

FEDERAL REAL PROPERTY ASSOCIATION

Event Summary: A Discussion with the Legislative Branch on Federal Real Property

September 25, 2018 – Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, D.C.

The Federal Real Property Association (FRPA) held its annual Discussion with the Legislative Branch on September 25, 2018 at the Rayburn House Office Building in Washington, D.C. The event featured Congressman Mark Meadows (R-NC) along with a panel of staffers including:



Congressman Mark Meadows (R-NC) addresses the audience in the Transportation and Infrastructure (T&I) Hearing Room.

- Johanna Hardy (Staff Director, Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure)
- Elliot Doomes (Minority Council (Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure)
- Walker Barrett (Legislative Director, Rep. Jeff Denham)
- Ellen Johnson (Senior Professional Staff for the Majority, Subcommittee on Government Operations, Oversight and Government Reform, Committee on House Oversight & Government Reform)
- Mark Stephenson (Legislative Director, Committee on House Oversight & Government Reform)
- Satya Thallam (Chief Economist, Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs)

Panelist bios can be found on the [FRPA website](#). The discussion was moderated by Mary Goldsmith (Director at RSM). Highlights are below.

Introduction by Congressman Meadows

Congressman Meadows provided an overview of the challenges the Federal government faces in managing its real property portfolio. He explained that it is important for agencies to be incentivized to manage their real property efficiently. He also gave a brief overview of the Federal Asset Sale and Transfer Act (FASTA) and noted that he has reached out several times for an update on the status of the Board. He will reach out again and follow-up with the FRPA.

What is the status of the FASTA Implementation?

Walker Barret noted that Congressman Jeff Denham (R-CA) was able to get FASTA passed in 2016 but implementation has been delayed. However, some progress has been made. Three Board members have been recommended by the White House and the General Services Administration (GSA) met the deadline for publishing the Federal Real Property Profile (FRPP). GSA also continues to look for ways to improve the FRPP data and make it more digestible for the public. Satya Thallam added thought that the quality of data is at mercy of what agencies can provide.

What would the first year of FASTA look like?

Elliot Doomes noted that GSA has worked with agencies to identify potential projects. Johanna Hardy added that, when the legislation was being drafted, no one thought it would be possible

SPEAKER SPOTLIGHT



Congressman Mark Meadows is in his third term in Congress and has been serving North Carolina's Eleventh District since January of 2013, after a 27-year career as a small business owner. During his time in Congress, he has championed fiscal responsibility, accountable government, pro-growth economic policies, pro-family and pro-life initiatives, and a strong national defense.

Congressman Meadows serves on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee where he Chairs the Subcommittee on Government Operations, which has oversight jurisdiction over federal agencies, the Executive Office of the President, the Postal Service, the Freedom of Information Act, and more. He also serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

Mr. Meadows previously served as a congressional delegate to the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly and as a commissioner on the Congressional-Executive Commission on China.

Please see the Congressman's full bio on his [website](#).

for six part-time board members to identify all deals. The FASTA process is public so the private sector and state/local authorities can bring potential disposition and consolidation opportunities to the attention of Congress.

Are operating leases for tenant agencies producing fiscal discipline as expected?

Ellen Johnson noted that there needs to be a consensus from both sides of the aisle to change budget rules. Elliot noted that the budget rules do not work for real estate. He added that he has advocated for working with the Budget Committee to create an exception for real estate. Ellen responded that every committee wants an exemption from budget rules but changing them to accommodate various interests may not be the best solution. Mark Stephenson noted that any recommended changes need to be bipartisan and include an agreement between appropriators and authorizers. Ellen noted that the rules will change only when there is consensus among members. Currently there is no consensus.

Will the full-scale consolidation of St. Elizabeths continue?

Elliot noted that the full-scale consolidation still makes sense. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and GSA have been moving the project along the best they can given the irregular funding they have received. Satya noted that DHS has made a strong and credible argument for why the full consolidation at St. Elizabeths makes operational and mission sense. However, GSA has committed to conducting a long-term assessment of the project.