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House of Representatives

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Opening Statement Ranking Member Robin Kelly

Hearing on “The Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA) Scorecard 6.0: Measuring Agencies’ Implementation” Subcommittee on Information Technology

May 23, 2018

Before starting today’s hearing, I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, Chairman Meadows, and Ranking Member Connolly for your cooperation and leadership as our Subcommittees continue to work together to oversee federal IT systems. It’s been an honor and a privilege to work with each of you in this important area.

Improving the capabilities of the federal government’s IT systems is critical to our country’s national security. A key part of that effort is the ongoing oversight our Subcommittees have been conducting to hold agencies accountable for implementing the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA). Crucial to this oversight has been the scorecard that our Subcommittees developed for grading agency progress in meeting the FITARA requirements.

Today, our Subcommittees have released the sixth version of the scorecard. The new Scorecard has some notable changes since the last one we released.

First, this Scorecard adds a new category for grading agency performance in fulfilling the recently enacted Modernizing Government Technology Act (MGT Act). The MGT Act gives agencies the authority to establish working capital funds that can be used to modernize outdated legacy IT systems and enhance cybersecurity. The Act was first introduced by none other than Chairman Hurd, and I was proud to be an original cosponsor of this landmark legislation, along with Chairman Meadows and Ranking Member Connolly.

Second, the Scorecard now lowers the overall grades for those agencies whose Chief Information Officers (CIO) do not report to either the head or deputy head of an agency. Since the development of the first scorecard, the Subcommittees have prioritized improving the reporting relationship between CIOs and agency heads. GAO has found that in those instances where CIOs do not report to the heads of their agencies, their ability to effectively manage IT is weakened. Our ongoing persistence in improving this reporting relationship appears to have caught the attention of the White House. Last week, President Trump issued an executive order directing that agency heads take action to ensure that “the CIO of the covered agency reports directly to the agency head.”

The new Scorecard also previews a new area that relates to federal cybersecurity and would grade agencies on their progress in improving their information security programs. Recent data breaches like the

September 2017 Equifax breach, in which hackers gained access to information on over 145 million Americans, highlights the need to strengthen information security in both the government and private sectors.

Today's Scorecard shows that while some agencies have made progress, others have hit roadblocks in meeting the requirements of FITARA. For example, while some agencies like the National Science Foundation improved, going from a "C-" to a "B+," others like the Department of Defense (DOD), have fallen behind, going from a "D" in 2015 to an "F" today.

This most recent Scorecard performance has me concerned. Fourteen agencies received failing grades in their management of software licenses. That represents the loss of an important opportunity to save taxpayer funds. According to GAO, by improving in this area, agencies have the potential to achieve hundreds of millions of dollars in government-wide savings. The Scorecard also demonstrates that several agencies are still failing to consolidate and reduce their number of federal data centers. For example, since June 2017, DOD has scored an "F" in meeting the metrics that were established by the Office of Management and Budget for consolidating and optimizing data centers.

I look forward to hearing from today's agencies on the challenges they face in FITARA implementation, and how Congress can be more helpful.

Last year, the federal government spent almost \$95 billion on its IT systems. FITARA and by extension, the MGT Act, are critical to ensuring that agencies are making the necessary IT investments to transition to more modern, efficient, and secure technologies. The scored metrics provide an important measurement for assessing agency progress in achieving these goals.

I want to thank the witnesses for testifying today. Your background and expertise will be helpful to us as we examine ways to further strengthen the federal government's capabilities in the area of IT acquisitions and operations.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

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