

Subject: Strategic Planning Process



**AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES
NATIONAL COUNCIL OF HUD LOCALS 222
THE PRESIDENT
WASHINGTON, DC 20410-0050**

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Deputy Secretary Sims,

Thank you for providing this opportunity to discuss HUD's Strategic Plan. It is important that the agency be results oriented and set goals. But to truly be a *strategic* plan, we must consider how we can best achieve the goals. What HUD looks like will affect what HUD achieves.

The Families and Work Institute recently issued a report on what are the elements of an *effective* workplace. The Institute is a mainstream organization, sponsored by corporations such as Johnson & Johnson, Verizon, Chevron, GlaxoSmithCline, and the United States Navy. The Institute identifies six criteria for effective workplaces—job challenge and learning, supervisor task support, a climate of respect and trust, worker autonomy, economic security and work-life fit, which you have spoken of to me, on several prior occasions.

We recognize the challenge to create and support effective workplaces in all 80 offices, big and small. But there are steps this administration can take. HUD jobs are challenging, but many HUD programs are dumped on employees without any meaningful training; supervisors receive inadequate training in modern management methods, no support for establishing a climate of respect and trust, and no disincentives when they establish hostile and disrespectful workplaces; although we have negotiated many policies to improve work-life fit, we continue to meet obstacles to their implementation; and economic security includes the opportunities for career advancement, which at HUD must include both upward mobility opportunities and grade parity.

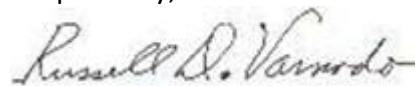
Effective workplaces make a difference. As the Institute reports, "employees who are highly engaged, satisfied and plan to remain with the organization are in a better position to achieve important business goals and objectives . . ." We agree with the conclusions of the Institute; "to be a truly effective workplace—[HUD's] design, practices and policies—must benefit both the organization and its employees."

I believe that Peter and Lisa agreeing to meet with the Union's leadership is a good starting point of

departure from the past way of doing things, while opening the opportunity for cooperation and shared accomplishments in the future.

Thank you for your time. We look forward to working towards a truly effective HUD.

Respectfully,



Russell D. Varnado
President, AFGE Council 222

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