OPEN GOVERNMENT

A Progress Report to the American People

DECEMBER 2009

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"My Administration is committed to creating an unprecedented level of openness in government. We will work together to ensure the public trust and establish a system of transparency, public participation, and collaboration. Openness will strengthen our democracy and promote efficiency and effectiveness in government."

—President Barack Obama, January 21, 2009

TRANSPARENCY.

PARTICIPATION.

COLLABORATION.

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Let the Sun Shine In : Welcoming a New Era of Open Government

For too long, the American people have experienced a culture of secrecy in Washington, where information is locked up, taxpayer dollars disappear without a trace, and lobbyists wield undue influence. For Americans, business as usual in Washington has reinforced the belief that government benefits the special interests and the well connected at the expense of the American people.

But President Obama committed to change the way Washington works. And he has begun to do just that. On his first full day in office, President Obama signed the Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government, ushering in a new era of open and accountable government meant to bridge the gap between the American people and their government:

- The Administration is **reducing the influence of special interests** by writing new ethics rules that prevent lobbyists from coming to work in government or sitting on its advisory boards.
- The Administration is **tracking how government uses the money** with which the people have entrusted it with easy-to-understand websites like recovery.gov, USASpending.gov, and IT.usaspending.gov
- The Administration has issued an Open Government Directive, instructing every government agency to **open its doors and its data** to the American people.

The Obama Administration is reshaping government according to three core values:

- **Transparency**. Government should provide citizens with information about what their government is doing so that government can be held accountable.
- **Participation.** Government should actively solicit expertise from outside Washington so that it makes policies with the benefit of the best information.
- **Collaboration**. Government officials should work together with one another and with citizens as part of doing their job of solving national problems.

Since day one, the Administration has been implementing these values of transparency, participation, and collaboration in tangible ways that benefit the American people. For example:

- **Safeguarding Americans:** Creating Virtual USA to enable public safety officials across levels of government to share information in real time and improve response to national disasters.
- **Creating a Healthier America:** Creating a Healthier America: Empowering doctors and patients to improve healthcare by making crucial data on nutrition and Veterans Health Administration facilities available for the first time in machine readable format.
- **Increasing American Jobs and Competitiveness:** Enlisting entrepreneurs and technology firms to help identify the best Tools for America's Job Seekers and making it easier for young, start-ups to leverage federal technologies, funding, and partnerships to innovate, create jobs, and strengthen economic growth.

This progress report offers the American people a snapshot of the progress to date, highlights of the Administration's new open government policy framework—the Open Government Directive —together with a roadmap for what's to come.

Creating an Open Government in Practice

Open government is not the work of any single office. The entire Obama Administration is moving forward with broad measures to translate the values of openness into lasting improvements in the way government makes decisions, solves problems, and addresses national challenges.

Transparency

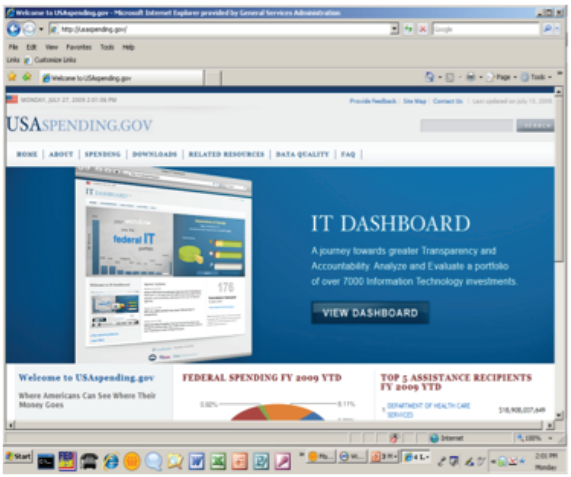
Transparency promotes accountability by providing citizens with information about what their government is doing and by putting government data online.

Openness promotes government accountability. It encourages journalists, researchers, government officials, and the public to scrutinize and thereby improve how government works on behalf of Americans. The Administration has transformed the President's commitment into tangible results. Most recently, the White House, for the first time ever, began publishing the names of everyone who visits the White House. Each month, records of visitors from the previous 90-120 days are now made available online. This gives the public a unique look at whose voices are being heard in the policymaking process.

In addition, the Administration has also reformed the government's FOIA processes, provided an unprecedented look at federal spending for economic recovery, provided on-line access to White House staff financial reports and salaries, adopted a tough new state secrets policy, reversed an executive order that previously limited access to presidential records, and webcast White House meetings and conferences.

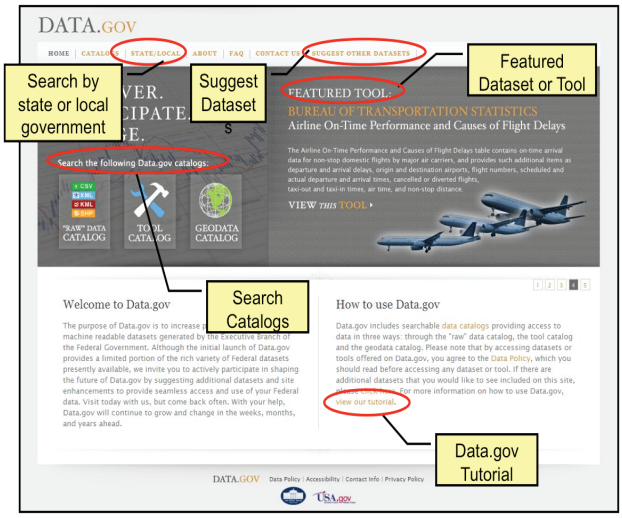
In addition, new lobbying rules have closed the revolving door for lobbyists to work in government and expanded disclosure of lobbyist contacts with the government.

