

U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
Review of the USDA Reorganization Proposal
July 30, 2025
Questions for the Record
The Honorable Stephen Vaden

Senator Amy Klobuchar

1. **Written impact analyses:** As I requested in my July 28, 2025, letter to you, provide:
 - a. Any written analyses conducted on the reorganization's potential impacts on USDA's ability to effectively administer grants like disaster assistance and other financial assistance like loans and cooperative agreements to farmers and rural communities;
 - b. Any written analyses conducted on the reorganization's potential impacts on USDA's research functions vital to farmers, including on animal diseases such as avian flu and New World screwworm;
 - c. Any written analyses conducted on the reorganization's potential impacts on USDA's ability to effectively administer nutrition assistance programs for Americans;
 - d. Any additional analyses conducted on the potential impacts of the reorganization plan, including any cost-benefit and civil rights analyses.

Response: USDA will share analyses where appropriate.

2. **Timeline:** As I requested in my July 28, 2025 letter to you, provide a timeline of planned employee notification and engagement for each USDA mission area and agency and office.

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders and the public to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Any employee notification will occur subsequent to the close of the comment period. All stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, are encouraged to provide feedback by emailing reorganization@usda.gov.

3. **Regional Hubs:** USDA's reorganization plan states that its goal is to move the agency closer to the farmers it serves, but 90 percent of the USDA is already outside of the D.C. region and the consolidation and closure of regional offices will mean hubs are farther away for many farmers.

- a. Which mission areas and agencies and offices will be relocating to one of the five new headquarters? Please provide a list of mission areas and agencies and offices that will be moving from their current locations and which locations they will be moving to.

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

- b. Does USDA plan to move other staff from other states outside of the National Capital Region to the new hub locations?

Response: As outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025, USDA is soliciting input on moving staff from certain regional offices that are outside the National Capital Region to hub locations or other locations.

- c. Please provide a list for each state of how many employees will be required to relocate and the place to which they will be required to move.

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. At this time no decision has been made on the number of employees who will be required to relocate and the state on which they will be required to relocate.

- d. Has USDA calculated whether, after all the offices and mission areas throughout the United States have been shuffled into the 5 hubs, there will be a cost savings?

Response: Final estimates will not be available until after the comment period and further consultations are complete.

4. **Effect of Relocation:** GAO's report on the Economic Research Service and National Institute of Food and Agriculture relocation to Kansas City noted that USDA did not properly account for attrition-related costs in assessing cost-savings. Have you taken the costs GAO identified in that report into account in your analyses for the July 24 relocation plan?

Response: Yes.

5. **Deferred Maintenance:** During Wednesday's hearing you stated that USDA will save at least \$2.2 billion by leaving the National Capital Region facilities due to the deferred maintenance on those buildings. USDA's FY2019 Explanatory Notes states that there were approximately \$145 million in deficiencies at that time related to the USDA Headquarters Complex and George Washington Carver Center (GWCC).

a. Please provide in detail the costs included in the \$2.2 billion figure.

Response: The deferred maintenance estimate is based on the following:

South Building Deferred Maintenance: \$1.322 billion

Whitten Building Deferred Maintenance: \$601 million

BARC Deferred Maintenance: \$300 million

USDA has requested funding from Congress to modernize the buildings entrusted to our care. The Department has had challenges in securing the appropriate funding to keep pace with the costs of caring for and modernizing our facilities, that are historic buildings.

Over the course of the past decade, Congress has rescinded over \$73M of the Agriculture Buildings and Facilities accounts, as well as rescinded or repurposed \$723M of the nonrecurring expense fund that is used to maintain, operate and modernize the facilities.

b. Please provide a breakdown on the category of deferred maintenance similar to previous budget proposals (e.g., energy efficiency, health/safety, space utilization).

Response: Limited renovation and modernization have occurred in these facilities, with resources primarily dedicated to keeping the facilities operational. As a result, space in the buildings is not optimized for modern office work and the utilization rate for the buildings does not achieve the USE IT ACT threshold. The resulting inefficiency means the Department is spending relatively high amounts to maintain basic operations.

c. Does USDA pay a lease to GSA for the South Building or GWCC? If so, what annual amount?

Response: No. The South Building is GSA-owned but USDA operated and maintained. GWCC is USDA owned, and USDA maintained.

6. **Public comment:** On August 1, USDA announced that it was opening up a public comment period beginning on August 1 through August 26, for a period of 26 days, for members of the public, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and stakeholders.

- a. Will USDA be making the comments related to the reorganization plan received via the email publicly available, similar to comments submitted via regulations.gov? If not, why not?

Response: While prioritizing the protection of the anonymity of commenters, USDA will work to share results of the comment period as appropriate.

- b. Other than the reorganization@usda.gov email address, please describe what other methods is USDA using to allow its own employees to submit feedback on the reorganization plan.

Response: USDA agencies are leveraging existing feedback mechanisms for gathering feedback from employees.

- c. Will USDA ensure the Congress has the opportunity to review any comments related to the reorganization plan received via the email address and work together with USDA before USDA makes any additional decisions or announcements regarding the reorganization?

Response: While prioritizing the protection of the anonymity of commenters, USDA will work to share results of the comment period as appropriate.

7. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS):** USDA has reported that nearly 500 Food and Nutrition Service staff, or 28 percent of the workforce, have left as a result of the deferred resignation program (DRP). In addition, the organization plan includes vacating the current FNS headquarters at Braddock Road and relocating all FNS regional staff.

- a. During the hearing, I asked you to share the number of staff who have left FNS by function, including but not limited to those who have left positions related to financial management, program integrity, or management review of nutrition programs. Please provide this information.

Response: Approximately 500 FNS employees took the Deferred Resignation Program: 7% of the resignations were from the child nutrition program; 11% from supplemental nutrition assistance and safety; 17% supported management and technology; 6% supported retailer operations and compliance; 47% were assigned to the regional operations and support units; and the remaining resignations represented leadership/management and policy units.

- b. Where will staff currently assigned to the FNS Braddock Road facility be assigned when that building is vacated? Please provide the percentage of existing FNS staff who will be assigned to USDA offices in the National Capital Region and those who will be assigned to regional hubs.

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of

Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

8. **Food Aid Programs:** The dismantling of USAID hurt American farmers, created hardship for hungry people around the world, and diminished U.S. influence globally. I am concerned that the reorganization will further undermine food aid programs that remain at USDA, Food for Progress and McGovern-Dole, as well as for the procurement of commodities for the Food for Peace Program.
- a. Can you elaborate on what the reorganization plan might mean for food aid programs? Does the reorganization assume that the programs will no longer exist, consistent with the President's budget?

Response: USDA programming will not be disrupted by the reorganization.

- b. Does your reorganization plan include a permanent relocation of Food for Peace from USAID to USDA? If so, what assumptions does it make about the permanent staffing, budget, and capacity required for USDA to administer the program?

Response: Secretary's Memorandum 1078-012, *Prioritizing Foreign Assistance from the United States Department of Agriculture, Which Makes The United States of America Safer, Stronger, and More Prosperous*, lays out the Department's priorities. All foreign assistance program investments from the USDA must prioritize (1) making America safer, stronger, and more effective; (2) meeting the core objectives at USDA; and (3) ensuring a return on investment for the American farmers, ranchers, foresters, and agricultural producers who seek to support vulnerable communities around the world with the bounty of American agriculture. Going forward agreements will need to demonstrate how they make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous.

9. **Impact of Reorganization on APHIS and FSIS**

- a. Of APHIS's six operational program units and five management support units, which units and what specific services will be asked to relocate? Provide a detailed breakdown of where specific units and services will be asked to relocate to.

Response: USDA recognizes the criticality of APHIS' mission. In fact, the identification of Raleigh and Fort Collins was in part because these are already APHIS regional hub locations. In regard to APHIS employees in the National Capital Region, USDA announced on August 1, 2025 the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the

Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

- b. Which offices and divisions within FSIS will be asked to relocate? Provide a detailed breakdown of where specific offices and divisions will be asked to relocate to.

