

May 3, 2019

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

I write regarding the need to reduce the federal government's concentration in Washington, D.C., and a solution to this frustration that I believe you will support - draining the swamp by relocating federal agencies outside of the Washington, D.C. metro area. Throughout your presidency, you have already reduced regulatory costs by billions of dollars, repealed burdensome regulations before implementing new statutes, and placed hundreds of proposed federal actions under greater scrutiny. Your leadership has benefited the nation greatly. As a result, communities, small business owners, employees, and entire industries are experiencing significant economic opportunities. However, for governmental efficiency to progress, more action is required.

While there are arguments for maintaining concentrated government functions in Washington, D.C., many federal agencies are politically independent in their core mission or are too far removed from the Americans they regulate. Relocating some federal agencies throughout the country would distribute economic opportunity, disperse bureaucratic power, and bridge the gap between regulators and the American people. This general idea is not new and has been attempted by numerous administrations to no avail. Currently, the five richest counties in America are located near Washington, D.C., and as you know this city continues to have the highest per capita income in the nation. By relocating federal agencies to smaller and more cost-effective cities, struggling communities will finally be given the opportunity to compete economically and develop as rapidly as experienced in Washington, D.C.

To address these issues, I introduced the *Decentralize Regulatory Agencies, Include the Nation Act (DRAIN Act)*. As a basic framework, this legislation would provide the Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Administrator of the U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) the authority to develop and implement a plan under which non-national security federal agencies could be relocated outside Washington, D.C. Specifically, the relocation site would be determined on a competitive basis by the Director of OMB, the Administrator of GSA, and the head of each agency. Priority in the bidding process would be given to communities with higher-than-average unemployment rate with existing infrastructure in place.

Washington's centralization and dogmatic culture acts as a national tax on talent and removes the diversely skilled citizens from the states and communities that most need them. An ambitious approach is necessary for federal agencies to take the initiative on balancing the disparity of the nation's distribution of resources. Because a rapid transition of multiple headquarters would cause short-term disruptions, I respectfully urge your administration to develop comprehensive feasibility studies to account for all economic, technological, workforce, and logistical factors involved with transitioning non-national security agencies out of the Washington, D.C. metro area. Completing these studies would be a sensible first step towards verifying the practicality of moving any single agency to a new home elsewhere in the country. With special attention to cost savings, the studies should highlight the benefits of decentralizing power and unleashing economic opportunity, as well as reveal the challenges and limitations each agency might encounter as it addresses the site-selection process.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to working with you to dislodge the arms of the federal government from Washington, D.C., and further drain the swamp while giving economic opportunities to the rest of America.

Sincerely,



Todd Young  
United States Senator