From listening tours to webcasts to town halls, the White House and federal agencies are opening up the way they work. It's almost hard to believe that the first blog in the federal government only began in 2008!



IT Dashboard – Visualizing IT Spending

Recovery.gov – Tracking Stimulus Spending



Data.gov – Federal One-Stop Data Sharing Platform

Openness entails sharing government data, by making it available to the public online in open and accessible formats.

In May 2009, the Administration launched Data.gov, a website that makes economic, health care, environmental, and other information available in multiple electronic formats, allowing the public access to more government information online than ever before. Data.gov also offers access to handy software tools, such as one for tracking performance of flights. Having a website where agencies can make their information available is helping to make transparency real in practice as well as in principle.

Democratizing data reduces cost and eliminates waste, fraud, and abuse; creates new jobs and businesses; and improves people's daily lives.

- **Reducing costs and eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse**. The Administration has provided unprecedented visibility into the expenditure of taxpayer dollars. By visualizing the investments and impact of stimulus dollars (Recovery.gov), general expenditures (usaspending.gov), and IT budgets (it.usaspending.gov) in easy-to-understand "dashboards," the Administration has empowered agencies and the public to spot, and halt, wasteful projects.
- **Creating new jobs and businesses.** Under the Obama Administration, agencies are publishing data to drive entrepreneurship and economic growth, increasing access to small business grants and licensing opportunities and connecting entrepreneurs to useful resources and to one another via Entrepreneurship.gov and Business.gov. The United States Patent and Trademark Office will improve access to historical and current U.S. published patent data by beginning to post this data online for free download in the first quarter of 2010.
- **Improving the everyday lives of Americans.** The Administration is making available "high-value" data that helps promote national priorities. When the Department of Agriculture makes nutritional information available, parents can plan smarter meals for their families. When the Department of Transportation makes information on the status and causes of airport delays available, travelers, and those waiting for them, can better plan their work and play. When the Department of Labor makes safety information available, employers can better protect their workers.

Inspired by the President's call for more open government, these transparency efforts are being replicated across the country and around the world. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts launched its data catalogue, following in the footsteps of Washington, DC, San Francisco, New York, and other locales around the country (as well as cities in Canada and the UK), to provide public access to information from and about government. Publishing government information facilitates collaboration between government and the public and transforms dry data into tools that can improve people's lives.

Participation

Greater access to information about how the government does its work, drives greater citizen participation. This Administration's commitment to public participation is based on the simple notion that many of the best ideas come from outside of Washington.

Public participation shapes policy development. Education Secretary Arne Duncan embarked on a Listening and Learning Tour to hear ideas on how to strengthen schools, whether through increased focus on schools' performance and students' achievement, incentives for teachers and principals to work in disadvantaged schools, or streamlined resources to turn around the lowest-performing schools. By the end of 2009, the Secretary or a senior member of his staff will have visited all 50 states and gathered input on ways to improve America's classrooms.

But the process doesn't stop with the visits. The Secretary and his staff regularly reflect on what they've heard on the Department's blog. More than 500 people have written comments on these posts. A comment by a high school world history teacher in Princeton, Texas, prompted a call from the Secretary to learn more about the teacher's suggestions for how to achieve higher academic standards.

These ideas will contribute to initiatives that Secretary Duncan is shaping at the Department of Education.

The Department of Education's blog is just one of the many ways in which the Administration has used new social media tools and unprecedented levels of connectivity to engage a broader swathe of American people than ever before.

For example, Open for Questions gave Americans across the nation a direct line to the Administration to ask exactly what they wanted to know about the Administration's efforts to get the economy back on track.

A Health IT Online Forum is currently drawing on the expertise of stakeholders on the front lines of healthcare delivery to uncover new strategies to accelerate the adoption of Health IT and bend the healthcare cost curve.

This Administration is also committed to fostering participation and innovation across the government workforce. Using the same free software behind Wikipedia, the Army

Federal Register 2.0: Opening a Window into the Inner Workings of Government

Every weekday the National Archives and Records Administration publishes the Federal Register. This "newspaper of our democracy" provides a detailed description of the Executive branch's doings. This "newspaper" is heavy reading. The text is dense and detailed and organized chronologically in a department-by-department and agency-by-agency format, making it more accessible in practice to avid government-watchers and experienced interest groups than the general public.

When the National Archives made the Federal Register available for download in a machine-readable format, the value of this initiative came not from the government alone but from the collaboration between government and citizens.

Government published the data that, in turn, enabled Princeton's Center for Information Technology to launch Fedthread.org, a website that enables people to annotate the Federal Register and comment in its margins. Public Resource.org, created a software application that makes it simpler to search the Federal Register. And GovPulse makes it possible to visualize the Federal Register by topic or by location so the reader can see how particular government actions affect different local communities.

"Wikified Field Manual" invites military professionals to participate in writing Army Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures—instructions for soldiers on all aspects of military life—collaboratively in real-time. By inviting participation in writing Army doctrine, the men and women who serve our nation participate in and have access to the best possible information when they need it.

In August, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) launched a competition to solicit ideas from VA employees and members of Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) who work with Veterans each day to deliver the services and benefits they have earned. The competition is reaching out to the VSOs and the VA employees because of their unique ability to understand the root causes of backlogs and delays. To date, the VA has received and reviewed more than 3,000 suggestions. The winning suggestion will receive full funding for project development and execution.

