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Opening Statement Rep. Gerald Connolly, Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Government Operations Hearing on “Federal Trade Commission and General Services Administration Thwart Cost Saving Consolidation”

December 3, 2013

Chairman Mica, thank you for holding today's hearing. The Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) historic Apex Building and the National Gallery of Art's (NGA) West and East Buildings together form an iconic streetscape at the end of the “Federal Triangle.” Today we consider proposals to transfer the FTC Headquarters Building to the NGA.

I am new to this issue, compared to the Chairman and key agency stakeholders who have been working on this matter for six years. I am interested in hearing from all sides this morning on the potential savings, potential costs, and operational impacts associated with the proposed transfer of the Apex Building from the FTC to the NGA.

My understanding is that the Chairman, an avowed supporter of the arts, has sought to expand the National Gallery into the Apex Building to enable the museum to grow and expand its offering to the American public, while consolidating leases and cutting costs.

However, I also have come to learn that the FTC and the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) believe this transfer would not be advisable with respect to operational or financial considerations, in addition to historical considerations related to the fact that former President Franklin Delano Roosevelt built the celebrated Apex Building in 1938 specifically to serve as the home for the then newly-established FTC.

I want to thank our witnesses for participating at our hearing this morning, and I look forward to examining these issues. I also want to thank the Constitution Center for hosting this hearing. I hope we can have a constructive discussion focused on how we can best serve the respective missions of the FTC and the NGA, the national capital region, and most importantly, the American taxpayer.

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