Response: USDA recognizes the criticality of FSIS' mission. In regard to FSIS employees in the National Capital Region, USDA announced on August 1, 2025 the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

- c. USDA has reported that around 1,300 Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) staff have departed as a result of the Deferred Resignation Program (DRP). Please provide a detailed breakdown of staff reductions from both normal attrition and DRP in each component of APHIS's six operational program units and five management support units relative to the staffing at the start of the Administration.

Response:

APHIS Units	DRP	Other Separations
ANIMAL AND PLANT HEALTH INSPECTION SERVICE	2	0
ANIMAL CARE	34	15
BIOTECHNOLOGY REGULATORY SERVICES	13	1
EMERGENCY & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE SERVICES	51	9
INTERNATIONAL SERVICES	13	2
LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS STAFF	26	3
MRP BUSINESS SERVICES	273	38
OFFICE OF CIVIL RIGHTS	9	2
PLANT PROTECTION & QUARANTINE	402	279
POLICY & PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	33	5
VETERINARY SERVICES	362	69
WILDLIFE SERVICES	165	125
Grand Total	1383	548

- d. Please provide specific information on staff who have left positions related to veterinary services, animal disease management work, and the number of vacancies of veterinarian positions within APHIS.

Response: Since January 20, 235 APHIS employees have left their positions related to veterinary services and animal disease management work from the following series: 0701 Veterinary Medical Officers, 0704 Animal Health Technicians, 0403 Microbiologists and Lab Techs (Veterinary Services Program

only.) Of those 235 employees, 176 enrolled in the deferred resignation program. USDA and APHIS specifically continue to hire for veterinarian positions as these positions are excluded under the Secretary's hiring freeze exception memorandum. Currently, APHIS has 96 priority vacancies for Veterinary Medical Officers and 24 priority vacancies for Animal Health Technicians.

10. Forest Service Regions: The U.S. Forest Service's Regional Offices are responsible for coordinating implementation policy across individual National Forests, and play a key role in U.S. Forest Service functions ranging from the establishment of timber targets to the selection of Forest Legacy Program awards.

- a. Is the USDA planning to eliminate Regional Foresters positions? If so, does this mean all individual administrative units will communicate directly with the Washington Office, or will there be an equivalent position to Regional Foresters created in the reorganization?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to position elimination and/or reassignments will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

- b. Did the USDA consult with any key forestry stakeholders, including State Foresters, timber companies, sportsmen, and recreation groups, before releasing the reorganization plan?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to position elimination and/or reassignments will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

11. Forestry Research: U.S. Forest Service Research & Development carries out world-class forestry research into insect & disease challenges to forest health, wildland fire, innovative uses of wood products, wildlife habitat, and many other management issues on U.S. forestland, both public and private. The President's fiscal year 2026 budget proposed eliminating all USFS R&D funding, and the reorganization plan calls for consolidating the five U.S. Forest Service Research Stations into a single location.

- a. What is the USDA's contingency plan for ongoing experiments or research being conducted at the existing Research Stations given the plan to consolidate these locations?

Response: USDA recognizes the importance of ongoing experiments and research being conducted through the Forest Service's Research and Development Program. There have been no decisions about individual projects made as part of the Secretary's Announcement on August 1, 2025.

- b. Will facilities associated with the five Research Stations also be closed?

Response: The identification of Fort Collins was in part because this is already a USFS research hub location. USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation and facility closure will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

12. **Field-based Agencies:** Rural Development, the Farm Service Agency and Natural Resources Conservation Service are typically considered the field-based agencies due to their county USDA service center delivery mechanism, and they are often are co-located.

- a. How does USDA currently determine how costs are shared among USDA agencies that are co-located?

Response: USDA does not have a standard methodology for determining how costs are shared among USDA agencies that are co-located. Cost factors can vary at each unique office location and are typically allocated based upon a proportional share of space occupied by each agency.

- b. Does USDA plan to use this same process to determine co-location costs during and after the reorganization process?

Response: No. USDA intends to develop a standard methodology for determining how costs are shared among USDA agencies that are co-located.

Senator Joni Ernst

1. Deputy Secretary Vaden, in your testimony, you detailed the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) reorganization plan to relocate a portion of the National Capital Region federal employees to North Carolina, Missouri, Indiana, Colorado, and Utah. Iowa is home to agricultural expertise and affordable living. Nearly 87,000 farmers serve as the foundation for our agricultural economy, which employs 19 percent of residents and accounts for one-third of the state's economic output. Whether it be a local county office or a large research center, USDA's presence in Iowa allows our farmers to partner with you on-the-ground.

In Ames, for example, USDA centers like the National Veterinary Services Laboratory and the National Animal Disease Center work collaboratively to protect livestock and animal health. Most recently, these centers have been critical in responding to Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) and understanding the economic impact of such outbreaks.

In addition to agricultural expertise, Iowa offers an affordable living option for USDA employees. Ames has a federal locality payment of 18.01 percent—comparable to and even lower than most of the cities designated for USDA relocation.

- a. Can you explain how USDA decided on the cities it selected as hub locations? What factors influenced these decisions?
- b. If there's an opportunity, would you commit to taking another look at relocating staff to Iowa, to benefit from reinforcing the state's leadership and significant resources in agriculture?

Response: The Department currently employs approximately 4,600 individuals that work within the National Capital Region (NCR). The hub locations selected ensure USDA is located closer to the people it serves while achieving savings to the American taxpayer. The locations also take into consideration existing concentrations of USDA employees and the cost of living for USDA employees. Further decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the current comment period closes.

Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith

1. We are constantly hearing from folks about the importance of State Veterinarians at APHIS, who are essential in combatting foreign animal disease outbreaks. These positions, along with an active network of partners who fill service gaps and a robust pipeline of emerging veterinarians, are critical to the health of our livestock across the nation, and as a result, the bottom line for U.S. farmers & ranchers. As you look to this reorganization, how will you ensure that USDA's new structure will address current staff shortages and enhance the recruitment of new veterinarians, so we are prepared to respond to animal disease outbreaks now and in the future? How will the reorganization further impact the surveillance and diagnostic process to ensure we have no gaps in coverage

Response: The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will maintain its current centers, which are already located within USDA hub cities. The reorganization will have no impact on veterinary services or disease outbreak response.

Senator Charles Grassley

1. Why was Congress not notified or consulted of plans for the reorganization despite so many in Congress supporting these plans?

Response: The Department strongly believes the employees who would be most directly affected should be the first to hear about the Secretary's reorganization memorandum, which was a first step, not the final. Now we have entered a 30-day comment period, having given notice to you of our intentions to reorganize the Department. I welcome feedback and suggestions.

2. Will there be any flexibility for Congress to weigh in on the hubs that have been designated, the movement of positions to certain locations, or the vacating of certain properties such as the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center?

Response: Throughout this process, we welcome feedback from employees, stakeholders, and Congress.

3. Ames, Iowa is home to the Agriculture Research Service's National Animal Disease Center and the National Laboratory for Agriculture and The Environment among others. Will USDA move any positions or projects to Ames, Iowa?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

4. What do you see as Congress's role in this process? Will there be closer consultation with Congress moving forward?

Response: The memorandum issued by the Secretary has built-in flexibility. The memorandum lays out a vision, but then there is a line in that memorandum which says the vision and the plans laid out here can change, and the Secretary delegated authority to me to make those changes, where appropriate.

Senator Michael Bennet

1. I am encouraged by USDA's decision to invest in Fort Collins as a key regional hub. Colorado is uniquely positioned to support the Department's mission in the West, and the success of the hub will depend on ensuring it is fully resourced, strategically staffed, and built to adapt as needs evolve—whether in wildfire response, conservation, or other

priorities. As you know, Fort Collins already hosts USDA employees from agencies such as the Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and Forest Service (USFS). In addition, Denver is home to a Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) regional office, and Lakewood is home to regional offices for the US Forest Service (USFS) and National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS).