The Federal Communications Commission is embracing public and employee participation. The FCC:

- *Launched a brainstorming website and blog to generate public input on the National Broadband Plan.*
- *Hosted more than 30 broadband policy workshops, open to public participation in person and online.*
- *Created openinternet.gov, enriching the official record on net neutrality with more than 22,000 comments.*
- *Launched an internal site for employees to collaborate on best ways to improve the agency, resulting in employees self-organizing running clubs and green task forces.*

In September, the Administration launched the President's SAVE Award contest, contest, to seek federal employees' ideas for trimming costs and saving taxpayer dollars. Nearly 40,000 ideas poured in. The next month, the Administration launched the GreenGov Challenge, an innovative online tool for federal employees to suggest and vote on clean energy ideas.

These examples highlight the core belief that participation leads to stronger government policies and more effective, more affordable government services.

Collaboration

While participation brings information to government so that officials can make more informed policy decisions, collaboration focuses on finding innovative strategies for solving challenges.

In July 2009, the Department of Health and Human Services tapped American creativity to address the difficult problem of reaching those most vulnerable to H1N1 flu—teens and young adults—with the message about washing hands and getting a flu shot. HHS awarded a cash prize to the "H1N1 Rap by Dr. Clarke," the winner of HHS's video contest. The PSA video contest created a huge amount of awareness about H1N1 prevention. More than 50,000 votes were cast in determining the winner, and hundreds of thousands of people viewed the entries.

The H1N1 Rap by Dr. Clarke won the 2009 Flu Prevention PSA Contest

In September 2009, the Department of Transportation's Distracted Driving Summit gave rise to the Drive to Life PSA Contest. Drive to Life challenged kids and teens to help get out important safe driving messages to their peers across America, in their own thoughts and words. The traffic safety PSA competition is sponsored by the National Organizations for Youth Safety and the National Road Safety Foundation, Inc.

As part of the Educate to Innovate campaign in November, the President kicked off National Lab Day, a collaboration between government agencies and grassroots organizations to bring hands-on learning to

***Virtual USA**—a collaboration among the Department of Homeland Security, the emergency response community, and eight states across the nation—is an innovative information-sharing system that helps federal, state, local, and tribal first responders work with all levels of government to make fast, well-informed decisions. The system links these partners' disparate tools and technologies in order to share the location and operational status of power and water lines, flood detectors, helicopter-capable landing sites, emergency vehicle and ambulance locations, weather and traffic conditions, evacuation routes, and school and government building floor plans, and does so without requiring any participating entity to change either the system it now uses or the way it does business.*

Virtual USA:

***Integrates Existing Frameworks and Investments:** Virtual USA complements existing policies, processes, and architectures and leverages existing information-sharing platforms and other solutions in each of the respective states to permit new and existing technologies and concepts to seamlessly exchange information with one another.*

***Draws on Practitioner Input:** Virtual USA was created based on the needs of local and state practitioners to manage data access within their own jurisdictions and to share information with relevant jurisdictions across the nation.*

***Employs a Comprehensive Approach:** Virtual USA is not limited to making information exchanges possible between only two agencies or fixed points; instead, the initiative fosters dynamic information-sharing among all federal, state, local, and tribal practitioners.*

***Provides a Flexible, Accessible Platform:** Because Virtual USA uses open data standards and open-source software, additional states and localities can join this information exchange project.*

***Involves Everyone:** Virtual USA provides mechanisms for Americans in their own communities to contribute information to complement that of police, fire, and other government workers to develop more complete pictures of disaster and recovery efforts in real-time.*

10 million students by upgrading science labs, supporting project-based learning, and building communities of support for science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) teachers. The effort has already garnered the collaboration of 2.5 million STEM professionals from science and engineering societies, multiple foundations and companies, and almost 4 million educators. Collectively, this partnership is committed to working with more than 10,000 teachers and 1 million students within a year, and 100,000 teachers and 10 million students over the next four years.

The Department of Labor sees collaboration as critical to help America's job seekers quickly and easily connect with jobs. In December, the Department launched the Tools for America's Job Seekers Challenge, challenging entrepreneurs and tech firms to showcase their online job search and career advancement tools. In January, job seekers and workforce professionals will be invited to test-drive, comment on, and recommend tools. In the end, the challenge will help One Stop Career Centers across the country identify the most compelling online tools to set job seekers on the shortest path to success.

The Administration is also taking advantage of social media technology to create a culture of collaboration that facilitates knowledge-sharing within and across agencies. For example, NASA recently launched "Spacebook," a professional network for collaboration across NASA. Spacebook can reduce project risks, save money, and reduce environmental impacts. Importantly, this tool also helps NASA to attract and retain the next generation of scientists and engineers, who expect to be able to use social media tools to support their work.

Similarly, the Department of Defense is scaling Aristotle—a technology developed by the Air Force to link people, projects, and documents—across the entire Department of Defense to enable scientists and technologists to collaborate, thereby saving the nation, time, money, and even lives.

Healthy Kids Challenge

Within the Department of Agriculture resides a small but vitally important agency: the Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. The work of the Center focuses on improving the nutritional well being of all Americans by providing the most current, evidence-based nutrition guidance available. With obesity having reached epidemic proportions, President Obama has made combating this public health crisis one the Administration's top priorities.

Openness and collaboration are central to the achieving the mission of the Center. The Center is launching a new project to invite the American people to work together to safeguard the health and well-being of American youth. The Center is making available online for download (on www.data.gov) a database of the 1,000 most commonly eaten foods and inviting entrepreneurs, software developers and students to compete to develop the best mobile and web-based games that teach youth key nutrition concepts. Entries will be judged by some of the nation's leading gaming experts. Budding entrepreneurial game designers are free to re-use their designs.

