

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

September 22, 1975

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This is in response to your letter of September 17, 1975 requesting me to testify on September 24 in connection with your Subcommittee's investigative hearings on alleged violations and abuses of merit principles in Federal employment.

As you know, I was pleased to meet last July with Subcommittee staff to answer whatever questions they had about personnel matters at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and to offer my thoughts as to ways in which the system of referral and recruitment of individuals for employment at Departments such as HUD can be improved. As you noted in your letter, I advised the staff at that time of my reservations concerning a possible appearance as a witness before your Subcommittee in view of my current position and responsibilities. However, I also advised that I wished to cooperate with the Subcommittee in any way possible, and offered to provide whatever written answers or statement the Subcommittee deemed desirable in order to complete its factual record. Your staff informed me that they appreciated the unique circumstances involved, and indicated that a written statement or answers to the questions might well be an acceptable alternative way to proceed.

I appreciate your assurances that any questions I might be asked in a hearing would be confined to the period of time I served in the Department of Housing and Urban Development as Executive Assistant to Secretary Lynn. Nevertheless, in view of my current position as a commissioned member of the President's immediate staff, I have been advised that it would be inappropriate for me to testify even as to matters pertaining to my past Federal service. Accordingly, I have been instructed to respectfully decline your



invitation to appear as a witness at the Subcommittee's hearings. I trust that you will appreciate the difficult questions of principle and precedent that compel this position.

At the same time, I should like to restate my willingness to cooperate in any appropriate way with the important work of your Subcommittee. To this end, I remain willing to answer in writing for the Subcommittee's factual record any questions that you deem appropriate, and am available at your convenience to do so.

With best personal regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

*James A. Wilderotter*

James A. Wilderotter  
Associate Counsel  
to the President

Honorable David N. Henderson  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Manpower  
and Civil Service  
Committee on Post Office  
and Civil Service  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