- a. What agencies, positions, and functions do you plan to locate at the Fort Collins hub, and how will you leverage existing USDA resources and expertise already in Colorado?

Response: USDA already has multiple agencies in Fort Collins including the Forest Service, APHIS, and Agricultural Research Center. USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Because of this consultation period, the list of what other agencies or specific positions may be relocated to Fort Collins has not been finalized.

- b. Does your current plan involve moving functions from Denver or Lakewood to Fort Collins? Which Colorado offices outside of Fort Collins, if any, will remain in their current locations?

Response: Fort Collins, Denver, and Lakewood are all part of the Denver federal locality area. Initially, USDA does not expect to move functions from Denver or Lakewood to Fort Collins but will explore the Denver federal locality area facility strategy over time.

- c. Will any current USDA employees in Colorado lose their jobs or be required to relocate to other states as a result of this reorganization?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025 the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. At this time no decision has been made on the number of employees who will be required to relocate.

- d. Are you working with USDA agency personnel to ensure that the reorganization will increase efficiency in their workflow and that there will be no loss of services provided to Colorado as a result of the move?

Response: Increasing efficiencies, improving service, and reducing costs to the taxpayers were driving factors in this reorganization plan.

- e. Are stakeholders in Colorado being provided with timely, substantive briefings to inform their participation in the 30-day comment period? If so, can you provide a list of Colorado stakeholders with whom you have engaged?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. USDA will continue to engage with stakeholders, including Colorado stakeholders, as decisions are made subsequent to the comment period.

- 2. In Principle 3 of the USDA reorganization framework, the Department proposes eliminating ARS Area Offices and managing "residual functions" through the Office of National Programs. What specific "residual functions" will be retained, and how will they be managed under this new structure?

Response: Area Offices perform administrative, stakeholder engagement, and laboratory and research coordination functions. Administrative functions will be consolidated to eliminate redundancies. ARS intends to retain stakeholder engagement and laboratory and research coordination functions with these functions overseen by the Office of National Programs. Existing Area Office staff performing these functions will continue to be located where they are today, except for Beltsville staff housed at BARC.

- 3. The Forest Service's regional offices provide specialized expertise to forests across the country, enable coordination among forests, help maintain external relationships, and provide budget oversight. Regional offices also play an integral role in implementing the agency's statutory obligations under the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and other legislation.
 - a. How will USDA ensure that these critical functions are not lost through the reorganization?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to the agency's structure and the location of specialized personnel will be made after that date.

- b. Some specialized personnel—such as experts in ski area management, real estate, or litigation—are only located at the regional level. How will the Forest Service manage this transition and ensure that critical expertise that is difficult to replace is not permanently lost.

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to the agency's structure and the location of specialized personnel will be made after that date.

- c. How will USDA ensure that the elimination of regional offices does not compromise the Forest Service's ability to fulfill its statutory and regulatory duties?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025.

- d. Will the USFS have a new structure for regional oversight, or will all 155 forests report directly to the Chief? If my office has a question that applies broadly to Colorado forests, where should I direct my question?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. While no final decisions have been made, USDA does not expect that all 155 forests will report directly to the Chief.

The U.S. Forest Service Office of Legislative Affairs can manage questions that you or your staff have that apply broadly to Colorado forests.

- 4. Forest Service Regional offices play key roles in coordinating wildfire response and also support crucial on-the-ground work for mitigation and restoration.
 - a. How will USDA retain and transition critical fire services at the agency?

Response: USDA understands the importance of the wildland fire program. USDA's announcement on August 1, 2025, recognized the ongoing fire season and no changes are currently anticipated in the wildland fire program. Any restructuring will be done at a future date and designed to improve the performance and effectiveness of the program with the health and wellbeing of our firefighters in mind.

- b. Will any fire personnel, resources, or functions be lost or disrupted as part of the move?

Response: The reorganization will be done in a way that does not interfere with the U.S. Forest Service during peak fire activity in the West. They are going to remain focused on their mission of safe and effective fire response and any movements will take place when the agency has decided it is safe to do so.

5. If Forest Service regional offices are eliminated, every existing grant, cooperative agreement, MOU, MOA, or contract signed by a regional forester will need to be renegotiated, as the federal signatory would no longer exist. This would affect states, Tribes, counties, NGOs, universities, and others with legal agreements in place.
 - a. What entity or office within the Forest Service will assume responsibility for renegotiating these agreements? How will USDA divide those responsibilities geographically?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. The renegotiation of agreements will be conducted on a case-by-case basis, as needed with our Office of General Counsel.

- b. Please provide an estimate of how many positions at Forest Service regional offices and research stations would be affected by the proposed reorganization. Has USDA or the Forest Service conducted any analysis of how these changes might affect institutional capacity or expertise? If not, why?

Response: USDA will share analyses where appropriate.

- c. What engagement has occurred with rural municipal or county governments that may be affected by these changes?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025.

6. Several authorities in current law rely on the structure and roles of regional offices and research stations—for example, the appointment of Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) members. How does the Department plan to maintain continuity in fulfilling these statutory responsibilities if these offices are restructured or eliminated?

Response: USDA does not anticipate any interruptions in fulfilling our statutory responsibilities as a part of the reorganization.

7. Forest Service research stations play a critical role in supporting rural communities and private forest landowners, particularly on issues like wildfire risk, forest health, and invasive species. How will USDA ensure that any consolidation of research functions continues to support these stakeholders, especially given rapid changes in forest ownership and management needs?

Response: The identification of Fort Collins was in part because this is already USFS research hub location. USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to the research stations closures will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

8. The long-standing decentralized structure of the Forest Service has supported strong relationships with local partners and has been foundational to efforts on wildfire mitigation, suppression, and recovery; recreation; and landscape-scale restoration.
 - a. How will USDA ensure that external relationships are preserved or strengthened through the reorganization process?
 - b. Which external stakeholders were consulted during the development of the reorganization framework?
 - c. Were groups such as state emergency service offices, state foresters, timber purchasers, sportsmen, or recreation advocates included?
 - d. Are you proactively engaging with them now to ensure they are appropriately briefed on the development of the plan to provide relevant feedback?
 - e. Who will USDA consult with during the formulation of agency-specific "consolidation step-down plans"?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025.

Senator Cory Booker

1. Forest Service researchers conduct regionally-specific research in different forest ecosystems, which deal with distinct pests, forest fire pressures, surrounding industries, and weather challenges. Do you plan to relocate employees or sell land or buildings from

any of the experimental forests, ranges, or watersheds? Please provide a list of all experimental units where you plan to reduce functions.

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions about our research facilities will be made after the comment period is closed.

2. The Little Silas Experimental Forest in New Jersey conducts important research on prescribed burns and wildfire management.
 - a. Can you confirm that USDA will not relocate the researchers who work from the Silas Little Experimental Forest?

Response: USDA has not made any decisions regarding relocating individual researchers.

- b. Can you confirm that USDA will not remove the buildings at Silas Little Experimental Forest, which are used to store equipment and host researchers seasonally?

Response: Decisions about our research facilities will be made after the 30-day comment period is closed.

- c. Can you confirm that USDA will not shut down, scale down, or otherwise slow the research taking place at Silas Little Experimental Forest?

Response: Decisions about our research facilities will be made after the 30-day comment period is closed.

3. Do you plan to relocate employees from any of the Forestry Sciences Laboratories or Institutes?

Response: USDA has not made any decisions regarding relocating individual researchers.

4. Please explain how moving Forest Service employees from Regional Offices will bring the USDA closer to the people it serves. How do you justify increasing the distance between Forest Service employees and the regions they serve, in New Jersey and the northeast more broadly?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the

Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025.

5. Do you plan to relocate employees from any of the Forest Service Urban Field Stations? If yes, how do you justify moving people further from their mission areas?

Response: USDA has not made any decisions regarding relocating individual researchers.

