



Advanced Search



Today's Issue

Past Alerts

Sample Alert

Register

Topics

- Originations
- Servicing
- Secondary/MBS
- Personnel
- Regulatory
- Data/Rankings
- Mergers & Acquisitions
- Nonconforming
- Fannie
- Freddie
- Ginnie Mae/FHA
- Commercial/Multifamily
- Technology
- Warehouse

September 18, 2018

Watt Accuser at the FHFA Seeks Senate Hearing on Sexual Harassment Allegations

By Carisa Chappell

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Simone Grimes, the Federal Housing Finance Agency employee who accused agency Director Mel Watt of sexual harassment, wants a public airing of her allegations before the Senate Banking Committee.

Diane Seltzer Torre, Grimes' attorney, told *Inside The GSEs* Tuesday morning she sent a letter to Sens. Mike Crapo, R-ID, and Sherrod Brown, D-OH, asking that the Senate Banking Committee hold a hearing so Grimes can testify regarding her allegations, which first came to light this summer in a report by *Politico*.

To date, Watt has denied wrongdoing regarding the civil charges and in late July issued a statement saying he had not "done anything contrary to law."

The House Financial Services Committee is expected to hold an FHFA oversight hearing by Sept. 27. Seltzer said, "I certainly hope that these allegations will be discussed during the hearing next week."

The attorney said an investigative report by the U.S. Postal Service regarding the allegations was signed and provided to the FHFA on Aug. 13, but there has been no action by the regulator since then. "They have not contacted me or my client regarding next steps or anything regarding the investigation. I wrote to their attorney on September 13, 2018, and have received no acknowledgement," said Seltzer.

In late August, Grimes filed a \$1 million civil damage claim against the FHFA, alleging gender discrimination.