

**Written Statement of Elliot D. Doomes
Commissioner of the Public Buildings Service
of the U.S. General Services Administration
before the
Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings, and Emergency
Management of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
U.S. House of Representatives
“From Headquarters Building to Field Offices: Examining the FBI’s Real Estate Needs
and Strategy.”
Wednesday, April 10, 2024, 10:00 am
Rayburn House Office Building, Room 2167**

Good morning, Chairman Perry, Ranking Member Titus, and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee. My name is Elliot Doomes, and I am the Commissioner of the Public Buildings Service (“PBS”) at the U.S. General Services Administration (“GSA”). I appreciate the Committee’s invitation to discuss how PBS supports the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (“FBI”) real estate needs and strategy, and provide an update on GSA’s site selection for the FBI Headquarters suburban campus since my testimony last December. GSA’s intent is to deliver the highest quality facilities for the FBI while maintaining our agency goals of optimizing the federal footprint.

GSA partners with federal agencies like the FBI, community stakeholders, and the real estate industry at large to meet our mission of providing real estate solutions for the federal government at the best value to the taxpayer. We can best accomplish this mission by implementing our fundamental real estate portfolio strategy to prioritize investments that make optimal use of federally-owned facilities for which there are long-term agency requirements while disposing of facilities the government no longer needs, and implementing leasing strategies that optimize space and reduce costs. GSA drives our portfolio strategy forward in partnership with agencies like the FBI to support their mission over the long-term. For the FBI, our priorities are the construction of their new headquarters and the support required to acquire and administer the leases for many of their 56 field offices.

GSA is fully committed to providing high-quality space for the American taxpayer. Each year, GSA submits a capital plan as a part of the President's budget request that outlines strategic investments to better meet the government's real estate needs. This year, GSA's FY 2025 budget submission includes \$1.6 billion for repair and alterations work, of which \$584 million is for major repairs and alteration, and a new request for a \$425 million Optimization Program that will allow GSA to reconfigure and renovate federal buildings to better utilize space and to expedite the disposition of unneeded federal facilities. If this request is approved, agencies like the FBI will benefit from our Optimization Program that is designed to support their mission needs by facilitating GSA's strategic divestiture of unneeded federally-owned assets and reducing the reliance on leased space. This fund will allow GSA to reconfigure and renovate core assets under GSA's jurisdiction, custody, and control to support efforts to more efficiently utilize these assets in response to the requirements of our client agencies. With full access to the Federal Buildings Fund, GSA will be able to right-size our federal footprint faster while saving taxpayer dollars and supporting local economies with good paying jobs.

National Priorities Related to the FBI

GSA leverages its expertise and best practices to support the real estate mission requirements of the FBI. I will describe some of the unique challenges related to supporting the space and location requirements for the FBI's mission, and provide some examples of where GSA has worked with the FBI to consolidate several locations into one at considerable savings to the taxpayer. I can assure this Committee that my priority as the Commissioner of GSA's PBS is to deliver the highest-quality real property solutions for agencies like the FBI at the best value for the federal taxpayer.

It is helpful to highlight two examples where GSA worked with the FBI to shrink its footprint and better utilize existing federally-owned facilities. First, in October 2020, the FBI was able to eliminate two leases and reduce its total space needs by over 50,000 Rentable Square

Footage (“RSF”) in New York City by consolidating into the Javits Federal Building. This resulted in a lease cost savings totaling \$13 million annually, and brought the FBI’s total occupancy at the Javits federal building up to 604,388 RSF. GSA continues to invest in that space, with \$37 million requested in FY 2025 to allow for needed fire and life-safety improvements. Second, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, GSA renovated space in the William J. Green, Jr., Federal Building to restack the building and enhance security features, which in turn allowed the FBI to consolidate two existing leases into that space. The first phase was completed in July 2021 and the second phase was completed in February 2024. This consolidation eliminated the need for 31,000 RSF with an annual reduction of \$840,000 in rent.