6. As of today, USDA has still not informed all stakeholders of some of the specific changes being planned by USDA, such as which Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) offices are slated for closure, and whether Forest Service experimental units will be eliminated.
- How do you justify not sharing this information with all relevant stakeholders, when the comment period has already started?
 - When will you share the details with all stakeholders?
 - Can you commit to making sure ALL stakeholders have at least thirty days to weigh in, after seeing specific plans of exactly which office units are proposed for relocations/closure/or other changes, BEFORE final decisions are made?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation and retention will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

7. Which FNS regional offices will you eliminate or reduce, and where will these functions be transferred to?

Response: The Food and Nutrition Service will reduce its number of regions from seven to four and align locations with the USDA Hubs and Service Centers over a two-year period. USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

8. Please explain how closing FNS regional offices will meet your stated goal of getting more USDA employees closer to the people that USDA serves.

Response: The current FNS organizational structure and geographic distribution including several USDA resources in Alexandria, VA have not

reduced SNAP error rates or increased application timeliness. USDA intends to move more resources to provide technical assistance to its state administered programs. This includes moving resources from the National Capital Region and consolidating management layers and other support functions.

9. Why is USDA no longer planning to relocate employees based in the Texas Food and Nutrition Service office?

Response: Based on initial feedback, USDA will retain its Dallas, Texas Regional Office.

10. The current reorganization plan relocates employees into Regional Hubs in states that are predominantly represented by Republicans.

- a. Can you confirm that the Regional Offices and other units that are being shut down or relocated are not disproportionately in Democratically represented states?
- b. What will you do to make sure that the reorganization is a non-partisan process and that feedback from stakeholders in Democratically-represented states is fairly incorporated?

Response: Hub locations were selected based upon cost of living, current resource distribution, and the most geographically logical areas to best serve our farmers, ranchers, and producers. Although these decisions were not based upon political landscapes, two of the five hub locations are in states with Democratic Governors. USDA will also maintain two additional core administrative support locations: Albuquerque, New Mexico and Minneapolis, Minnesota.

11. Which National Agricultural Statistics Service offices will you eliminate or reduce, and where will these functions be transferred to?

Response: The National Agricultural Statistics Service will consolidate its 12 existing regions into five USDA Hubs over a multi-year period. The NASS National Operations Center in St. Louis, Missouri will be retained.

12. How many USDA employees work in New Jersey? How many, and from which units, are slated for relocation?

Response: A total of 568 employees work in New Jersey. No decisions on employee relocations have been made at this time.

13. Which National Resources Conservation Service units or employees will be relocated?

Response: The Natural Resources Conservation Service will align its regional structure with the five USDA hub locations.

14. Will you formally survey USDA employees on if they are willing to relocate, before finalizing plans for reorganization? If yes, will you make this information available to Congress?

Response: We are actively communicating with USDA employees, and all affected employees will have the option to relocate. In addition, there is a public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025.

Response: While prioritizing the protection of the anonymity of commenters, USDA will work to share results of the comment period as appropriate.

15. Is USDA open to changing the USDA Regional Hub Locations based on feedback that you receive?

Response: The five proposed hub locations were carefully selected. The lower cost of living in all proposed hub locations offer individuals the ability to enter into a career, start a family, and stay with the USDA long-term. However, USDA is open to changing the Regional Hub locations based on feedback it receives.

16. The USDA must serve areas regardless of their cost-of-living. There are many areas in the Northeast that have relatively low cost-of-living. Further, there are many talented people who want to live and work in the Northeast region, whose expertise we would miss out on by only allowing them to work in other areas. The USDA should not double down on only serving areas of the country where it already is. How do you justify no USDA Regional Hub Location being in the Northeast?

Response: The National Capitol Region falls within the Northeast region. Every agency and mission area under the Secretary's plan will have representation and officials in Washington, D.C., allowing USDA to serve the Northeast region and the entire country.

17. As part of this reorganization, USDA is proposing to shut down USDA mission area civil rights offices and consolidate all civil rights functions into the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights. We know that historically and still today a lot of the USDA discrimination happens at the local level including at the county committee level. To the extent there is any civil rights oversight that is currently happening at the local level, it is happening through mission area offices like the FPAC Civil Rights Division which you now plan to close. What is USDA's plan for addressing ongoing discrimination at the local level including in county committees?

Response: Consolidating civil rights functions will ensure everyone served by the USDA receives the same excellent level of service, regardless of which agency within the Department is serving them.

18. Given the significant staffing changes over the past 6 months and before the reorganization starts, I want to better understand the current status of field offices and field office employees. Please provide the following information by state and county and by agency (excluding part-time employees like the FSA county committee members) and if employees are associated with the state office, please denote the split between the local service center and state office and between farm loan programs and farm programs “county office” employees:

- a. Number of employees on the payroll at the start of the Administration in January 2025;

Response: 110,928 (total # on 1/25/25) // 102,568 adjusted (i.e., minus County)

- b. Number of employees that have taken the deferred resignation program and are no longer working even if they are on the payroll through the end of the fiscal year;

Response: DRP 1: 3,928 // DRP 2: 11,609

- c. Number of employees that have otherwise separated from federal service through retirement or other attrition since January 2025;

Response: As of 7/29/25: 1,789 retirements // 3,995 other departures

- d. Number of positions that have been advertised for external candidates since January 2025 for these field and state offices, excluding advertisements for positions that are only open to current federal employees;

Response: As of 7/29/25: 5,106 new hires

- e. Number of positions that have been filled by external candidates since January 2025.

Response: As of 7/29/25: 4,825 external hires. 309 of these hires were FSA county employees, 1,360 were permanent employees (public safety and national security such as firefighters and law enforcement), 160 were Term employees, and the remainder were temporary/seasonal employees.

19. Over the past 7 months, USDA has lost over 15,000 employees just through the deferred resignation program alone. There were reports that USDA employees were scared of losing their jobs and thought that they had to take DRP during the process. It turns out that too many employees took DRP and are now getting paid not to work for the rest of

the fiscal year, and USDA is now asking employees in some agencies like NRCS and Forest Service to transfer internally to fill critical roles. And NRCS is reportedly approving fewer EQIP applications due to a diminished workforce. Now, through this reorganization effort, the Trump Administration plans to uproot an additional 2,000+ DC-based employees and move them across the country. Many of them will likely not stay with the Department - the previous reorganization of NIFA and ERS under the first Trump Administration saw nearly 75% of staff decline the move. Those two agencies saw lower productivity, increased disengagement among remaining staff, and considerably less experience among those who were hired to replace those that left.

- a. How is USDA going to fix the existing delays to customers with a reorganization plan that Secretary Rollins has stated on Fox News is actually intended to further deplete USDA staff?
- b. How will you ensure the known disruptions to continuous service and loss of institutional knowledge that would result from this planned move by the Trump Administration do not impact the quality of service provided to America's farmers and ranchers? How will you ensure that USDA remains agile in its ability to respond to uncertain market conditions and evolving threats to American agriculture as it undergoes this massive transformation of its Departmental structure?
- c. Has USDA conducted any evaluation of the potential impact this reorganization effort will have on the quality and timeliness of services to producers? If so, what were the findings of those analyses?

Response: Over the last four years, USDA's workforce grew by approximately 8% and employees' salaries increased by 14.5%. Many of these salaries were funded by temporary funding. We must make certain USDA can afford its workforce. And where appropriate, the Secretary maintains the ability to hire critically necessary positions.

20. Secretary Rollins spoke to Fox News on July 25th and said that one of the goals of this reorganization is to deter people from public service. She said, "President Trump's vision was always to move people out of these government jobs, where maybe it isn't the most productive use, into the private sector." This is an echo of the initial "fork in the road" email sent to government employees, encouraging them to resign, characterizing government service jobs as "lower productivity jobs," and contrasting them with those in private sector, which it called "higher productivity jobs." This message undermines the honor of public service. Do you think the USDA employees who work for you are doing "lower productivity jobs"?

Response: Over the last four years, USDA's workforce grew by approximately 8% and employees' salaries increased by 14.5%. Many of these salaries were funded by temporary funding. We must make certain USDA can afford its workforce.