By making reliable government data available to the American people and inviting their collaboration in developing new products and tools for the public good, the Center is taking the values of openness and translating them into practical ways to address the national priority of reducing obesity and safeguarding the lives of America's children.

The Open Government Directive: Hardwiring Accountability

The Administration's most expansive step toward a more accountable government is the Open Government Directive released by the White House Office of Management and Budget in December 2009. This policy guidance, called for by President Obama in his first executive memorandum, is designed to hardwire accountability and accessibility into government institutions. It is the product of an unprecedented outreach effort to tap the public's ideas for what the Directive should include. (See Appendix 1)

First, the directive instructs agencies to **provide information to the public online in open**, accessible, **machine-readable formats**. Agencies are required to develop a timeline for publishing new, high-value information that will increase agency accountability and responsiveness; improve public knowledge of the agency and its operations; further the core mission of the agency; create economic opportunity; or respond to need and demand as identified through public consultation. This is directly responsive to what the Administration heard consistently from the public and government workers. "Open Government requires open information," wrote one member of the public.

The directive also focuses attention on specific kinds of information. The directive requires that annual **Freedom of Information Act** reports be published online in machine-readable formats. It demands transparency in how agencies are improving **records management** and publishing online information about how to access **declassified agency materials**. It also requires agencies to solicit public input about what types of materials to prioritize for declassification in the future.

FOIA Reports to be Published Online in Open Formats

Second, the directive aims to **instill the values of transparency, participation, and collaboration into the culture of every agency by requiring agencies to formulate an Open Government Plan and website**. The directive calls for each agency to develop its own unique roadmap, in consultation with the American people and open government experts, rather than prescribing a one-size-fits-all approach. The plan should reflect the input of senior policy, legal, and technology leadership, as well as input from the general public and open government experts. Once again, these ideas came directly from the public's suggestion that "all agencies [should] submit a plan for how they will incorporate open government activities into their missions."

To assist agencies in the process of creating a plan, the White House will establish a **forum and online dashboard to share best practices and track progress**.

Third, it calls upon the White House Office of Management and Budget, in consultation with the Chief Technology Officer and Chief Information Officer, to **review government-wide information policies that may need updating or clarifying** to allow agencies to fully utilize new technologies that promote open government. OMB will establish a policy for use of **challenges, prizes and other incentive-backed strategies** for innovation in government.

Open Government Directive Milestones

Within 45 days:

- Each agency shall publish at Data.gov at least three new, high-value data sets.
- The Chief Performance Officer, the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, the Chief Information Officer, and the Chief Technology Officer will establish a working group on open government.

Within 60 days:

- Each agency shall create an open-government web page to serve as the gateway for agency activities related to the Open Government Directive.
- The Chief Technology Officer and Chief Information Officer will create a dashboard to track agencies' Open Government Plans and assess open government in the Executive branch.

Within 90 days:

- The Chief Performance Officer will issue a framework for agencies to use challenges and other incentive-backed strategies for improving open government.

Within 120 days:

- Agencies shall publish Open Government Plans describing steps to improve transparency and promote public participation and collaboration.
- The Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, in consultation with the Chief Technology Officer and Chief Information Officer, will review existing government information policies and, where necessary, issue clarifying guidance and/or propose revisions to promote greater openness.

Open Government: Committed to Changing How Things Work

In addition to the commitments set forth in the Open Government Directive, numerous additional initiatives are underway. The Administration is:

- Experimenting with new techniques and tools to improve citizen engagement in the formulation and implementation of policy and in rulemaking.
- Expanding the offerings on Apps.gov, a platform that provides agencies with software tools with government-friendly terms of service so that every agency that wants a blog, a wiki, a challenge platform, or other citizen engagement tool can easily develop one.
- Designing, with public consultation, the Open Government Dashboard called for in the Directive and ensuring that the Dashboard offers concrete metrics for measuring progress toward a more accountable and open government.

- Expanding the Open Government "Innovations Gallery" at www.whitehouse.gov/open to showcase examples of open government in action. Through videos, short descriptions, and contact information, the Gallery facilitates best practices sharing.
- Establishing Fast Track Action Committees to make immediate and concrete progress on chronic problems impeding open government.
- Developing "communities of practice" to facilitate the sharing of ideas and software code across agencies and levels of government to realize open government in practice.

In addition to these initiatives, every Cabinet Department is launching a concrete new project to improve transparency, participation, and collaboration and thereby create tangible benefits to people in their daily lives. The following are just a few of the two-dozen brand-new Open Government efforts that debuted with the release of the Open Government Directive in December 2009 (See Appendix 2):

- **Strengthening the Nation's Emergency Response**: *Virtual USA*—a collaboration among the Department of Homeland Security, the emergency response community, and eight states across the nation—is an innovative information-sharing system that helps federal, state, local, and tribal first responders work with all levels of government to make fast, well-informed decisions. The system links these partners' disparate tools and technologies in order to share the location and operational status of power and water lines, flood detectors, helicopter-capable landing sites, emergency vehicle and ambulance locations, weather and traffic conditions, evacuation routes, and school and government building floor plans, and does so without requiring any participating entity to change either the system it now uses or the way it does business.
- **Promoting Healthy Kids:** To unleash innovative approaches to improving the health of America's children, the Department of Agriculture is releasing nutrition data for common portion sizes of over 1,000 commonly consumed foods and launching a national competition for creative, mobile and web-based games. The competition will challenge entrepreneurs, software developers, and students to leverage the newly-released data to develop games to help children make healthy eating decisions.
- **National Assets for High-Tech Economic Growth:** Fledgling businesses need easier ways to identify and assess entrepreneurial opportunities that will create jobs and strengthen economic growth. Towards that goal, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Agricultural Research Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in the Department of Commerce, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration are increasing access to information on 1) new technologies available for commercial licensing, 2) opportunities for cooperative research and development (CRADA), 3) Small Business Innovative Research (SBIR) opportunities, 4) SBIR awards, and 5) active CRADAs.

