

**STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN DANNY K. DAVIS AT THE
COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM
HEARING
ON FEDERAL HIRING PROCESS APRT II**

Tuesday, July 13, 2004

Chairwoman Davis, as you know, in June, we held a federal hiring process hearing in my district in Chicago. Based on the testimony from that hearing, I am convinced of two things. First, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and federal agencies need to do more to improve their hiring processes. Second, federal agencies do not need new hiring flexibilities.

The Homeland Security Act of 2002 contained new governmentwide hiring flexibilities that would help agencies to expedite and control their hiring processes. The Act permitted category ranking, which is an alternative ranking and selection procedure that can expand the pool of qualified job applicants for agency managers. Agencies also were given direct hiring authority, which allows agencies to appoint individuals to positions without adhering to certain hiring requirements. Finally, the Act also established a Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) in each of the 24 federal agencies to advise and assist the head of each agency with human capital management efforts.

Federal agencies are not taking advantage of these much requested flexibilities, and it appears they have not been taking advantage of long-existing personnel flexibilities, as well.

The General Accounting Office (GAO) has released two reports that document the importance of succession planning and the need to incorporate diversity as a management initiative in the senior executive service. Federal agencies must ensure that they are hiring a diverse pool of candidates for federal jobs, particularly at the senior management levels.

The federal government is at an important crossroads. We have an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of federal hiring processes and the diversity of the workforce, particularly at the senior levels of government. We can and should do better.

I look forward to the testimony of today's witnesses.

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