

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

2321 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6301

(202) 225-6371
<http://science.house.gov>

July 8, 2025

Stephen Ehikian
Acting Administrator
General Services Administration
1800 F St. NW
Washington, D.C. 20405

Dear Acting Administrator Ehikian,

We write to you with great alarm after the June 25 press conference announcing the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) takeover of the building currently occupied by the National Science Foundation (NSF). At the press conference, HUD Secretary Scott Turner, Virginia Governor Glenn Youngkin, and Public Buildings Service Commissioner Michael Peters joyfully discussed the decision to move HUD into the building, bragging about how much of a victory this would be for HUD and for the Commonwealth of Virginia. At no point in the prepared remarks was it mentioned that the building has been home to NSF since 2017. Are the more than 1,800 NSF employees somehow less valuable to Virginia, somehow less worthy of a functional building? In fact, the building was custom designed to NSF's unique needs, including the capability to host expert grant review panels year-round. We do not for a moment suggest that HUD employees don't also deserve a functional, safe building. However, it is not clear this decision was made with HUD employees in mind at all. This baffling decision demands answers on the process that has or has not been followed, the plans for NSF, and the jaw-dropping demands allegedly made by Secretary Turner regarding luxury accommodations for his personal use.

The disrespect and disregard of NSF employees displayed at the June 25 press conference is a disheartening blow for an already demoralized workforce. The press conference was relocated at the last moment to keep NSF employees out of the room, and in Secretary Turner's statement, they were referred to as merely the "current team and employees of this building."¹ In his prepared remarks, Governor Youngkin said, "I don't think it's been ever that a federal Cabinet-

¹ Drew Wilder, Gina Cook, "'This is bull—': National Science Foundation employees protest HUD's takeover," NBC 4 Washington, June 25, 2025, accessed here: <https://www.nbcwashington.com/news/local/northern-virginia/this-is-bull-national-science-foundation-employees-protest-huds-takeover/3944316/>

level agency has moved its headquarters to Virginia,” blatantly erasing the 1,800 NSF employees currently working (and many living) in the state he governs because, we suppose, he does not value employees who work at non-Cabinet-level agencies. And the disrespect of NSF at this event was not merely in rhetoric – GSA admitted that it had not bothered to think about where to house NSF before announcing this HUD takeover. When asked about the plan for NSF, Commissioner Peters was blunt: “We don’t have a plan yet,” he told a local reporter.²

At the press event, Governor Youngkin said that his team “presented lots of sites around Virginia” to GSA and HUD.³ That calls into serious question how it is possible that such a disruptive plan was selected in lieu of choosing one of the many other buildings presented by the Governor’s team. While this selection flies in the face of good governance, efficiency, and basic respect for NSF employees, it does make more sense when considered alongside a jaw-dropping list of perks allegedly requested by Secretary Turner. These perks, first revealed by the American Federation of Government Employees Local 3403, include a dedicated executive top-floor suite, an executive dining room, reserved parking for the Secretary’s five cars, and a gym for the use of the Secretary and his family.⁴ Secretary Turner responded to a question about this saying that “this is not about Scott Turner; it’s never been about Scott Turner.” Whether this allegation is true or not, we expect both HUD and GSA to commit that this will not happen, now or ever. It doesn’t matter whether this is “about Scott Turner,” or if such accommodations are just the cherry on top – they are absolutely unacceptable, and GSA and HUD must promise that they will never be actioned. As it stands, there is no reasonable justification outside these reported luxuries to explain displacing NSF.

Not only is this plan wasteful and disrespectful, but it may flout security requirements put in place after September 11, 2001. According to documentation reviewed by the Committee, the building currently occupied by NSF does not meet the requirements of a Level III security posture. Upgrades to attain this level would have cost a minimum of \$50 million, and it was determined that NSF is at a low risk of a terrorist attack or natural event.⁵ HUD, however, is a Cabinet-level agency; NSF is not. The Secretary of HUD is in the Presidential line of succession; the NSF director is not. The risks and costs of upgrading to a Level III facility were considered before NSF moved into the building, and it would be reckless to move HUD into the same building without proper consideration of HUD’s particular risk profile.

² “National Science Foundation employees protest HUD’s takeover,” NBC4 Washington, June 25, 2025, accessed here: https://youtu.be/3Oc7UaF3u54?si=ZC_SB0lh1iRwTnT&t=214

³ “Live: The New Golden Age of HUD | Secretary Turner Unveils HUD’s New Building,” HUDchannel, June 25, 2025, accessed here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdctWVC7LQM&ab_channel=HUDchannel

⁴ “National Science Foundation Surprise: Employees Being Relocated to Accommodate Secretary of HUD’s Palatial New Office,” American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO, Local 3403, accessed here: https://www.afge.org/contentassets/d39b37aa070e4ca38844605a82d3f028/afgel3403_stmnt_us_hud_overtaking_nsf_office_space_2025.pdf

⁵ Documentation on file with the Committee.

In order to fully understand the decision process – or lack thereof – that went into this intended move, we request documentation and answers to the following questions July 15, 2025. Given Commissioner Peters’s statement at the press conference that “we are going to be erring on the side of moving faster than slower,” we demand a timely and comprehensive response to assess whether this displacement of NSF has been properly considered.

1. All documents and communications (including, but not limited to, emails, text messages, instant messages, comments, notes, analyses, legal and other memoranda, letters, telephone logs, Signal messages, meeting minutes, calendar entries, PowerPoint slides, and presentation materials) exchanged between GSA and HUD regarding the consideration, selection, potential renovation, and planned move of HUD into the NSF building.
2. All documents and communications (including, but not limited to, emails, text messages, instant messages, comments, notes, analyses, legal and other memoranda, letters, telephone logs, Signal messages, meeting minutes, calendar entries, PowerPoint slides, and presentation materials) exchanged between GSA and NSF regarding the consideration, selection, potential renovation, and planned move of HUD into the NSF building.
3. What alternative buildings were considered for HUD, and what buildings are being considered for NSF?
4. When is the anticipated displacement of NSF from the building they currently occupy?
5. What is the plan, as it stands as of July 15, 2025, for NSF following displacement?
6. Does a building housing HUD require a Level III security posture?
7. What are the physical modifications planned for the building NSF currently occupies to meet any security needs of HUD, organizational needs, or requests from Secretary Turner? What are the anticipated costs for these physical modifications? What is the anticipated timeline for these physical modifications? Will the NSF workforce be impacted by construction while still occupying the building?

In addition to providing the documentation and answering the questions above, we request that you brief the Science Committee Democratic staff on the planned displacement of NSF by July 15, 2025.

Pursuant to Rule X of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology “shall review and study on a continuing basis laws, programs, and Government activities relating to nonmilitary research and development.”⁶ The Committee possesses jurisdiction over the National Science Foundation.⁷ If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Sara Palasits or Albert Hinman with the Committee’s Minority staff at (202) 225-6375. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

⁶ [119 First Session House Rules](#).

⁷ *Id.*

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Zoe Lofgren", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Zoe Lofgren
Ranking Member
Committee on Science, Space, & Technology

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Haley Stevens", with a large, stylized "H" and a circular flourish at the end.

Haley Stevens
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Research &
Technology

CC: Brian Stone
Acting Director
National Science Foundation

Scott Turner
Secretary
Department of Housing and Urban Development

Brian Babin
Chairman
Committee on Science, Space, & Technology

Jay Obernolte
Chairman
Subcommittee on Research & Technology
Committee on Science, Space, & Technology