FBI Headquarters

The FBI is in dire need of a new headquarters facility. The FBI has occupied the J. Edgar Hoover Building (the “Hoover Building”) since 1974. However, as multiple studies have found and many members and staff of this Committee have witnessed firsthand, the Hoover Building is no longer able to support the FBI’s long-term security, space, and mission requirements. This 50-year-old facility is nearing the end of its life cycle, and is exhibiting many signs of significant deterioration. Moreover, the Hoover Building was not designed to meet the modern mission requirements of the FBI. As our FBI colleagues have indicated, the dispersion of FBI elements across several locations in the National Capital Region (“NCR”) has created significant management challenges and impedes the FBI’s ability to respond to emerging threats. This was true in 2011 when the process to examine the need for a new building began, and the issues have only worsened since that time.

As part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-103), Congress directed GSA to select a new headquarters location for the FBI from among three specified locations. GSA determined that Greenbelt, Maryland was the site most advantageous for the government, because it has the lowest overall cost to taxpayers of the three sites that were considered; the

site provides the best access to public transportation for FBI employees and visitors as it is accessible to both the Metro and commuter rails; it provides the government with project schedule certainty; and, it offers the greatest opportunity for the government's investment to positively impact the Washington, D.C. region through sustainable and equitable development.

GSA ran a fair and transparent process, guided by the agency's best practices in site selection. At every step, the GSA team worked to carefully follow the process outlined publicly, and to make a decision that best meets the needs of the FBI and the public for the long-term. Consistent with our commitment to transparency, our agency's full site selection decision and many other related documents associated with the site selection process are publicly available on GSA's website.

FBI Prospectus Report

In accordance with Division E, Title V, Section 530 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2022 (P.L. 117-103), on March 28, 2024, GSA submitted a report, consistent with the requirements of section 3307(b) of title 40, United States Code, on the construction of a new suburban headquarters for the FBI in the NCR.

The FBI headquarters suburban campus will bring together employees from the Hoover Building and eight leased locations across the NCR for a new, modern, and secure facility tailored to fully support the FBI's national security, intelligence, and law enforcement missions. The report includes a summary of the material provisions of the construction and consolidation of the FBI in a new headquarters facility, including all of the estimated costs associated with site acquisition, design, construction, management and inspection, and a description of the buildings and infrastructure needed to complete the project. Upon submission, GSA posted this report on our website in our publicly available online prospectus library.

Now that the relevant committees in both the House and Senate have received the headquarters report required by Congress, GSA awaits the necessary approvals before acquiring the Greenbelt, Maryland site and commencing with design and construction activities.

FBI Field Offices

The FBI's space needs are not limited to the NCR. Multiple locations throughout the country are experiencing significant challenges impeding the FBI's ability to rapidly respond to ever changing threats, as highlighted by the U.S. Government Accountability Office. Because the space requirements of the FBI require significant tenant improvements, GSA is working with the agency in these locations to ensure efficient use of space and cost effectiveness for the taxpayers.

Currently, the FBI occupies 56 field offices across the country, 47 of which are leased by GSA, totaling approximately 12.5 million RSF. The remaining nine FBI field offices are located in federally-owned facilities under GSA's jurisdiction, custody, and control. At these locations, the FBI pays GSA rent that is deposited into the Federal Buildings Fund, with the expectation that this rent will be used to adequately maintain the facilities that the FBI occupies. Providing GSA with full access to the Federal Buildings Fund is crucial to our mission of providing the highest level of support to not only the FBI, but to all of our customer agencies.

GSA requires both funding and approval to deliver high-quality space in federally-owned facilities. The need for consistent access to the Federal Buildings Fund and a more streamlined prospectus process is highlighted throughout the Agency's FY 2025 budget request.

Conclusion

GSA's mission is to provide the best value in real estate, which means working with partner agencies like the FBI to deliver the functional and secure federal facilities they need in order to fulfill their missions. GSA is fully committed to delivering a highly effective footprint to help the FBI deliver on their mission. GSA looks forward to working with the FBI and this

Committee on these important projects. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I look forward to answering your questions.