21. One of the stated principles of this reorganization is centralization and getting government services closer to the Americans through these hub cities. But many of USDA's programs, particularly those involving public lands and rural communities, rely on decentralized, place-based decision-making.

- a. How will USDA ensure that this shift toward centralization does not come at the expense of local responsiveness?
- b. What's the plan to preserve institutional knowledge, long-standing community relationships, and field-level expertise when so much is being pulled away from the regions and into centralized hubs?

Response: There are no farms or forests in Washington, D.C. Moving employees closer to the stakeholders it serves does not compromise institutional knowledge, and it is unfair to minimize the depth of knowledge of the 92% of USDA employees in areas other than the National Capital Region.

Senator Ben Ray Lujan

1. **Efficiency and Service Delivery:** Please provide specific examples of how this restructuring will measurably improve USDA's efficiency, service delivery, or interagency coordination with respect to the administration of domestic nutrition programs. Please provide relevant accompanying materials and analysis in support of these examples and conclusions.

Response: USDA will share analyses where appropriate and at the appropriate time.

2. **FNS Regional Offices:** This plan proposes to consolidate the regional offices for the Food and Nutrition Service from seven to five and relocate all of them. Collectively, these regional offices serve all states and Tribes administering FNS programs, providing critical technical assistance and oversight.

- a. Can you explain exactly how states and Tribes will be served under the five new regional offices?
- b. Were the seven FNS regions assessed and adjusted during President Trump's first term and, if so, what additional factors and considerations led you to conclude that additional adjustment was necessary?
- c. Have final decisions been made regarding locations for planned FNS regions and what were the key considerations in selecting these regions?

- d. Has the Department conducted an analysis of how this proposed reorganization will impact the ability of Americans to access federal nutrition assistance programs?
- e. Does USDA have a plan in place to retain experienced staff at the Food and Nutrition Service who support states in getting food out to those impacted by disaster?

Response: The current FNS organizational structure and geographic distribution including several USDA resources in Alexandria, VA have not reduced SNAP error rates or increased application timeliness. USDA intends to move more resources to provide technical assistance to its state administered programs. This includes moving resources from the National Capital Region and consolidating management layers and other support functions.

- 3. **FNS Retail Operations:** Has USDA analyzed how consolidating regional offices for the Food and Nutrition Service from seven to five will affect inspections of applicant and currently-authorized SNAP retailers? If so, please share that analysis with Congress. How will USDA ensure that retailer applications are processed in a timely manner given that there will be fewer FNS offices located near stores?

Response: The current FNS organizational structure and geographic distribution including several USDA resources in Alexandria, VA have not reduced SNAP error rates or increased application timeliness. USDA intends to move more resources to provide technical assistance to its state administered programs. This includes moving resources from the National Capital Region and consolidating management layers and other support functions.

- 4. **Forest Service:** Most observers would say that the Forest Service is already under capacity relative to the amount of work that Congress has authorized and directed it to do. Now the agency has new responsibilities under the reconciliation bill and is implicated, at least partially, in a variety of President Trumps Executive orders. This reorganization is going to further hamstring and agency that has already lost over 15,000 people under your leadership. How is the Forest Service going to deliver on the statutory responsibilities that this committee has given it when we continue to lose the leadership and institutional knowledge at the agency?
 - a. As you know, the Forest Service's Southwest Regional Office is located in Albuquerque, New Mexico.
 - b. What will eliminating the Forest Service's Southwest Regional Office in Albuquerque, New Mexico mean for the employees there?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the

Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. USDA will communicate any impacts to Southwest Regional Office employees upon conclusion of the comment period.

Senator Raphael Warnock

1. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) announcement, the pillars of this reorganization plan are to ensure the size of USDA's workforce aligns with available financial resources and agricultural priorities; bring USDA closer to its customers; eliminate management layers and bureaucracy; and consolidate redundant support functions.¹
 - a. What steps will USDA take to ensure that farmer-facing services, like those of the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service, are not disrupted by this reorganization plan?
 - b. What steps will you take to ensure that the normal processes of USDA are not delayed or interrupted?

Response: Most USDA employees are at the field-level and will continue to be in the County Offices where they serve farmers, foresters, ranchers, and producers.

2. On August 1, 2025, the USDA opened a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders to provide feedback on the USDA's reorganization plan.²
 - a. How will USDA take any submitted public comments into account when implementing or changing the reorganization plan?
 - b. How many rounds of public comment periods will the USDA conduct?
 - c. Prior to this announcement, did USDA engage in any proactive outreach to solicit feedback from stakeholders? If so, which stakeholders?
 - d. What additional outreach does USDA plan to do to ensure *all* communities that would be affected by this reorganization plan are aware of this public comment period and have the opportunity to provide feedback on this plan?
 - e. Will you commit to meeting with the Georgia Commissioner of Agriculture to receive and seriously consider his feedback on this plan?

¹ <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/07/24/secretary-rollins-announces-usda-reorganization-restoring-departments-core-mission-supporting>

² <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/news/press-releases/2025/08/01/usda-opens-public-comment-period-department-reorganization-plan>

- f. Will you commit to meeting with the Georgia Farm Bureau to receive and seriously consider its feedback on this plan?
- g. Will you commit to meeting with the Georgia State Forester to receive and seriously consider his feedback on this plan?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025.

- 3. During the hearing, when asked if USDA consulted with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), you responded that "a plan was submitted to the Office of Management and Budget."³ Are there any differences between the plan submitted to OMB and the plan USDA released publicly on July 24, 2025? If yes, please provide this Committee with a copy of the plan USDA submitted to the Office of Management and Budget.

Response: A draft framework was submitted to OMB, and it did change as we continued to iterate the plan. The Secretary Memorandum reflects USDA's actual reorganization intentions.

- 4. During the hearing, you stated that USDA would be happy to work with members to provide background data on the decisions that were made within the reorganization plan. Will you commit to sharing all background data and analyses that USDA collected and conducted for this reorganization plan with this Committee? If yes, please provide this Committee with copies of all background data and analyses.

Response: USDA will share analyses where appropriate and at the appropriate time.

- 5. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act includes a provision that provides farmers with an opportunity to voluntarily increase their allocations of base acres.⁴ How will you work to ensure that USDA's reorganization plan and the consolidation of offices do not interfere with the agency's ability to efficiently and equitably carry out this application and base acre allocation process?

Response: Maintaining continuity of its programs is of paramount importance to USDA and USDA will reassess if program operations or USDA service are impacted.

³ <https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/hearings/review-of-the-usda-reorganization-proposal>

⁴ One Big Beautiful Bill Act, Pub. L. No. 119-21.

6. The Secretary's Memorandum: SM 1078-015 states that under this reorganization plan, the Department will consolidate "civil rights functions into the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights."⁵
- a. When creating this plan, did USDA comply with Departmental Regulation 1010⁶ to consult with internal civil rights staff?
 - b. If not, does USDA intend to comply with the requirements of Departmental Regulation 1010, including the requirement for consultation of civil rights staff? If not, why not?
 - c. Has USDA considered how the consolidation of civil rights functions within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights would affect the complaint process and timelines?

Response: USDA will comply with all laws and regulations necessary through this process. The consolidation of Civil Rights functions at the Department level will provide employees and the public uniform processes and standards across the entire department.

7. The Secretary's Memorandum: SM 1078-015 states that under this reorganization plan, the Department will reduce the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business at USDA "to a single position that focuses on the statutory requirements."⁷ This office was created to provide maximum opportunities for small businesses to participate in USDA's contracting portfolio.⁸ Given USDA's significant contracting needs, what steps will USDA take to ensure the office's statutory mandate is met with just one person?

Response: USDA is a strong supporter of contracting to small businesses and consistently meets and routinely exceeds its small business goals. However, the Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization's (OSDBU) impact on achieving these goals is minimal since it does not employ any contracting officers or contracting staff and is primarily focused on reporting and attending limited outreach events. USDA recognizes that achievement of its small business goals rests within its procurement functions and this consolidation bolsters accountability for delivering small business goals.

