

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) 225-5074
MINORITY (202) 225-5051
<http://oversight.house.gov>

Opening Statement
Ranking Member Robin Kelly

Hearing on “DATA Act: Monitoring Implementation Progress”
Subcommittee on Information Technology

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Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you to our witnesses for appearing on today’s panel to discuss the Administration’s progress in implementing the DATA Act.

The Act requires that agencies report spending data in a consistent way which, in turn, will create opportunities to improve operational efficiency and oversight.

The transparency that the DATA Act is designed to provide will help enhance accountability for agencies’ spending decisions.

Once implemented, the DATA Act will provide the public with federal spending data that is accessible, reliable, and usable. Mr. Lebryk has stated before this Committee, quote, “Better data leads to better decisions and ultimately a better government.”

The Office of Management and Budget and the Department of Treasury have initiated multiple efforts to carry out the requirements of the DATA Act. I commend the way the Administration has embraced the DATA Act and worked diligently to set the executive branch on the right path.

The Department of Health and Human Services has taken a significant role in designing a plan to test a pilot program to streamline and reduce the reporting burden on grantees. I look

forward to hearing more about their plans for the pilot, some of the potential outcomes and a time frame for results.

However, the procurement portion of the pilot program, which intends to test areas for reducing the reporting burden on contractors, has taken a narrow approach, focusing on only one area in which contractor reporting could be reduced. In a report released today on the pilot program, GAO raised concerns with the design of the procurement portion and its ability to provide meaningful and useful data for effective testing of the pilot. GAO recommends that OMB clearly document how the procurement portion of the pilot will contribute to the DATA Act requirements and ensure the design reflects leading practices.

It is important that Congressional oversight helps ensure that the opportunity to reduce reporting burden and streamline areas of reporting is not missed during the implementation of the DATA Act.

The work of Congress did not end with the passage or oversight of the DATA Act. It is equally important that Congress provide sufficient resources for federal agencies to make the necessary changes to implement the DATA Act and transform the collection and reporting of federal spending data.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses.

Contact: Jennifer Werner, Communications Director, (202) 225-5051.