



From the Office of
Congresswoman
Jo Ann Davis



Jo Ann Davis, Chairwoman
House Government Reform Subcommittee on Civil Service and Agency Organization
“Transforming the Defense Department:
Examining the Merits of the Proposed National Security Personnel System”
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Thank you all for joining us today. We are here to discuss the Defense Department’s proposed National Security Personnel System, which is part of the larger “Defense Transformation for the 21st Century Act.” In terms of both size and scope, this personnel proposal – which affects nearly 700,000 civilian employees of the Pentagon, or about one-third of the federal government’s non-postal civilian workforce – is among the most important matters that will come before this Subcommittee this session.

I called this hearing to give the members of this Subcommittee an opportunity to learn more about this legislation and to question the Defense Department and the other stakeholders about the implications of this proposal, and I want to get to our witnesses as quickly as possible.

Clearly, there are questions that are on everyone’s mind, foremost among them being the issue of whether Congress should give the Defense Department flexibilities that exceed those granted to the new Homeland Security Department just a few months ago. I know many of our witnesses will want to address that topic.

I begin this hearing with an open mind. We must find a way to recruit, reward and retain our most talented employees, and to get the most out of the federal workforce. And the Defense Department, given its unique mission and the necessity for civilian employees to work hand-in-hand with the brave men and women who wear the uniform of our Armed Services, certainly has personnel needs that differ from the rest of the federal government.

But, as we all know, pay-for-performance will not work without a strong personnel management system, one that is understood and accepted by employees and their supervisors. I appreciate the Pentagon’s decision to publish much of this information in the April 2 Federal Register, and I’m sure we will have questions dealing with these “best practices,” in addition to the language of the legislation before us.

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