8. The Secretary's Memorandum: SM 1078-015 states USDA would be realigning the Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE) student programs to the Agricultural Research Service.⁹ As you know, OPPE is a statutorily required office.

⁵ <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sm-1078-015.pdf>

⁶ https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/DR_1010-001_Organization_Planning_Review_and_Approval.pdf

⁷ <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sm-1078-015.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/general-information/staff-offices/departamental-administration/office-small-and-disadvantaged-business-utilization-osdbu>

⁹ <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sm-1078-015.pdf>

Please explain what functions and programs OPPE would be responsible for after the realignment under the reorganization plan.

Response: The Student Programs that will be aligned to ARS (e.g., 1890 Scholars, 1890 liaisons and Hispanic Serving Institution liaisons, and E. Kika De La Garza Fellowship Program) are not statutorily required to be housed within OPPE. ARS already administers USDA-wide student programs (Wallace Carver and HACU internship program) and realigning the OPPE programs to ARS allows the programs to be more effectively administered. OPPE will continue to maintain its statutory responsibilities for military/veteran liaison functions, New and Beginning Farmers, and Farm Labor.

9. The Secretary's Memorandum: SM 1078-015 also states that the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) "will reduce its number of regions from seven to five."¹⁰

- a. How will USDA ensure continuity of critical nutrition programs that serve over 40 million Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients during this transition, including the many thousands of families and children in Georgia that rely on this aid?

Response: SNAP is a federally funded, state-administered program, and will continue without disruption.

- b. Has USDA conducted an analysis of how losing FNS employees will affect SNAP error rate monitoring and technical assistance to states, Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program oversight and implementation, child nutrition program administration, and emergency food assistance during disasters? If so, please provide that analysis for each program in your response. If not, please explain why you did not do so before announcing this plan.

Response: The current FNS organizational structure and geographic distribution including several USDA resources in Alexandria, VA have not reduced SNAP error rates or increased application timeliness. USDA intends to move more resources to provide technical assistance to its state administered programs. This includes moving resources from the National Capital Region and consolidating management layers and other support functions.

- c. FNS regularly works with Congress and other federal agencies on policy development and crisis response. How will this collaboration be maintained when FNS leadership and expertise are dispersed across the country rather than where these partnerships can be most effectively managed?

¹⁰ *Id.*

Response: FNS will continue to have the appropriate personnel that directly provide policy development and crisis response support located in the Washington, D.C. area.

10. The Secretary's Memorandum: SM 1078-015 also states that USDA will maintain the Forest Service's eastern service center in Athens, Georgia, while phasing out the nine Regional Offices, including the Forest Service's Southern Region headquarters in Atlanta, Georgia, over the next year.¹¹

- a. How many employees from the Southern Region headquarters will be moved to Athens?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions about individual relocations have not been made yet.

- b. Will Southern Region headquarters employees in Atlanta have lateral reassignment opportunities to the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests within the state?

Response: Lateral reassignment opportunities are always available to U.S. Forest Service employees.

- c. Will they prioritize reassigning Southern Region headquarters employees to other National Forests within the Southern Region's current footprint?

Response: Employees are currently eligible for voluntary reassignments and choose where and which positions they are interested in – USDA has not issued any mandatory reassignments.

- d. What will be the primary responsibility of the employees in the Athens, Georgia office?

Response: The Service Center in Athens, GA will support the U.S. Forest Service's southern operations.

- e. Will the Forest Service maintain the Forestry Sciences Laboratory in Athens?

Response: Yes. Athens was chosen in part because it was already a hub for USFS operations and research and development.

¹¹ <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/sm-1078-015.pdf>

11. Regional Foresters to develop 5-year strategies for increasing their timber volume offered over the next 4-5 years; establish, within 24 months, 2 years' worth of "shelf stock" of timber volume coming from project decisions; and integrate their regional 10-year reforestation implementation strategies with the national active forest management strategy.¹² With the reorganization eliminating the Forest Service Regional Offices, who will now be responsible for implementing the above strategies?

Response: As with all land management decisions, local line officers (e.g., Forest Supervisors) will retain decision-making authority and be responsible their respective timber projects and accomplishments.

12. According to the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) uses an iterative process for establishing timber targets wherein the USFS Washington Office (WO) works with each of the USFS Regions to set targets for the total amount of timber the agency aims to sell.¹³ In this process, USFS WO asks the regions for the amount of timber they aim to sell each year for the next five 5 years and how funding they would need to plan and implement timber sales. The USFS then eventually sets agencywide and regional timber targets for the upcoming year. Given the USDA reorganization plan eliminates USFS Regional Offices, how will the USFS establish timber targets and allocate resources for meeting the timber targets?

Response: USFS will continue to use its timber management staff to establish timber targets and allocation resources.

13. During your testimony, you stated that this relocation is an "exciting opportunity" for current employees. However, you also acknowledged that expecting all employees to relocate would be "unrealistic."¹⁴ According to reporting, Secretary Rollins also said that potentially half of the National Capital Region-based staff may not relocate.¹⁵

- a. Has USDA conducted any analysis of the hardship this reorganization will impose on employee families, including disruption to children's education and spouse employment, loss of family and community support networks, and impact on employees nearing retirement who may be forced to choose between career and family stability? If so, please provide that analysis in your response. If not, please explain why you did not do so before announcing this plan.

Response: Despite the number of USDA employees growing by approximately 8% in the last four years, the number of employees in the National Capital Region has decreased by over 13% in the same period. The cost of living in the Washington, D.C. metro is already the biggest hurdle to retaining talented staff.

¹² <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/implementation-secretarial-memo-1078-006.pdf>

¹³ <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-25-107496.pdf>

¹⁴ <https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/hearings/review-of-the-usda-reorganization-proposal>

¹⁵ <https://subscriber.politicopro.com/article/2025/07/rollins-says-potentially-half-of-usdas-washington-staff-may-not-relocate-for-reorganization-00477035>

Future leaders of USDA can afford the cost of living in the regional hubs. We want people to come to USDA for a career, to start a family, and to stay with us.

- b. What specific contingency plans are in place if fewer than 50% of affected USDA staff accept relocation?

Response: Despite the number of USDA employees growing by approximately 8% in the last four years, the number of employees in the National Capital Region has decreased by over 13% in the same period. The cost of living in the Washington, D.C. metro is already the biggest hurdle to retaining talented staff. Future leaders of USDA can afford the cost of living in the regional hubs. We want people to come to USDA for a career, to start a family, and to stay with us.

- c. How will USDA replace the institutional knowledge and specialized experience of the remaining senior USDA staff who choose not to relocate?

Response: Despite the number of USDA employees growing by approximately 8% in the last four years, the number of employees in the National Capital Region has decreased by over 13% in the same period. The cost of living in the Washington, D.C. metro is already the biggest hurdle to retaining talented staff. Future leaders of USDA can afford the cost of living in the regional hubs. We want people to come to USDA for a career, to start a family, and to stay with us.

- d. What is the estimated timeline and cost for training replacement staff to achieve equivalent competency levels?

Response: Decisions regarding relocations are not yet final and estimated timeline and cost is speculative. However, based on the decline in the number of employees in the National Capital Region over the last four years, it can be assumed that new staff can be trained in a reasonable period of time.

- e. What safeguards are in place to reverse the implementation of any provisions of this plan if they prove detrimental to program operations and USDA service?

Response: Maintaining continuity of its programs is of paramount importance to USDA and USDA will reassess if program operations or USDA service is impacted.

14. Following the relocation of the Economic Research Service and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), GAO released a report that included several recommendations to USDA, many of which USDA has yet to address as of March 2025.¹⁶ The report also found that the relocation resulted in each agency losing over half of their employees and that the proportion of Black employees at NIFA significantly declined.¹⁷

¹⁶ <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-104709>

¹⁷ <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-104709.pdf>

- a. Why has the USDA not updated the GAO on its progress?

Response: The Biden administration chose to contemplate implementation of GAO's recommendations, choosing to take no action.

- b. Does it intend to make these recommendations before moving forward with the relocation plan? If not, why?

