

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
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Opening Statement
Rep. Elijah E. Cummings, Ranking Member

Hearing on “Wasting Information Technology Dollars: How Can the Federal Government Reform its IT Investment Strategy?”

January 22, 2013

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to welcome all our witnesses here today, including our good friend and distinguished former Chairman, Tom Davis. It's great to see you.

I think this is an appropriate first hearing for this Congress. This is a good government hearing that gets right to core of our Committee's jurisdiction. Today we are examining federal spending on information technology. Our Committee has jurisdiction over the efficiency and management of government operations and activities, including procurement. It is our responsibility to ensure that the federal government is spending money wisely and efficiently. This includes federal spending on information technology.

The President's Fiscal Year 2013 budget projected that agencies will spend \$79 billion on IT this year. The Government Accountability Office has found that agencies do not have adequate oversight of these investments. In a report last October, GAO found that five major agencies have not been using the proper safeguards to ensure that their investments in the operation and maintenance of IT systems are performing as intended. As GAO said, “Until agencies address these shortcomings, there is increased risk that these agencies will not know whether the multibillion dollar investments fully meet their intended objectives.”

I look forward to hearing from Mr. VanRoekel, the Chief Information Officer, about the progress the Administration has made in improving the quality of IT investments, what is being done to improve oversight of those investments, and how overall spending is being reduced. In particular, I am interested in hearing about the Administration's efforts to improve the transparency of IT investments. I also look forward to hearing from industry leaders who can identify the challenges and opportunities we face in our efforts to improve the way the government invests in IT.

Finally, I want to applaud the work of our resident technology expert, Representative Connolly, the Ranking Member of the Government Operations Subcommittee. Mr. Connolly held a forum in his district last May that explored many of the same issues we will hear about today. He also has taken the lead in introducing legislation to reduce waste by consolidating federal data centers. The Administration's efforts on data center consolidation are expected to save the government \$3 billion by 2015.

I believe it is time to modernize the way the government does business. This will require strategic investments in technology, but we should not overlook the importance of strategic investments in our workforce. Our acquisition community needs to have the tools necessary to effectively oversee increasingly complex systems from beginning to end. These professionals ensure that the government is a smart consumer.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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