

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 31, 2024

The Honorable Robin Carnahan
Administrator
U.S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20405

Dear Administrator Carnahan:

Since December 2023, the Committee on the Judiciary, the Committee on Oversight and Accountability, and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure have been conducting oversight of the General Services Administration’s (GSA) decision to select Greenbelt, Maryland as the location for the new Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Headquarters building.¹ To date, the Committees’ oversight has revealed that the site selection process may have been tainted by political influence and that GSA’s recent prospectus report detailing the construction costs for the new facility is inadequate.² As a result, there are serious questions as to whether the current proposal is appropriately mission-based and the multi-billion dollar cost to the taxpayer is justified.

In accordance with the *Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022*, on March 28, 2024, GSA submitted a prospectus report to House and Senate Committees, including the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.³ The prospectus outlined how GSA plans to “expeditiously move forward” with site acquisition, design, and construction of the Greenbelt site using its existing \$845 million in appropriated funds for the project.⁴ In addition, the details in the current prospectus are nearly identical to the prospectus submitted in 2016—eight years ago—despite a reduction in staffing and changes in market conditions. As a result, the Committees have not been provided updated information on current costs or project scope.⁵ Given questions surrounding the site selection process, the FBI’s ongoing concerns with the

¹ See Letter from Hon. Jim Jordan, Chairman, H. Comm on the Judiciary, and Hon. James Comer, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, to Hon. Robin Carnahan, Adm’r, U.S. Gen. Serv. Admin (Dec. 1, 2023); Letter from Hon. Sam Graves, Chairman, H. Comm. on Transportation & Infrastructure, to Hon. Robin Carnahan, Adm’r, U.S. Gen. Serv. Admin (Dec. 14, 2023).

² REPORT: SITE ACQUISITION, DESIGN, AND MANAGEMENT/OVERSIGHT/SUPPORT ACTIVITIES, DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE – FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION CONSOLIDATED HEADQUARTERS, GREENBELT, MARYLAND, U.S. GEN. SERV. ADMIN. (MAR. 2024).

³ *Id.*

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ GSA PROSPECTUS, FBI HEADQUARTERS CONSOLIDATION, NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION, PNCR-FBI-NCR17 (FEB. 8, 2016).

project, and the availability of existing FBI facilities elsewhere that could house Headquarters operations, we have significant, unresolved concerns about the use of taxpayer dollars for this project.⁶

The Judiciary and Oversight Committees' investigation has revealed that the site selection process for the new FBI headquarters has been marred by politics and irregularities. For example, among other things:

- Nina Albert, the then-GSA Commissioner of Public Buildings Service who also served as the site selection authority for the FBI headquarters project, convened an unusual “back-check” meeting with the site selection panel after it agreed to select the Springfield, Virginia site.⁷
- During this back-check meeting, Albert allegedly showed favorability for the Greenbelt site—a property owned by her former employer—and the Greenbelt site was ultimately chosen.⁸
- During the site selection process, GSA unnecessarily elevated the importance of amorphous “equity” initiatives pushed by the Biden White House, increasing the value of the “equity” criterion as site selection process progressed,⁹ and arranging for a special presentation about equity—but not about other criteria—to the site selection panel.¹⁰
- The site selection process did not require GSA to consider the cost of construction for the new facility, leaving the completion of the Greenbelt site as an unknown financial burden to American taxpayers.¹¹
- Before and during the site selection process, Albert maintained active relationships and communications with colleagues employed by her former employer, including with the point of contact of the FBI headquarters project.¹²

⁶ See Email from Christopher Wray, Dir., Fed. Bureau of Investigation, to FBI Employees (Nov. 9, 2023 at 6:10 AM); Letter from the Hon. Christopher A. Wray, Dir., Fed. Bureau of Investigation, to the Hon. Robin Carnahan, Adm’r, U.S. Gen. Serv. Admin. (Oct. 12, 2023).

⁷ Transcribed Interview with Shannon Parry, Asst. Dir., Info. Management Div., Fed. Bureau of Investigation by H. Comm on the Judiciary & H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability at 22 (Apr. 9, 2024) [hereinafter “Parry Interview”].

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ SITE SELECTION PLAN (AMENDMENT 2), FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION, SUBURBAN HEADQUARTERS, U.S. GEN. SERV. ADMIN (JULY 2023).

¹⁰ Parry Interview at 37, *supra* note 7.

¹¹ Briefing with Gen. Serv. Admin. before the H. Comm. on the Judiciary, and H. Comm. on Oversight & Accountability, 118th Cong. (May 14, 2024).

¹² See e.g. GSAFBIHQ_006325; GSAFBIHQ_006326; GSAFBIHQ_006333-GSAFBIHQ_006335; GSAFBIHQ_006336-GSAFBIHQ_006341; GSAFBIHQ_006353; GSAFBIHQ_006366; GSAFBIHQ_006367-GSAFBIHQ_006369; GSAFBIHQ_006403; GSAFBIHQ_006533 (on file with Comms.)

The Honorable Robin Carnahan


July 31, 2024

Page 3

The Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has also identified several errors in GSA's prospectus report regarding the reported cost and leasing space for the FBI. During the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's hearing in December 2023, the FBI claimed that it is moving thousands of employees out of the National Capital Region (NCR) to other FBI campuses across the country, including the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama.¹³ Despite the FBI's realignment effort, the cost of the new FBI headquarters building has increased from \$3 billion to \$4.5 billion, and the FBI still wants to maintain a presence in D.C. to accommodate 750 to 1,000 FBI personnel.¹⁴

We believe that the current proposal for a new FBI headquarters is inadequate, ill-defined, and does not take into account the current requirements of the FBI. Accordingly, GSA should submit a prospectus that includes accurate and updated information on costs and scope and considers alternative solutions on locations that may better meet the FBI's current mission. Until such a prospectus is submitted and the concerns identified are addressed, the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has insufficient information to call the prospectus up for Committee action.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.



Sam Graves
Chairman
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary



James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

cc: The Honorable Rick Larsen, Ranking Member
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure

The Honorable Jerrold L. Nadler, Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary

The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

¹³ Jory Heckman, *New FBI headquarters will take more than a decade to build, as agency struggles with 'obsolete' space*, FED. NEWS NETWORK (Apr. 11, 2024).

¹⁴ *Id.*