



Homeland Security

May 13, 2013

The Honorable Bennie G. Thompson
Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Thompson:

Thank you for your April 19, 2013, letter regarding the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Chief Information Officer (CIO).

Richard Spires, who was on leave as DHS CIO, resigned his position effective May 17, 2013. Although personnel and privacy rules prohibit me from discussing why Mr. Spires elected to take leave and resign, I can confirm it was not related in any way to the testimony he delivered on February 27 or the testimony he was scheduled to deliver on March 19. In fact, Mr. Spires subsequently met with the Subcommittee Chair to discuss topics related to that hearing. Contrary to media reports, Mr. Spires was not placed in an administrative leave status surrounding any disagreement concerning his authority as DHS CIO.

Deputy CIO Margie Graves is currently serving as acting CIO. Ms. Graves is fully qualified to fill this role and previously served as acting CIO prior to Mr. Spires arrival at DHS. Ms. Graves joined DHS as a federal employee through the Transportation Security Administration in August 2003. She was recruited because of her skills in business process re-engineering and post-merger integration and became Deputy Program Manager in the Border and Transportation Security Directorate, focusing on creating "One DHS" from 22 legacy agencies. In March 2004, she established the DHS CIO's Enterprise Business Management Office (EBMO) and, upon being selected for the Senior Executive Service in 2006, became the Executive Director for EBMO. She has served as Deputy CIO since January 2009, having been offered the position following an open competition where she was deemed the best-qualified candidate. Ms. Graves was not converted from a consultant to a federal employee at DHS CIO.

I appreciate your interest in this matter and look forward to working with you further. If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Legislative Affairs at (202) 447-5890.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Peacock".

Nelson Peacock
Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs