Acting Director, Office of Personnel Management, to Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies, 2020 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Delay (Mar. 31, 2020) (online at www.chcoc.gov/content/2020-federal-employee-viewpoint-survey-delay).

² Pub. L. No. 108-136 (2004).

OPM should use this opportunity to craft temporary questions that assess agency preparedness and response, including, for example, ensuring continuity of operations during the pandemic. OPM could create first-of-its-kind data that will enable agencies to evaluate and improve their leadership posture and performance during a crisis. The Survey is an opportunity to improve agency performance and identify resources to better prepare the federal workforce and its leaders for future crises.

For these reasons, we request a briefing by May 1, 2020, to discuss the measures OPM has taken or will take to administer the 2020 FEVS.

The Committee on Oversight and Reform is the principal oversight committee of the House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Subcommittee staff at (202) 225-5051.

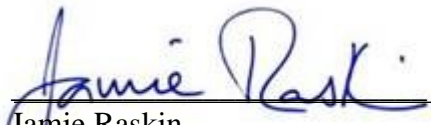
Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations



Stephen F. Lynch
Chairman
Subcommittee on National Security



Jamie Raskin
Chairman
Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties



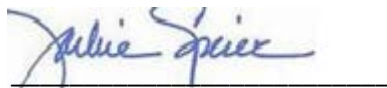
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Ro Khanna
Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



John P. Sarbanes
Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform



Jackie Speier
Member
Committee on Oversight and Reform

The Honorable Michael Rigas

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cc: The Honorable Jody B. Hice, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on National Security

The Honorable Chip Roy, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Civil Right and Civil Liberties