Congress’ Role in Driving Performance Improvement

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Panelists

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• Alissa Czyz, Acting Director, Strategic Issues, GAO

• Katie Bailey, Legislative Director, Senator Braun

• Wendy Ginsberg, Staff Director, House Oversight & Government Reform Subcommittee on Operations
Polling Question

• Do you believe that Congress has effectively created laws to ensure government agencies improve their performance on an ongoing basis?
  • Yes
  • No
  • Somewhat

Congressional Action

Congress has long been focused on improving federal performance and accountability.

• CFO Act of 1990 aimed to strengthen federal financial management.
• Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 created performance-related reporting requirements.
Congressional Action

In the last decade, Congress has sought a renewed focus on federal performance, management, and transparency.

- GPRA Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA)
- Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (DATA Act)
- Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018 (Evidence Act), including open data (OPEN Government Data Act)

GPRAMA – what is it?

- The Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act (GPRAMA)
- GPRAMA significantly enhances GPRA, the centerpiece of a statutory framework that Congress put in place during the 1990s to help resolve longstanding performance and management problems in the federal government and provide greater accountability for results. Congress passed GPRAMA in 2010 to address a number of persistent federal performance challenges, including focusing attention on crosscutting issues and enhancing the use and usefulness of performance information.
What is the DATA Act?

The **Digital Accountability and Transparency Act** of 2014 is a law that aims to make information on federal expenditures more easily accessible and transparent. The law requires OMB and the U.S. Department of the Treasury to establish common standards for financial data provided by all government agencies and to expand the amount of data that agencies must provide to the government website, USASpending. The goal of the law is to improve the ability of Americans to track and understand how the government is spending their tax dollars.

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What is the Evidence Act?

The **Foundations for Evidence-Based Policymaking Act** is a United States law that establishes processes for the federal government to modernize its data management practices, evidence-building functions, and statistical efficiency to inform policy decisions. The “Evidence Act” contains four parts, which address evidence capacity, open data, and data confidentiality.
New Legislation

Performance Enhancement Reform Act introduced on April 16, 2021 to ensure key stakeholders and resources are not left out of the creation of federal agencies’ performance plans. The Act creates amendments to:

- Require agencies’ Chief Performance Officers, where applicable, to work in consultation with the Chief Human Capital Officer, the Chief Information Officer, the Chief Data Officer, and the Chief Financial Officer to prepare the annual performance plans;

New Legislation continued

- Require performance plans to include descriptions of human capital, training, data and evidence, information technology, and skill sets needed for the agency to meet the agency’s performance goals; and

- Require performance plans to include descriptions of technology modernization investments, system upgrades, staff technology skills and expertise, stakeholder input and feedback, and other resources and strategies needed to meet the agency’s performance goals.
Conclusion

• Tracking and evaluating federal performance and spending—with evidence and data—are central to effective and transparent decision making.

• GAO continues to assess the implementation of these Acts, with reports coming out later this year and beyond.

Audience Q & A