

ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

Majority (202) 225-5051
Minority (202) 225-5074

June 8, 2010

Ms. Casey Coleman
Chief Information Officer
U.S. General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405-0002

Dear Ms. Coleman:

The federal government spends more than \$76 billion annually on information technology (IT), including more than 10,000 legacy systems that are often fragmented and lag far behind private sector innovations. In an effort to both modernize and cut costs, the Obama Administration announced the Federal Cloud Computing Initiative (FCCI) in September 2009.

Since then, the Administration has placed cloud computing at the center of its IT strategy, including it in both its FY 2010 and FY 2011 budgets, launching a cloud computing portal hosted by GSA (apps.gov), and establishing a number of committees and working groups to expedite the development of standards and overall implementation of cloud computing services. It is our understanding that you chair the Cloud Computing Executive Steering Committee (CCESC), which leads the FCCI.

While there are compelling arguments for the federal government to utilize cloud computing, the technology is still a relatively new concept. As such, there are a number of questions and concerns about the federal government's use of cloud computing. The Committee is examining these issues and intends to hold a hearing on the potential benefits and risks of moving federal IT into the "cloud".

It is our understanding that a number of agencies are already using cloud computing for everything from email service to platform development despite the fact that OMB has yet to issue guidance on its use. Currently, there are no clear policies and procedures in place for cloud computing, and standards are not yet developed for security, interoperability, or data portability.

Moreover, there does not appear to be a finalized plan for the government-wide implementation of cloud computing.

The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform is the principal oversight Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives, with jurisdiction over “any matter.” Under Rules X and XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee is examining the FCCI.

In his recent Semiannual Report to Congress, the Inspector General noted that, “GSA systems development projects have typically experienced significant schedule delays and cost overruns, the need for frequent redesign, and a prolonged period of time in development.”¹ In light of these past performance issues and to assist the Committee in its examination, please provide written answers to the following questions:

1. Late last month a draft Cloud Computing Initiative Vision and Strategy Document was made public on the newly launched info.apps.gov.²
 - (a) Is this the FCCI plan for the government-wide implementation of cloud computing? If so, what is the timeline for finalizing this plan? Please provide a copy of the most recent plan along with any additional background information and relevant supporting materials.
 - (b) According to the draft plan, there are a number of specific benchmarks the FCCI should meet in the coming months. Will those goals be met, and if not, please explain why.
2. What cost estimates, including projected spending and savings, are available on the FCCI?
3. What is the status of the development of standards for security, interoperability, and data portability? Please provide copies of any supporting materials and timelines that may exist.
4. What agencies currently use or plan to use cloud computing technology and services? Please provide a list of agencies, a description of the project, and the name of the cloud computing service provider.
5. What plans, if any, are in place to address the unique challenges of cloud computing procurement? More specifically, how will the Administration protect against institutional conflicts of interest, ensure that cloud acquisitions are fully transparent and subject to full and open competition?

¹ GSA Office of Inspector General, *Semiannual Report to the Congress*, October 1, 2009-March 31, 2010.

² GSA, *Cloud Computing Initiative Vision and Strategy Document (DRAFT)*, February 2010. Available at <http://info.apps.gov/node/2>. (Accessed June 3, 2010.)

Ms. Casey Coleman

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Please deliver the requested information to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, room 2157 Rayburn House Office Building, no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, June 18, 2010. Should you have any questions about this request, please contact Amy Miller or Bert Hammond of the Committee staff at (202) 225-5051.

Sincerely,



Edolphus Towns
Chairman



Diane Watson
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Government Management,
Organization and Procurement

cc: Mr. Vivek Kundra
Federal Chief Information Officer
Administrator for E-Government and Information Technology
Office of Management and Budget

The Honorable Darrell Issa
Ranking Minority Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

The Honorable Brian Bilbray
Ranking Minority Member
Subcommittee on Government Management, Organization, and Procurement