Response: The Biden administration chose to contemplate implementation of GAO's recommendations, choosing to take no action.

- c. Has USDA performed any civil rights impact analysis of the reorganization with respect to employment and USDA programs, as required under section 12403(a) of the 2018 Farm Bill?¹⁸ If so, please provide a copy of that analysis.

Response: USDA will share analyses where appropriate and at the appropriate time.

- d. What steps will USDA take to ensure that any approved RIFs will not disproportionately affect underserved and/or minority employees?

Response: USDA intends to leverage all its voluntary workforce reshaping tools and does not intend to conduct any large-scale RIFs. If any small and focused RIFs are required, USDA will undertake an analysis to understand the impact to all USDA employees.

- e. What steps will USDA take to ensure that underserved and/or minority employees are not disproportionately impacted by this relocation plan?

Response: USDA intends to leverage all its voluntary workforce reshaping tools.

15. During the hearing, you stated that “there can be no RIFs unless it is personally approved by [you].”¹⁹ What factors or analyses will you use to determine whether to approve a Reduction in Force (RIF)?

Response: USDA intends to leverage all its voluntary workforce reshaping tools to mitigate any potential RIFs. RIFs will only be approved after all other tools are leveraged, and at my discretion.

¹⁸ <https://www.congress.gov/115/plaws/publ334/PLAW-115publ334.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://www.agriculture.senate.gov/hearings/review-of-the-usda-reorganization-proposal>

Senator Peter Welch

1. Many of USDA's programs, particularly those involving public lands and rural communities, rely on decentralized, place-based decision-making.
 - a. How will USDA ensure that this reorganization plan does not come at the expense of local responsiveness?

Response: The reorganization plan retains all current field capacity.

- b. What's the plan to preserve institutional knowledge, long-standing community relationships, and field-level expertise when so much is being pulled away from the regions and into centralized hubs?

Response: The reorganization plan retains all current field capacity.

- c. How are you working to engage with Northeast stakeholders on the impacts of this reorganization plan in their ability to interact with USDA programs and personnel?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025.

- d. What is the total number of USDA offices outside of the National Capital Region that will be closed?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

- e. How many USDA employees outside of the National Capital Region will be relocated?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

2. This reorganization plan concerns me because USDA still hasn't released funding for many USDA programs. More specifically, Vermont is still waiting for USDA to allocate \$31 million through the Rural Development Disaster Assistance Fund (DAF). If there is a loss of 30-50% of National Capital Region staff as projected by Secretary Rollins, how does USDA plan to roll out funding for programs that impact small-scale farmers and rural communities?

Response: The reorganization plan retains all current field capacity, and USDA Rural Development will continue to utilize field offices across the nation to roll out programs that assist rural communities.

Senator John Fetterman

1. Recently, Ranking Member Klobuchar and other senators sent a letter to you and Secretary Rollins regarding the USDA's proposed reorganization plan. This letter included detailed oversight questions for how the USDA decided to reorganize and its plans to execute on this proposal. These questions fall squarely within the oversight responsibilities of this committee and were meant to ensure the USDA is utilizing a process of reasoned decision-making as it undertakes this proposed reorganization. As leaders directly elected by our constituents, we need USDA to be responsive to us as we serve farmers and rural communities in our states—especially as this proposed reorganization was announced with little to no input from our constituents. While the USDA may be responsible for implementing law—including the law cited in the secretary's July 24 memo—these laws are written in this Committee. As such, it is the expectation of the Committee that the USDA participate in inquiries relating to our work to ensure that the laws we, and our predecessors, have worked to enact are faithfully executed and comply with intent. Your response to the Ranking Member's letter was, to say the least, inadequate. As such, I expect detailed responses to each of the following questions about governance and process:
 - a. Will you commit yourself and your staff to providing more substantive, thoughtful responses to members of this committee and our staff about this relocation proposal, which would reshape the way USDA operates—including but not limited to the detailed responses we expect through these questions for the record?

Response: Over the last four years, while the number of USDA employees grew by 8%, the number of National Capital Region employees decreased by over 13%. No reorganization notification was provided to Congress. Issuance of the reorganization memorandum and providing an opportunity for anyone to provide comments is an effort to provide transparency.

- b. How will you and your staff work with members of this committee and our staff to provide advance information about decisions you make around this proposed reorganization?

Response: Over the last four years, while the number of USDA employees grew by 8%, the number of National Capital Region employees decreased by over 13%. No reorganization notification was provided to Congress. Issuance of the reorganization memorandum and providing an opportunity for anyone to provide comments is an effort to provide transparency.

- c. Departmental Regulation 1010—issued in 2018—describes the policy and actions for making changes to organizational structures within USDA and requires that a statement acknowledging that all applicable labor relations organizations representing affected employees have been notified of the proposal, and certifying that the proposing officials have met or will meet all applicable labor relations obligations. Does USDA have such a statement, in accordance with DR 1010? If not, why not?

Response: USDA will meet all statutorily required labor management obligations.

- d. On August 1, 2025, USDA announced a public comment period for its proposed reorganization. The actions and information shared by USDA up to this point have been inadequate to provide the public and Congress the information we need to comment on the proposal substantively. How will you ensure openness and transparency through this process, when you are circumventing operating through the Federal Register notice and comment process?

Response: Over the last four years, while the number of USDA employees grew by 8%, the number of National Capital Region employees decreased by over 13%. No reorganization notification was provided to Congress. Issuance of the reorganization memorandum and providing an opportunity for anyone to provide comments is an effort to provide transparency.

- e. It is well understood that providing an opportunity for notice and comment comes with the expectation that the agency will carefully consider all comments and analyses received. To ensure transparency in this process, is USDA prepared to publicly post the comments gathered to enhance the public's understanding of the concerns of their fellow citizens and is the USDA prepared to consider and respond to comments as it would during an APA rulemaking?

Response: While prioritizing the protection of the anonymity of commenters, USDA will work to share results of the comment period as appropriate.

- f. Secretary Rollins stated on August 3 that USDA's plans to move much of its National Capital Region (NCR)-based staff to 5 hubs are "about 95 percent"

finalized. What parts of the plan are not finalized yet? Why did USDA finalize over 90 percent of the plan prior to talking to Congress, stakeholders, and its own employees?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

2. During the hearing, you testified that 91 out of 94 ARS labs will be untouched. There are 38 USDA-ARS positions at the Pasture Lab in University Park, PA. Please provide the locations of the 3 ARS labs that you propose to be affected. Will any of the positions in University Park, PA, be relocated to any of the new hubs, under your proposed reorganization plan?

Response: The only ARS lab impacted by the reorganization memorandum is in Beltsville, Maryland. The positions at the Pasture Lab will not be impacted.

3. Thank you for your stated commitment during the hearing to engaging with unions through this proposed process. I have several follow-ups, as union members are not fully reassured at this time.
 - a. What is your specific plan and timeline for engaging unions through this proposed process? I understand that there may be different requirements under different collective bargaining agreements, so please provide a plan and timeline for engagement for each union that has a collective bargaining agreement with USDA.

Response: USDA will follow all its statutory labor management obligations.

- b. Will you disclose all relocation timelines, relocation expense offerings, salary adjustments, and other pertinent details to union representatives with as much advance notice as practicable, and always before acting on such proposals? Please respond either yes or no.

Response: Yes

- c. What level of consultation has USDA had with employee unions up to this point, as required under federal labor law, and how has their input been incorporated into this reorganization plan?

Response: USDA will follow all its statutory labor management obligations.

4. The National Organic Program (NOP), currently housed in the USDA South Building and established as directed by Congress through the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, develops and enforces consistent standards for organically produced agricultural products sold in the U.S., ensuring that producers who invest in this value-added process are on a level playing field and consumers who purchase certified organic products are assured of the quality of the product. Organic standards are a priority to my state, which ranks highly in number of certified organic farms. They are something I've raised many times in this committee.
 - a. With the closing of the South Building, will NOP be relocated under your proposed reorganization?
 - b. If yes, to which hub or hubs will NOP be relocated?
 - c. Will USDA's proposed reorganization also entail a structural reassignment of the program?
 - d. How would this reassignment look if so?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.

