

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2023

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

Dear Administrator Carnahan:

The Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Oversight and Accountability are conducting oversight of the General Services Administration's (GSA) recent decision to select Greenbelt, Maryland, as the location for the new Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Headquarters building. Recent allegations suggest that the site selection process has been politicized and may not reflect the best use of American taxpayer dollars. We appreciate your full cooperation with our inquiry.

Since 2013, the FBI and GSA have been coordinating on how to use taxpayer funding for a new headquarters facility within the National Capital Region.¹ On November 9, 2023, GSA released a report prepared by Nina M. Albert, the then-GSA Commissioner of Public Buildings Service (PBS), outlining her decision to select Greenbelt, Maryland, as the location of a new taxpayer-funded FBI headquarters facility.² GSA's decision to select Greenbelt, Maryland for the new facility superseded an earlier three-person panel decision on July 31, 2023—a panel comprised of two GSA officials and one FBI official—that unanimously recommended Springfield, Virginia as the best site to build the facility.³

GSA's decision to deviate from the panel's recommendation raised concerns about the site selection process and the potential for conflicts of interest. On September 22, 2023, FBI Associate Deputy Director Brian Turner expressed concerns to you about Albert's impartiality after receiving a draft report a month earlier outlining the decision to choose Greenbelt, Maryland.⁴ In the memorandum, Turner wrote that Albert's decision did "not adhere to the site selection plan's clear direction that subcriteria within each criterion are of equal importance,"

¹ U.S. Gen. Serv. Admin., FBI Headquarters Consolidation, <https://www.gsa.gov/about-us/gsa-regions/region-11-national-capital/buildings-and-facilities/development-projects/fbi-hq-consolidation> (last visited Nov. 15, 2023).

² U.S. Gen. Serv. Admin., Site Selection Decision Rep., Fed. Bureau of Investigation, Suburban Headquarters, National Capital Region (Nov. 9, 2023).

³ Eric Bazail-Eimil, *FBI director, Virginia officials call for reversal of decision to relocate FBI headquarters in Maryland*, POLITICO (Nov. 9, 2023). See also Sadie Gunman, *FBI Accuses Biden Appointee of Bias in Selection of Headquarters Site*, WALL STREET JOURNAL (Nov. 9, 2023).

⁴ Memorandum for Gen. Serv. Admin. Adm'r Robin Carnahan from Brian Turner, Assoc. Deputy Dir., Fed. Bureau of Investigation, FBI New Suburban Headquarters Site Selection Concerns (Sept. 22, 2023).

which more heavily emphasized public transportation access than other factors.⁵ Albert's previous work as a senior official at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) also raises serious concerns about impartiality given that the agency owns the parcel of land designated for the new facility.⁶

On October 12, 2023, FBI Director Wray raised additional concerns to you about Albert's "previous employment by an interested party," in addition to her political appointment as PBS Commissioner.⁷ After the GSA's announcement of the new Greenbelt site, Director Wray sent an email to all FBI employees expressing concerns about the "fairness" and "transparency" in the site selection process.⁸ In the email, Director Wray stated, "the FBI observed that, at times, outside information was inserted into the process in a manner which appeared to disproportionately favor Greenbelt, and the justifications for the departures from the panel were varied and inconsistent."⁹

The Committees are also concerned that this funding for a new FBI facility is another misallocation of scarce federal resources. This incident, and the scandal that has resulted, is more evidence that the centralization of FBI operations in the National Capitol Region has allowed improper political influence to taint decisions that should be made in the best interest of the American citizens. It is more evidence that the FBI headquarters should be out of the National Capitol Region, as the Judiciary Committee has examined,¹⁰ to reduce politicization at the FBI and insulate the agency from improper political influences.

While you have defended the site selection process as "fair" and "transparent," and dismissed criticism of the process as "without merit,"¹¹ your assurances ring hollow. Accordingly, to inform our ongoing oversight of the FBI and the site selection process for its new headquarters, please provide the following documents and information:

1. All documents and communications referring or relating to the U.S. General Services Administration's Site Selection Plans for the FBI's Suburban Headquarters for the period January 20, 2021, to the present;
2. All documents and communications referring or relating to the potential conflict of interest involving the U.S. General Services Administration's Site Selection Authority Nina M. Albert for the period July 6, 2021, to the present;

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ 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 *Id.*

⁸ Email from Christopher Wray, Dir., Fed. Bureau of Investigation, to FBI Employees (Nov. 9, 2023 at 6:10 AM).

⁹ *Id.*

¹⁰ Letter from Rep. Jim Jordan, Chairman, H. Comm. on the Judiciary, to Rep. Kay Granger, Chairwoman, H. Comm. on the Appropriations (July 11, 2023).


¹¹ *Oversight of the U.S. General Services Administration: Hearing Before the H. Comm. on Oversight and Accountability*, 118th Cong. (2023) (testimony of Hon. Robin Carnahan, Adm'r, U.S. Gen. Serv. Admin.).

3. All documents and communications between or among the U.S. General Services Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation referring or relating to the site selection process for a new FBI headquarters facility for the period January 20, 2021, to the present;
4. All documents and communications referring or relating to the U.S. General Services Administration's Original Request for Information (RFI) and its responses for the proposed FBI Suburban Headquarters for the period January 1, 2013 to the present;
5. All documents and communications referring or relating to the U.S. General Services Administration's strategic plan for the Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) for the proposed FBI Suburban Headquarters for the period January 1, 2013, to the present;
6. A list of government-owned sites that the U.S. General Services Administration considered for the proposed FBI Suburban Headquarters, including but not limited to, Greenbelt, Maryland, Landover, Maryland, and Springfield, Virginia; and
7. All documents and communications referring or relating to the recommendations from the U.S. General Services Administration's Site Selection Team for the proposed FBI Suburban Headquarters for the period January 1, 2022, to the present.

Please provide this information as soon as possible, but no later than 5:00 p.m. on December 15, 2023. Additionally, please make the two GSA officials who participated in the panel for the site selection process available for a transcribed interview with the Committees. The Committees understand that Ms. Albert has since left GSA, and we will write to her directly to arrange for her transcribed interview.

The Judiciary Committee is authorized to conduct oversight of the Federal Bureau of Investigation pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives.¹² Additionally, the Committee on Oversight and Accountability has broad authority to investigate, "any matter," at "any time."¹³ If you have any questions about this request, please contact Judiciary Committee staff at (202) 225-6906. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


Jim Jordan
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary


James Comer
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Accountability

¹² Rules of the House of Representatives, R. X (2023).

¹³ *Id.*

The Honorable Robin Carnahan

December 1, 2023

Page 4

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

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