Working for Open Government: The Office of the Chief Technology Officer

Key to bringing about open government in practice is having senior leaders who are committed to the values of transparency, participation, and collaboration as a way of working. The President is committed to recruiting high-level champions for innovation across government. He appointed the nation's first Chief Technology Officer.

The Office of the Chief Technology Officer is a "policy entrepreneurship" organization, designed to deploy new technologies and open strategies to achieve agency priorities. Agencies are appointing their own Chief Technology Officers or innovation advisors to take the lead on promoting change and improving their effectiveness and efficiency through the application of new technology.

As an example: the President announced on June 25, 2009: "In the next 90 days, the United States Customs and Immigration Service will launch a vastly improved Web site that will, for the first time ever, allow applicants to get updates on the status of their applications via e-mail and text message and online." The Chief Technology Officer, collaborating with the Chief Performance Officer and Chief Information Officer, worked with Customs and Immigration to achieve the goal. This innovation improved the lives of countless immigrants wishing to know the status of their various applications.

Appendices

Appendix 1: The Open Government Initiative: The Unprecedented Consultation Process that Shaped the Open Government Directive

The Open Government Initiative Public Consultation Process (May 21-July 6)

In the January 21st Memorandum on Transparency and Open Government, President Obama directed the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) to issue recommendations for creating a more transparent, participatory, and collaborative government. To that end, the White House Open Government Initiative (OGI) and the CTO partnered with the American people to solicit expertise from outside of Washington. The three-phase public consultation (brainstorm, discussion, drafting) ran from May 21st–July 6th. This complemented an earlier online brainstorming with government employees, numerous face-to-face events around the country, and dozens of submissions received via electronic mail and posted to the White House Open Government Initiative (www.whitehouse.gov/open) website.

Here's how it worked. In May, the public brainstormed more than 900 ideas for open government policy. These ideas were categorized by theme to make them easier to sort, read, and map. Sixteen themes emerged from these proposals, each of which raised deeper questions and challenges to be tackled in an in-depth, online public discussion in June. In all, participants shared nearly 1,000 insights in response to the 16 blog postings. In a third phase to this open policymaking process, the public crafted proposed language via a web-based collaborative editing tool (aka a Wiki). By posting more than 300 drafts and rating other's proposals, the public helped us to begin to think about specific implementing language and, in the process, learned how hard it can be to translate lofty principles into clear and specific direction to agencies.

In the consultation process the public emphasized the importance of publishing raw government data online in machine-readable formats. Participants further urged the Administration to hardwire the principles of open government by requiring agencies to develop an open government plan and set clear milestones. They underscored the need for an enabling policy framework. Finally, they wanted to be sure that–in doing things in new, technologically—enabled ways—we continued to address traditional government reforms, such as making government more responsive to Freedom of Information Act requests and doing record keeping better.

Generally, government officials devise a draft of a policy and then solicit public engagement. We were able to use freely available, web-based tools to turn that conventional process on its head and work with the public from the get-go. More significantly, these tools enabled the public to take charge and "self-moderate" the conversation, using simple mechanisms for flagging public submissions, such as those on UFOs and birth certificates, as "off-topic," to help keep the discussion on-topic and easy to follow.

This online public consultation was only part of the listening exercise—but an important part that enabled us to hear from people outside of Washington. As one public commenter noted, "This was a great first experiment! Keep 'em coming! Only through activity can we refine practice." The output directly translated into ideas for the Open Government Directive.

Appendix 2: Cabinet Department Open Government Projects in Service of National Priorities

The Administration's commitment to open government goes beyond the making of government-wide policy for the future. It means real change in practice today. To mark the publication of the Open Government Directive in December 2009, every one of the Cabinet Departments launched a brand new, open government initiative. This work represents only the beginning of an ongoing commitment across the Administration to create a culture of openness in government.

Hardwiring Government Accountability

1. **Department of Justice: Improving Access to Government Information**—The Department of Justice is setting a transparency precedent for the rest of government by being the first to release its Annual Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Report in a machine-readable format. Annual FOIA Reports include detailed statistics on the number and disposition of FOIA requests, including response times, volume of requests, and personnel costs. As other agencies' Annual FOIA Reports are also made available in this format, members of the public, including public interest organizations, scholars, and the media, will be able to track performance. Ultimately, increasing the usefulness of the FOIA processing data will also enable targeted outreach to agencies by the Department of Justice to ensure greater compliance with the FOIA government-wide.

2. **General Services Administration: Making Advisory Committees More Transparent**—Federal Advisory Committees provide guidance on a wide range of issues, such as climate change and national defense. Now, for the first time, the General Services Administration will make 12 years of Committee data available for free download on Data.gov, enabling the public to scrutinize a rich universe of information, including 11,430 individual committee records detailing $3.24 billion in related spending for 77,740 meetings and 11,317 reports. The data can now be "mashed up" to generate insight into the range of individuals and interests advising government.

Transparency to Spur Innovation and Entrepreneurship

3. **Department of Interior: Fostering Energy Independence**—For the first time, the Department of the Interior is making key government data about America's hydropower resources available on a monthly basis. Timely information about the amount of raw energy generated through hydropower helps industry, academic researchers, and government work together to develop informed strategies for sustaining a dynamic and independent energy future for all Americans.