Senator Adam Schiff

1. What concrete actions will USDA take to prevent a repeat of the 2019 mass loss of senior researchers due to relocation of the Economic Research Service (ERS) and National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA)?

Response: Over the last four years, while the number of USDA employees has grown by 8%, the number of employees living within the National Capital Region has declined by over 13%. With the number of remote positions that USDA offered, employees could live anywhere, and they chose not to live within the National Capital Region.

USDA has implemented lessons learned from the ERS and NIFA relocation including the identification of multiple hub locations as opposed to a single location and focusing on locations where employees already work and reside that have a lower cost of living.

2. Given ongoing threats to national food security due to severe weather, supply chain disruptions, and invasive pests, what is the justification for USDA downsizing and/or relocating critical research programs at a time when expanded scientific capacity is needed most?

Response: On January 4, 2025, President Biden signed into law the USE IT Act. The USE IT Act requires all buildings leased or owned by a government agency to be at least 60 percent occupied. Not even one of USDA's buildings in the National Capital Region meets this congressionally-mandated 60 percent occupancy rate. The legislation states that if the 60 percent threshold is not reached, the agency should consolidate and vacate to get into a footprint that does meet the 60 percent threshold. USDA is following the law. This will take place over a period of years, and in a way that does not interfere with any ongoing research.

3. Federal and state agencies share mandates under laws (e.g., Plant Protection Act) in regard to pest surveillance, quarantine, eradication, and rapid response. The relocation of USDA's headquarters staff and key research centers away from the National Capital Region raises the following questions:
 - a. How will resources' physical and institutional distance from DC disrupt existing pest detection, surveillance, outreach, and crisis management functions?
 - b. How will funding flows, federal-state communication, data sharing, and technical expertise—currently tailored to California's particular pest risks—be maintained or improved through this plan?
 - c. How will the distancing of USDA personnel potentially hamper instant interagency consultation, joint training exercises, data exchange, and regulatory harmonization, all critical for outbreak containment and eradication efforts?
 - d. What concrete steps has USDA undertaken to study these questions and consult outside experts prior to the announced reorganization?

Response: Currently, 90% of USDA's staff report to work outside the National Capital Region. We have proposed adding approximately 2.5 percent to that number. The work of these 90% is just as vital to the mission of USDA as is the work of staff in the National Capital Region. In fact, the heart of USDA is in the field, and the maximum number of people possible should report to work there.

USDA has a total of 4,754 facilities at which its employees report to work every day. The Secretary's proposal calls for closing exactly four of those locations.

Every Agency and every Mission Area will continue to have representation and officials in Washington, D.C.

4. The reorganization plan states the Forest Service's nine regional offices will be phased out over the next year with consideration of the current fire season. Regional Foresters currently work between the DC office and 154 Forest Service administrative units to oversee the implementation of Forest Service policy. This comprises responsibilities ranging from wildfire response, including approving or denying requests to mobilize emergency firefighters, to providing direction, training, and assistance to individual forests for the administration of trails on Forest System lands. How will the Forest Service's DC office coordinate its policies across more than 150 different administrative units with the elimination of the Forest Service regions? Has USDA analyzed how the elimination of the nine Forest Service regions may impact Forest Service wildfire preparedness and response?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. USDA also recognizes the importance of wildfire preparedness and response. Any restructuring to the fire program will be done at a future date and designed to improve the performance and effectiveness of the program with the health and wellbeing of our firefighters in mind.

5. On April 3, 2025, Secretary's Memorandum 1078-006, entitled, "*Increasing Timber Production and Designating an Emergency Situation on National Forest System Lands*," designated more than 112 million acres of Forest Service lands as under an emergency situation. Authorized emergency actions on these lands include emergency consultation to comply with the Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and Clean Water Act (CWA) as well as allowing for expedited Tribal consultation in certain scenarios. Forest Service Regional Offices play a key role in communicating these policy changes down to individual forests. As acknowledged above, the Administration is proposing to eliminate Regional Offices as the Forest Service is being tasked with implementing a significant shift in policies. How would the planned elimination of Regional Offices affect the implementation of such policies?

Response: USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and trusted state and local partners, to provide feedback on the Department's reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary's memorandum issued on July 24, 2025.

- a. To establish a baseline of how many emergency consultations are conducted under the current regional structure, please provide the number of forest projects within Forest Service Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 that have utilized expedited Tribal consultation since April 3, 2025.

Response: No projects have used expedited Tribal Consultation.

- b. To establish a baseline of how many emergency consultations are conducted under the current regional structure, please provide the number of forest projects within Forest Service Regions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 10 located within the Forest Health and Fuels Emergency Situation Determination lands that have used the following since April 3, 2025:
 - i. Emergency consultation to comply with the ESA,
 - ii. Emergency and programmatic consultation to comply with the NHPA;
or
 - iii. Emergency procedures to comply with the CWA

Response: To date, 32 projects have used emergency consultations across the entire National Forest System.

- 6. One important role of the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is feeding people in disaster situations, during which FNS staff deploy to support emergency feeding and deploy the Disaster SNAP Program (D-SNAP). In some years, D-SNAP supports millions of people affected by natural disasters, such as in 2017, when over 3 million people devastated by a series of hurricanes relied on D-SNAP. D-SNAP also supports victims of tornadoes, wildfires, mud slides, winter storms, flooding, and other natural disasters. Disaster relief requires expertise and highly intensive staff efforts to deploy to and support emergency situations. How will FNS deal with significant loss of staff and expertise, particularly when FEMA is also facing disruption?

Response: Maintaining continuity of its programs is of paramount importance to USDA and sees not potential for disruption to its programming and progress.

- 7. With the loss of institutional knowledge of many career staff who are unlikely to relocate, what is USDA's plan to maintain progress across the following areas?
 - a. Progress that has been made in recent years regarding communication between USDA and the VA to address food insecurity amongst veterans
 - b. Interagency partnerships to reduce food loss and waste
 - c. Interagency partnerships to address nutrition security and improve diet-related health outcomes

Response: Maintaining continuity of its programs is of paramount importance to USDA and sees not potential for disruption to its programming and progress.

- 8. In the hearing, you were supportive of Risk Management Agency (RMA) employees working remotely and noted that many are "remote for a reason not because it became cool five years ago but because their job requires them to be on the road. And this

Reorganization Plan does not affect that.” That claim is contradicted by the fact that the main farmer-facing employees of the Federal Crop Insurance program are private crop insurance agents (and not federal employees), and that RMA employees are not required to be co-located with crop insurance companies or agents (as are, for example, commodity graders in their work). Conversely, you were critical of the previous Administration in allowing ERS and NIFA employees to be hired remotely, asserting that “employees that were hired reported to no office other than their own kitchen.”

- a. Can you explain this inconsistency between agencies and explain when USDA believes remote work is acceptable versus should be terminated?

Response: In January, President Trump issued an executive order requiring federal employees to return to in-person work, effectively ending remote work arrangements for many. This order, titled "Return to In-Person Work," directed agencies to transition back to traditional office environments, with some exceptions for specific roles or situations. USDA intends to fully comply with this order.

- b. Calling upon your testimony that FNS employees are overseeing the actual employees delivering nutrition programs (the states, in the case of FNS), RMA employees oversee program delivery but are not on the front lines themselves. Under the logic you used for RMA remote employment, is USDA considering allowing FNS employees to be remote instead of forcing them to move to one of the hubs when regional offices are closed?

Response: The Food and Nutrition Service will reduce its number of regions from seven to four and align locations with the USDA Hubs and Service Centers over a two-year period. USDA announced on August 1, 2025, the opening of a 30-day public comment period for stakeholders, including USDA employees, members of Congress, and agricultural and nutrition partners, to provide feedback on the Department’s reorganization plan, as outlined in the Secretary’s memorandum issued on July 24, 2025. Decisions pertaining to relocation will be made and announced after the comment period closes.