

STATEMENT OF TERESA BAILEY
Director, Office of Equal Employment Opportunity/Conciliation Programs
OFFICE OF THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

Regarding Diversity in Legislative Branch Agencies

**Subcommittee on Federal Workforce, Postal Service,
and the District of Columbia, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives**

November 13, 2007

Mr. Chairman, Congressman Marchant, members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss the Office of the Architect of the Capitol's (AOC's) efforts to identify, attract, hire, and retain a diverse workforce, as well as train and promote current staff to rise through the ranks to our executive level positions, thereby increasing diversity among senior-level management.

The AOC is firmly committed to equal employment opportunity and affirmative employment. While it has been our longstanding policy to employ and promote persons based on merit and without regard to race, color, age, religion, national origin, or disability, the AOC recognizes the inherent value of a diverse and inclusive workforce. We all benefit from the opportunity to work in an environment that brings together people with different backgrounds, skills, experiences, and perspectives. It is our differences that strengthen our ability to meet established strategic goals. Because it is one of our core values, we strive to integrate diversity at every level of the Agency as we carry out our mission to serve Congress and the American people.

Even before the launch of our first Strategic Plan in 2003, the AOC has been dedicated to employing a diverse workforce consisting of individuals with a variety of skills and institutional knowledge. As a service-based organization, these individuals are the AOC's most valuable assets and are critical to our success. Therefore, it is imperative that we continue to attract, develop, and retain diverse and highly motivated employees with the skills, talents, and knowledge necessary to support our mission.

We have defined our goals and outlined our strategies to accomplish these goals in our Human Capital Plan, which is an important supporting component of our Agency's Strategic Plan. Our first Human Capital Plan was rolled out in FY 2004 and we are updating it to carry us forward over the next five years. The Plan outlines various activities that will ensure we are adequately addressing the needs of our workforce, while at the same time, addressing the future needs of our organization by developing strong leaders and managers.

One of the ways we are assisting our workforce in developing the skills they need to become effective managers and grow in their careers is through participation in our Leadership Development Program.

Implemented in June 2004, this program establishes parameters and competencies for the training and development of supervisors, managers, and executives, and provides for the development of skills needed to perform effectively in these positions. The program encourages continual learning and training to develop well-rounded and capable supervisors and managers. In addition, the program's participants serve as a pool of well-trained and qualified applicants for consideration for higher, more senior managerial positions.

Our Leadership Development Program was designed and implemented using the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM's) program as a benchmark. The AOC's program aligns with OPM's competency definitions for supervisors, managers, and executives. A tool is provided to assess current skills and form the framework for Individual Development Plans to help individuals master applicable core competencies. The Individual Development Plan incorporates mandatory training requirements and other developmental opportunities. An employee's training needs are reviewed twice each year during an evaluation process.

In 2006, we enhanced our Agency's Leadership Development Program through employee participation in the Council for Excellence in Government Fellowship Program with the selection of three staff members. This hands-on, results-based leadership development program is designed to improve the performance and accountability of government workers, and is targeted specifically for those at the GS-14 and GS-15 level.

In addition to focusing on developing the existing talent within our Agency and understanding how the workforce is changing in terms of demographics, we have proactively worked to recruit diverse new hires by expanding our outreach efforts to attract a diverse candidate pool.

Career opportunities with the AOC are advertised nationwide through OPM's Web site, USA Jobs, and we have contracted with a Human Resources service provider to assist with implementation of our comprehensive Human Capital strategy. One of the tools we utilize heavily is the service provider's association with various diverse organizations, societies, colleges and universities, and professional associations that allow us to electronically distribute an unlimited number of vacancy announcements. These distributions reach minority groups, women, and persons with disabilities, as well as specific organizations such as the American Indian Higher Education Consortium; the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities; Historically Black Colleges and Universities; and the National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education. A number of minority organizations have endorsed the use of this service provider. They include Blacks in Government; Federal Asian Pacific American Council; National Image; and the Society of American Indian Government Employees.

In addition, our recruitment manager has conducted training sessions with staff on how to most effectively use our resources. We also use a number of recruitment sources to reach a large, diverse audience for our vacancy announcements. Examples include El Tiempo Latino Newspaper; the D.C. Mayor's Office of Latino Affairs; and the American Association of African American Museums – just to name a few.

The AOC has been participating in a number of recruitment events to increase awareness of job opportunities with our Agency. This past summer, we attended the Federally Employed Women Job Fair Conference and Mayor Fenty's DC-Wide Job Fair. Over the past several years, we have participated in Representative Albert Wynn's annual job fair. Later this week, we will be participating in the Asian Job Fair in Arlington, Virginia.

We are finalizing the AOC's Affirmative Employment Program which further delineates our commitment to equal employment opportunity and our goal of achieving a diverse workforce. Once the policy is implemented, we will develop an Affirmative Employment Plan that will identify

specific action-oriented strategies and efforts to achieve a more diverse workforce. While the AOC already utilizes a broad array of recruitment sources and techniques necessary to generate an adequate pool of diverse, qualified applicants for job vacancies, our efforts under the Affirmative Employment Plan will be expanded to include targeted recruitment initiatives, cooperative efforts with colleges and universities, and stronger partnerships with national professional associations and local community organizations.

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to note that our efforts over the past several years have begun to bear fruit. A comparative analysis of AOC-wide workforce data between 2002 and 2007 demonstrates gains in hiring of Asian and Hispanic individuals, although employment of African Americans and American Indians has decreased slightly over the same period.

At the GS-15 and SES-equivalent levels, the AOC has made significant progress in the recruitment and selection of women candidates; making up 23.1% and 35.7% of those ranks respectively. This is an increase over 2002 levels of 7.7% in the GS-15 ranks and 20% of SES-equivalents. Persons of color now represent 12.8% of GS-15 positions and 21.4% of SES-equivalent positions.

The AOC is deeply committed to our goal of attracting and retaining a diverse workforce and this commitment begins at the top of the organization. Our senior leadership team leads the way in fostering and promoting equal employment opportunities and affirmative employment. Earlier this year, our senior managers participated in a mandatory EEO and Affirmative Employment training program.

We recognize we still have work to do. Through these programs and other initiatives we will demonstrate that our actions speak volumes and our workforce will better reflect our society – and will be even more successful and productive as a result of the rich diversity of the skills and experiences of our employees. This concludes my statement. I would be happy to answer any questions the Subcommittee may have.