4. **Department of Commerce: Spurring Innovation through Intellectual Property**—The United States Patent and Trademark Office is committing to make all patents, published patent applications, and related materials even more easily searchable by the public online. The ability to sift through over 7,000,000 patents on useful inventions, design patents, and plant patents will enable entrepreneurs to find patents on which to found new businesses and discover improvements leading to original patentable products and services. With intellectual property-based businesses estimated to contribute nearly 40% of growth achieved by all U.S. private industry, the impact on jobs and the economy of more patent transparency is likely to be significant. As a step towards improved access to historical and current U.S. published patent data, the USPTO will begin by posting this data online for free download through a third party provider in the first quarter of calendar year 2010.

5. **Department of Health and Human Services, Department of Agriculture, Department of Commerce, Department of Energy & the National Aeronautics and Space Administration: National Assets for High-Tech Economic Growth**—Fledgling businesses need easier ways to identify and assess entrepreneurial opportunities that will create jobs and strengthen economic growth. Towards that goal, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Agricultural Research Service in the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in the Department of Commerce, the Department of Energy, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration are increasing access to information on 1) new technologies available for commercial licensing, 2) Cooperative Research and Development (CRADA) awards and opportunities, 3) Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) awards and opportunities, 4) Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) awards and opportunities, and 5) projects sponsored through grants and contracts.

6. **Department of Treasury: Showcasing Economic Trends in America**—The Department of Treasury is releasing IRS Statistics of Migration Data for the first time. This will show migration patterns of tax return filers moving from county-to-county or state-to-state across the entire United States, including information on 1) number of returns (households), 2) number of exemptions (individuals), and 3) gross adjusted income (wealth). Demographers, state and local government officials, real estate developers, business planners, researchers and journalists can use this never-before-available (without paying a fee) raw data to map migration over geography and time, mine for demographic/economic trends, and combine it with other high-value data sets to formulate and test economic theories. At the same time, Treasury is also releasing Office of Financial Stability Weekly Transaction Reports (which includes the TARP program) and

the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency Quarterly Report on Bank Trading and Derivatives Activities, thereby improving transparency of federal bank supervisory activities as well as the investment activities of financial institutions.

7. **Department of Energy: Advancing Clean Energy Technologies**—As part of its efforts to promote clean energy technologies, the Department of Energy is launching an open-source platform (www.openei.org) to make DOE resources and energy data widely available to the public. In coordination with the National Laboratories, DOE will open access to a collection of free, evolving, and editable energy information that can be used by government officials, the private sector, project developers, and others to help deploy clean energy technologies across the country and around the world. The site houses more than 60 tools to help develop clean energy resources—including maps of solar and wind potential, building code information, and best practices. These public tools and data will help communities usher in a clean energy future, reducing energy use and creating green jobs locally.

Transparency to Safeguard Americans

8. **Department of Homeland Security: Emergency Response**—*Virtual USA*—a collaboration among the Department of Homeland Security, the emergency response community, and eight states across the nation—is an innovative information-sharing system that helps federal, state, local, and tribal first responders work with all levels of government to make fast, well-informed decisions. The system links these partners' disparate tools and technologies in order to share the location and operational status of power and water lines, flood detectors, helicopter-capable landing sites, emergency vehicle and ambulance locations, weather and traffic conditions, evacuation routes, and school and government building floor plans, and does so without requiring any government entity to change either the system it now uses or the way it does business.

9. **Department of Veterans Affairs: Hospital Report Card**—To empower Veterans and the public at large to track quality, safety, and access to Veterans Health Administration (VHA) facilities, the Department of Veterans Affairs is publishing hospital "report cards," including raw data on care provided in outpatient and hospital settings, quality of care within given patient populations, and patient satisfaction and outcomes.

10. **Department of Homeland Security: Improving Services for Immigrants & Better Immigration Policy**—For the first time, the Department of Homeland Security will release raw data on the volume of applications to the United States Customs and Immigration Service field offices. This data can help immigration advocates understand trends and communicate expectations to their constituencies. In addition, by mashing the newly released data with statistics on population growth, demographic changes, and labor trends, researchers may be able to help DHS predict high volumes and plan for resource requirements to prevent slower processing times

11. **Department of Housing and Urban Development: Tracking Quality of Federally-Assisted Rental Housing**—The Real Estate Assessment Center conducts physical property inspections of public housing. HUD is releasing a full historical view of point-in-time property scores. Making

these details available will enable researchers, advocacy groups, and the general public to 1) better understand the physical condition of the HUD-assisted housing stock, 2) hold providers accountable for housing quality, and 3) plan for future affordable housing needs.

12. **Department of Defense: Safeguarding Voting Rights for America's Armed Forces**—The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) implements the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986, which permits members of the Uniformed Services and Merchant Marine, and their eligible family members and all citizens residing outside the United States, to vote in all federal elections. These data regarding voter success, participation rates, age, ranks, regional voting locations, home voting region, how the vote was cast (mail, fax, other), as well as survey data covering how voters and voting officials rated the effectiveness of absentee voting (effectiveness, ease, problems, etc.), as well as information on how voting districts actually performed in handling absentee votes (percentage counted, etc.), will now all be online at Data.gov.

13. **Department of Veterans Affairs: Geographic Distribution of Expenditures**—The National Center for Veterans Analysis and Statistics will release three years of raw data on estimated annual VA spending in each county and congressional district. The data represent payments to Veterans and dependents, services provided to Veterans, and general operating expenses. These data will be used by state and local Veteran agencies, Veteran advocacy groups, and the public to compare to and plan for local Veteran needs. Making the raw data available will enable its combination with local-population and veteran-related data, fostering new knowledge and improved services for Veterans.

