

**Nomination of Lurita Alexis Doan  
to be Administrator, General Services Administration**

Senator Joe Lieberman

May 22, 2006

Thank you, Madame Chairman and welcome Ms. Doan. Ms. Doan has been nominated to serve as Administrator of the General Services Administration (GSA) at a critical time for the agency. The procurement services GSA provides are central to the day to day operations of many government departments and its management of federal property can substantially impact savings for taxpayers. But GSA is grappling with a range of challenges, not the least of which is a major consolidation of operations. This is a trying time for the agency, and the new Administrator must have solid managerial experience and the ability to think creatively for the future.

As it struggles to emerge from difficulties with contract management and lack of project oversight, GSA must also deal with declining revenues, poor morale, the need for better financial controls, and low customer confidence. There is very little room for error for the new Administrator.

1. The merger of the Federal Supply Service (FSS) and the Federal Technology Service (FTS) into the Federal Acquisition Service (FAS) is designed to strengthen GSA's ability to provide efficient acquisition services. In the short term, though, the reorganization, coupled with recent declines in GSA's information technology business, has necessitated a downsizing of personnel, which the agency fortunately will be able to accomplish through voluntary buy-outs and early outs. I appreciate that the federal employee unions representing GSA workers have worked with the agency to help bring

greater efficiencies to the workplace while respecting the rights of employees.

2.

3. The Administrator will need to oversee what will surely be a difficult transition for GSA employees and at the same time ensure that financial and management controls for the new service are up and running properly. The ongoing reorganization of GSA's regional offices raises similar management challenges.

Recent turnover in GSA's leadership and among the ranks make these operational changes that much more difficult. Former Administrator Stephen Perry resigned last year and many mid-level managers have left, as well. This exodus has added to the delays and confusion surrounding the agency's ongoing reorganization and other efforts to improve services. The new Administrator will have to attract new talent for the challenges ahead while at the same time work to boost the morale of loyal rank and file employees whose work lives will be disrupted by the coming changes.

GSA has been updating its inventory of property to ensure it knows what it has and to rid itself of property with little or no use. For a number of years, the Government Accountability Office has ranked GSA's real property management on its biannual high risk list. Although the agency is making strides, the new Administrator must continue to ensure that the agency's property inventory is up to date and in full use.

GSA is also responsible for complying with laws such as Title V of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, which directs federal agencies to make surplus property available at no cost to nonprofit organizations or government agencies

that intend to serve the homeless. In recent years, critics have called into question the agency's commitment to and compliance with this law because of alleged non responsiveness and poor cooperation with prospective owners. The GSA Administrator must address this issue, too, and ensure that GSA operates in good faith, particularly with respect to its responsibilities toward society's disenfranchised.

I am impressed by Ms. Doan's credentials as a business entrepreneur and she has had a successful working relationship, on the contracting end, with GSA, all of which should serve her well. I appreciate her statement in her written responses to the Committee's pre-hearing questions that if confirmed she will perform her duties with innovation, energy and integrity. Indeed, if confirmed, she will face monumental challenges that will require every ounce of innovation and energy she has. I look forward to hearing her views on how she will address the many challenges GSA faces ahead.

Thank you.