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ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

# Congress of the United States

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### Opening Statement Chairman Todd R. Platts Subcommittee on Government Efficiency and Financial Management March 26, 2003

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I want to welcome you to the Subcommittee on Government Efficiency and Financial Management's first hearing in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress. I am eager to investigate some of the issues that face the operation of the federal government and build on some of the ideas that the distinguished former-Chairman Steve Horn examined. At a time of increasing government deficits, greater efficiency and financial accountability in the administration of Federal government operations is an ever-increasing top priority. I look forward to working with my esteemed colleagues on this subcommittee throughout the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Today the Subcommittee on Government Efficiency and Financial Management is holding the first of a series of three hearings on "Governing With Accountability." This hearing will focus on the President's Management Agenda and the impact the agenda has had on the improvement and operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Executive Branch. We also will explore how the President's Management Agenda has impacted the budget numbers included in the President's fiscal year 2004 budget.

Since I was first elected to office as a member of the Pennsylvania State Assembly, one of my main concerns has consistently been to ensure that government entities operate in the most efficient and accountable manner possible. In the State Assembly, I sat on a committee that examined many of these issues at the State level. Since being elected to the United States House of Representatives, my interest in accountability and efficiency has grown significantly. I am pleased to have the opportunity to explore these issues with my colleagues at the Federal level.

The Federal government has a responsibility to the taxpayers of this country to be productive and accountable. Unfortunately, many agencies are unable to demonstrate the value that they provide for the tax dollars that are spent on the programs they administer.

Unfortunately waste and inefficiency are found throughout government. Only improved management and accountability will begin to address these problems.

President Bush and his Administration are to be commended for having made improving the efficiency and effectiveness of government a top priority. The president's management agenda, which was unveiled last August, targets five major areas of government that need well-focused attention:

- Hiring and retaining a skilled, motivated federal workforce;
- Eliminating the government's pervasive inability to properly manage its money;
- Ensuring that federal programs achieve effective results from their massive investment of tax dollars;
- Expanding electronic government; and
- Increasing public-private competition for commercial-type federal functions.

Building on the Government Performance and Results Act, an executive branch management scorecard was developed to evaluate agencies' performance in each of these five areas. The scorecard uses a traffic light approach -- green for success, yellow for mixed results, and red for unsatisfactory. The Office of Management and Budget does the scoring. This is the second year that agencies have been graded on each of these five areas. The initial agency scores published in the fiscal year 2003 budget were predominately red. In the fiscal year 2004 budget, agencies were not only graded on their current status in implementing these management initiatives, they were also graded on their level of progress since last year. In the fiscal year 2004 budget, agencies' status scores continue to show "red" results. However, the agencies are making progress as evidenced by the large number of agencies with "green" lights on their progress scorecards.

Today we will have two panels of witnesses who are well versed on the President's Management Agenda and the progress that agencies are making. For our first panel we are honored to have one of our esteemed colleagues, Congressman Pete Sessions, who is the Chairman of the Results Caucus. On the second panel, we will hear from Ms. Pat Dalton, Director of Strategic Issues at the General Accounting Office; the Honorable Edward McPherson, who is the Chief Financial Officer at the Department of Agriculture; the Honorable Angela Styles, Administrator for Federal Procurement Policy at the Office of Management and Budget; and finally Mr. Mark Forman, Associate Director of Information Technology and E-Government at the Office and Management and Budget. I look forward to hearing your testimony today.

I look forward to working with our distinguished Ranking Member, Mr. Towns whose experience and insight will be very valuable for this subcommittee. I respect his deep involvement in the community he serves and look forward to working closely with him and the rest of the minority side of this subcommittee.