Improving Quality of Life and Serving Citizens

14. **Department of Labor: Keeping America's Workers Out of Harm's Way**—For the first time, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration in the Department of Labor is systematically publishing employer-specific information about occupational fatalities online. Employers with reported fatalities will have an incentive to take steps to improve safety and prevent future accidents. In addition, responsible employers will be able to use the database to identify dangerous conditions and take proactive precautions.

15. **Department of Transportation: Improving Airport Information**—The Department of Transportation/Federal Aviation Administration will expand public access to its frequently-updated information on airport delays through an Airport Status Web Service registered on Data.gov. The Web service combines FAA's information on ground delays, airport closures, ground stoppages, and arrival/departure delays with local weather provided by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to provide air travelers, and those waiting for them, with real-time updates on the status and causes of airport delays. Travelers and other users will be able to query status by airport. Responses will be available in multiple formats, so the information may be used in many interactive Web applications, allowing the data to be further combined with other user-generated information to provide new or enhanced products.

16. **Department of Agriculture: Promoting a Healthier America**—To unleash innovative approaches to improving the health of America's children, the Department of Agriculture is releasing nutrition data for over 1,000 commonly consumed foods and launching a national competition for creative, mobile and web-based games. The competition will challenge entrepreneurs, software developers, and students to leverage the newly released data to develop games to help children make healthy eating decisions.

17. **Department of Education: Assessing the Effectiveness of Federal Financial Aid Dollars**—By publishing data about federal financial assistance provided to students and families through various loan, grant, and work-study programs, including recipient and volume data for each aid program by school, the Department of Education is enabling researchers, policymakers, and advocacy groups to combine this information with data on school performance. That in turn will help them analyze the comparative bang-for-the-buck of federal dollars at different colleges and universities.

18. **Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture: Protecting the Public Against Wildland Fires**—Five agencies at the National Inter-agency Fire Center (NIFC), supporting the planning, coordination, and execution of a common wildland fire-fighting mission. Data about wildland fires are being made available to help the public, industry, academia, and government work together to develop and execute informed strategies for better protecting all Americans from wildland fires.

19. **Department of State: Mapping Conflict in Darfur and Beyond**—The State Department is releasing unprecedented new information about the conflict in Darfur from 2003 to 2009 and conflict throughout the entire continent of Africa in 2009. The first series of datasets depicts villages confirmed to be damaged or destroyed in the Darfur region of Sudan between 2003 and August 2009. The second series of datasets, under the name "Africa: Conflicts Without Borders" includes tabular data and Geographic Information System (GIS) files that depicts sub-national and transnational areas of conflict in Africa in 2009, based on the location of conflict incidents, concentrations of internally displaced persons, and cross-border refugee camps and rebel bases in neighboring countries.

20. **Department of Veterans Affairs: Veteran Population Model**—The Veteran Population Model—using combined data from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Department of Defense (DoD), and Bureau of the Census—provides the official estimates and projections of the veteran population for each year from April 1, 2000, through September 30, 2036. Previously available only through predefined queries, access to the raw data will enable public and private-sector service organizations to incorporate VetPop data into their models to project future demand based on population and demographic estimates.

Appendix 3: Select Transparency Milestones

Strengthening a Culture of Effectiveness and Accountability through Openness

- President issues Executive Order promoting the release of Presidential Records (January 2009)
- White House posts online all waivers under the President's Executive Order on Ethics (January 2009)
- Launch of Recovery.gov enables the American people to track how Recovery Act money is being spent (February 2009)
- Defense Secretary Gates emphasizes transparency, cooperation, and communication in government during an address in Turkey (February 2009)
- White House streams all five break-out sessions of Health Care Forum at Whitehouse.gov (March 2009)
- Department of Justice issues new pro-transparency guidelines for the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), establishing a presumption in favor of voluntary disclosure of government information (March 2009)
- President Obama issues a memorandum on Presidential Signing Statements (March 2009)
- The Federal Aviation Administration makes its entire Bird Strike database available to the public (April 2009)
- White House provides online access to staff financial reports (SF-278s) (April 2009)
- White House posts the President and Vice President's tax returns (April) and financial disclosure forms online (May 2009)
- U.S. Government Printing Office launches new, online federal digital system to increase public access to archived Government information (April 2009)
- The Council of Chief Information Officers launches Data.gov, a citizen-friendly platform that provides access to Federal datasets (May 2009)
- Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius launches Transparency Task Force at the Food and Drug Administration (June 2009)
- President announces that the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Office will increase transparency by allowing applicants to get updates on the status of their applications via e-mail, text messages, and the web. (June 2009)
- Chief Information Officer launches "IT Dashboard," a new, one-stop clearinghouse of information that allows the public to track $76 billion in federal IT initiatives and hold the government accountable for results (July 2009)
- White House posts salaries for White House staff in online, searchable database (July 2009)

- The Departments of Agriculture and Commerce launch BroadbandUSA.gov, a streamlined online application for broadband initiatives under the Recovery Act (July 2009)
- The Millennium Challenge Corporation launches MCC's Results Online, tracking worldwide poverty reduction partnerships.
- White House webcasts meetings, such as President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology Policy (August 2009)
- White House announces historic new policy to disclose White House visitor logs (September 2009)
- Attorney General adopts tough state secrets policy (September 2009)
- White House directs executive agencies and departments that federally-registered lobbyists not be appointed to agency advisory boards and commissions (September 2009)
- The National Archives and Records Administration and the Government Printing Office publish the Federal Register in XML, empowering individuals to take control over how they want to read the Federal Register (October 2009)
- For the first time, the White House posts visitor records online (October 2009)

Appendix 4: Select Participation Milestones

Reinvigorating Democracy and Improving Decisions through Meaningful Participation in Public Policymaking

