

5

4

**STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN DANNY K. DAVIS AT THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE AND AGENCY ORGANIZATION  
HEARING  
THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY'S  
NEW PERSONNEL SYSTEM**

**Wednesday, October 29, 2003**

Chairwoman Davis, the process that agency officials at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Office of Personnel Management designed to help develop the new personnel rules at DHS has been hailed as being very collaborative and inclusive.

A local columnist in last Sunday's paper described a recent personnel development working session as, "Bush administration appointees and federal union leaders gathered around a table and tried to step outside their adversarial relationship... For three days, officials from the Department of Homeland Security and federal unions took stock of one another as they discussed how best to overhaul pay and workforce rules affecting 180,000 civil service employees."

I am pleased that DHS' human resources development process has been collaborative and inclusive as called for in the Homeland Security Act. However, the Act also expresses the "Sense of Congress" that the "human resources management system envisioned for the Department should be one that *benefits* from the input of its employee."

It is not enough only to solicit the ideas of DHS employees and union officials. Their ideas and proposals must be considered and reflected in the proposed personnel system.

It is my understanding that the 52 personnel system options that have now been forwarded to the Secretary of DHS and the Director of OPM for consideration range from keeping the current General Schedule pay system to implementing a new performance-based pay system. In the area of collective bargaining, some options increase management rights by limiting the issues that can be bargained over, and other options increase union rights by expanding the scope of bargaining.

The Secretary of DHS and the Director of OPM have a difficult, but congressionally stated responsibility, to design a system that reflects the ideas and concerns of the employees who are the bread and butter of this agency. I hope that the much touted “collaborative design process” results in a human resources system that reflects the views of all those involved in the design process.

I look forward to the hearing from the witnesses and learning where they believe there is room for consensus and compromise in the design of the new personnel system at DHS.