

CQ COMMITTEE COVERAGE
House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee Markup
April 3, 2008

Subcommittee Approves Bill on GAO Personnel and Pay

By Emily P. Walker, CQ Staff

A House Oversight subcommittee on Thursday approved a bill that its sponsor hopes would boost morale at the Government Accountability Office (GAO) that has plummeted since the implementation of a new personnel system.

The Oversight and Government Reform panel's Subcommittee on the Federal Workforce, Postal Service and the District of Columbia approved [HR 5683](#) for consideration of the full committee.

According to the bill's sponsor (and subcommittee chairman) Danny K. Davis, D-Ill., the bill would improve the oversight, administration and pay adjustment functions at the GAO.

Davis said the subcommittee investigated the implementation of GAO's personnel system over the past two years and found that some GAO employees who met and exceeded expectations in 2006 and 2007 did not receive the annual across-the-board increase that other GAO employees received.

The bill would restore the 2006 and 2007 annual across-the-board increase to GAO employees who met expectations but did not receive the adjustment. It would guarantee that any GAO employee who meets expectations receive an annual increase.

At a March hearing, a consulting group hired by GAO told the subcommittee that a significant pay disparity was found between black and white analysts at GAO.

"The issue was not just pay, but that black people were getting less pay," subcommittee member Eleanor Holmes Norton, D-D.C., said at Thursday's markup.

In addition, a survey of GAO employees requested by Davis found that 81 percent of respondents thought morale in general at GAO is worse or much worse than before the personnel changes. And a majority of the respondents felt that not having an across-the-board increase for all staff is very or somewhat unreasonable.

In remarks accompanying his introduction of the bill on Wednesday, Davis said the measure would create a statutory inspector general for GAO and eliminate the GS-15 pay cap to allow the comptroller general the authority to pay employees up to the rate for Executive Level III.

The one Republican present at the markup, ranking subcommittee member Kenny Marchant of Texas, did not vote against approval, but complained that he lacked adequate time to review the legislation before the markup.

The subcommittee had initially been scheduled to mark up a bill ([HR 3799](#)) that would provide for some paid parental leave for federal employees.

Subcommittee Votes**HR 5683****Government Accountability Office/Vote to Approve**

Restructure the oversight, administration and pay adjustment functions at the Governmental Accountability Office.

The bill would restore the 2006 and 2007 annual across-the-board increase to GAO employees who met expectations but did not receive the adjustment. It would guarantee that any GAO employee who meets expectations receive an annual increase.

The bill would create a statutory inspector general for GAO and eliminate the GS-15 pay cap to allow the comptroller general the authority to pay employees up to the rate for Executive Level III.

Approved for full committee consideration by voice vote; April 3, 2008.

Source: **CQ Committee Coverage**

Gavel-to-gavel coverage and votes of every markup on Capitol Hill.

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