- **Agencies adopt new technologies to generate and capture good ideas from the Federal workforce. The State Department launches "Sounding Board,"** an electronic suggestion box (February 2009); The **Federal Communication Commission starts "Reboot the FCC"** (June 2009); **The Department of Labor** launches an Open Government blog to solicit efficiency and openness ideas from DOL employees (July 2009); The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Establish "Idea Lab,"** a crowd-sourcing tool for agency-wide idea generation and problem solving (August 2009); The White House launches the SAVE Award and the GreenGov Challenge (October 2009).
- **The Office of Management and Budget launches** first public comment on an Executive Order (February 2009)
- The General Service Administration Signs First Social Media Terms of Service Agreement (February 2009)
- In the Open for Questions Town Hall, the President answers questions that were submitted and voted on transparently by the public (March 2009)
- The Environmental Protection Agency launches Pick 5 for the Environment (April 2009)
- **The Office of Science and Technology Policy** launches blog to solicit public comment on science integrity policy (April 2009)

- **The Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board engages public in** national, online dialogue to solicit ideas, tools, and approaches to strengthen Recovery.gov (April 2009)
- Secretary of Education Arne Duncan takes "Listening Tour" online (May 2009)
- **The Environmental Protection Agency and the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs launch** Regulations.gov Exchange, an online forum inviting the public to propose ideas for how to improve Regulations.gov, the website for commenting on pending regulations (May 2009)
- **White House launches unprecedented 3-stage public consultation process on Whitehouse.gov** to engage the American public in designing the Administration's Open Government policy. Phase I invited the public to submit ideas, refine the ideas of others, and vote the best ones to the top. Phase II asked the public to engage in a deeper conversation on the most challenging themes to emerge from Phase I. Finally, Phase III invited the public to use a web-based wiki to collaboratively craft recommendations for how to hardwire the principles of open government in the core activities of Departments and Agencies government-wide (May-July 2009)
- White House hosts online healthcare discussion with the President (June 2009)
- White House and the National Archives and Records Administration start the Declassification Policy Forum to seek public input on declassification policy (June 2009)
- **The Federal Communications Commission launches** Broadband.gov to engage Americans in the development of the National Broadband Plan (July 2009)
- **The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) opens** forum **to seek public input on the Federal web site cookies policy** (July 2009)
- The Office of Management and Budget and the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board host a town hall meeting to discuss latest recipient reporting guidance (July 2009)
- The Department of Defense launches the Web 2.0 Guidance Forum to seek public input in developing a responsible and effective use of emerging Internet-based capabilities (July 2009)
- **The Federal Communications Commission launches** National Broadband Plan Brainstorm to seek examples from the public about how broadband is being used to achieve national priorities (August 2009)
- **The Environmental Protection Agency** seeks public input **on national enforcement priorities through online forum** (August 2009)
- President Obama announces the VA Innovation Initiative, challenging employees to submit groundbreaking ideas to improve the claims process for Veterans (September 2009)
- The Federal Communications Commission launches OpenInternet.gov, attracting more than 20,000 people to comment on the future of the Internet (September 2009)
- The Department of Health and Human Services Health IT Standards Committee Launches the Health IT Standards "FACA" blog to get the public's view on moving forward with healthcare information technology (October 2009)

- The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office launches the Director's Blog to engage the public on ways the office can function better (November 2009)
- The Department of Housing and Urban Development puts your Ideas in Action for the 2010-2015 Strategic Plan (November 2009)

Appendix 5: Select Collaboration Milestones

Nourishing Innovation Through Cooperation Across Government and with the Private Sector

- Department of Defense Launches DefenseSolutions.gov, a website through which innovative companies, entrepreneurs, and research organizations can offer potential solutions to the Department (February 2009)
- **The Environmental Protection Agency launches a** Water Quality Video Contest to educate the public on ways individuals can improve water quality in their community (March 2009)
- President Signs the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, establishing a central portal for Americans to find service opportunities (April 2009)
- National Archives and Records Administration creates Collaborate: A Virtual Community for Educators, a meeting place to teachers who want to incorporate primary resources into their lesson plans (April 2009)
- President Calls for Collaboration on Recommendations for Scientific Integrity in Speech to National Academy of Sciences (April 2009)
- White House launches Open Government Innovations Gallery to showcase open government innovations across the Federal government (May 2009)
- **The Department of Defense adopts** Aristotle, **an expert networking system** that connects scientists and technologists across the Department (June 2009).
- **The Department of State holds** first Government-sponsored TED talks to encourage greater collaboration with the private sector around important new ideas (June 2009)
- NASA launches Spacebook, leveraging technology to connect NASA employees (June 2009)
- **The Department of Health and Human Services runs** contest for best H1N1 Public Service Announcement (PSA), challenging Americans to get involved in the nation's flu preparedness efforts (July 2009)
- **U.S. Army** wikifies *Army Field Manual* to tap the experience and advice of battle-tested soldiers (July 2009)
- The Department of Health and Human Services hosts first CONNECT Code-A-Thon, bringing together open source developers from the public and private sector to improve national electronic healthcare records software (August 2009)

- The Department of Education launches the "I am What I Learn" Student Video Contest, asking students to create videos on the role that education can play in achieving their dreams (September 2009)
- **The General Services Administration launches** Apps.gov (September 2009)
- The Department of Transportation announces the Drive to Life Public Service Announcement Contest, asking teens to develop safe driving messages (September 2009)
- **President** announces **National Lab Day**, a national barn-raising for hands-on learning (November 2009)
- **Department of Labor launches** Tools for America's Job Seekers Challenge (December 2009)