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Written Statement of

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President

Senior Executives Association (SEA)

For the

Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee

United States Senate

Hearing On:

**“Ensuring a Trustworthy Government: Examining the National Security Risks of
Replacing Nonpartisan Civil Servants with Political Appointees”**

September 17, 2024

Introduction

Chairman Peters, Ranking Member Paul, and members of the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, thank you for holding this important hearing. The Senior Executives Association (SEA) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan professional membership association committed to promoting good government. Since 1980, SEA has advocated for the interests of career Federal leaders who are members of the Senior Executive Service (SES), Senior Professionals (SL/ST) and other senior career and aspiring public service leaders. I am honored to represent SEA as their President on this critical topic – ensuring our federal government has a modern, professional, apolitical civil service to aid in executing the laws of this nation and delivering essential agency missions and services for the American people.

I served this nation, in uniform, as a reservist, and as a federal civil servant for over 37 years. I embarked on my career in public service while attending Valdosta State College and joined its Air Force ROTC program. I served a tour of duty and then joined the reserves until I retired from the Air Force in 2007. I began working for the federal government as a GS-2 student trainee personnel management specialist at age 17 and continued to do so until my retirement from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) within the Department of Homeland Security as a senior executive in 2021. In between, I developed extensive experience with all aspects of the human capital and organizational management spectrum, including negotiating contracts with union counterparts at the Department of the Navy, overseeing Navy regional workforce planning efforts, joining FLETC as a Chief in the Human Capital Division, contributing to the establishment of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and serving as the Administrative Officer for the Jacksonville Field Office and helping stand up operations at Jacksonville and Gainesville airports, returning to FLETC to serve in a leadership role with the Training Directorate before taking on mission support, to include human capital, executive and advisory roles prior to my retirement.

I appreciate the committee elevating an important issue that has been often discussed yet politically unresolved through my entire professional career – federal employee performance and “accountability,” and the question of whether greater political control of the federal workforce will improve performance. These are topics closely intertwined with SEA’s history as a professional association representing career federal executives. SEA was founded in 1980 and created to represent new members of the Senior Executive Service (SES), which was established by Congress with the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 (CSRA). SEA has historically championed efforts by Congress and the President to strengthen and improve the capability and capacity of the federal workforce to handle the ever-expanding list of missions, duties, and requirements imposed by policymakers.

Unfortunately by 1987, less than a decade after the passage of the CSRA, neglect by the President and Congress had led the civil service into a “quiet crisis,” according to Paul Volcker, who chaired the first nonprofit National Commission on the Public Service in 1989. That philanthropy-funded commission sprang out of bipartisan cooperation between the Brookings Institution and the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) when in 1987 they together hosted a symposium envisioning “A National Public Service for the Year 2000.” The issues which

sparked the commission, and the conversation between Volcker and then-head of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) Charles Bowsher summarizing its work¹, would feel frustratingly familiar to policymakers today.

Since that time in the preceding decades, the tradition of serious bipartisan cooperation on the civil service and government operations has degraded, with fewer and fewer Members of Congress expressing interest in these core government management and workforce issues. While the efforts of this committee continue to be an exception to that rule, many reforms have not made the holistic positive impact intended. The organizational debt² and policy problems haven't changed in scope - they've simply magnified, piled on by new requirements and oversight procedures, resulting in calcified behaviors and culture within the federal bureaucracy. The debates in Congress through the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s on civil service and government management issues were always spirited and bipartisan. However, over time the ambition of lawmakers has narrowed, from systemic reforms intended to address design problems in the government – such as mixed personnel cases³ – to largely tinkering around the edges of decades old personnel laws or bypassing them by adding on new flexibilities and authorities.

Revisiting valid reform proposals of the past, such as the comprehensive congressional testimony on civil service modernization that SEA led the Government Managers Coalition in crafting in 2018 (Exhibit 1), or SEA's SES-focused policy recommendations⁴ or the association's overall policy agenda⁵, with a renewed commitment to solving the underlying management challenges, is necessary and overdue. Congress can create the infrastructure and conditions to enable effective change.

Discussion

The professional apolitical civil service has remained a work in progress for almost 150 years of our nation's history. SEA believes the nation would benefit from elected leaders in Congress and the White House committing their focus and energies to civil service and government modernization. Too frequently does government ask its employees to solve 21st century problems in 19th and 20th century policy and personnel management frameworks. Too often, this results in a poor or frustrating customer experience, or hours of paperwork. Imagine how government could be more responsive to changing needs of the nation if policymakers committed to modernizing government including the civil service for the digital age.

Following the assassination President Garfield by a disgruntled job seeker, Congress decided in 1883 that a partisan federal workforce was not in the national interest. Congress took subsequent action to buttress the apolitical civil service, to ensure the equitable delivery of government services and benefits to citizens. The Hatch Act passed in 1939 in direct response to concerns about politicians using federal employees of the Works Progress Administration (WPA)

¹ [The Not-So-Quiet Crisis: Paul Volcker on the Public Service | U.S. GAO](#)

² [Steve Blank Organizational Debt is like Technical debt – but worse](#)

³ 29 CFR § 1614.302; A Mixed Case involves an adverse action along with a claim of discrimination.

⁴ [SES Joint Policy Agenda - SEA, PPS, Volcker \(seniorexecs.org\)](#)

⁵ [118th SEA Legislative Agenda \(seniorexecs.org\)](#)

to engage in political activity in the prior election. In response to the Watergate-era and related politicization of agencies and abuse of authority during the Nixon administration, Congress acted swiftly updating the federal workforce and its management through the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, along with related reforms such as the Ethics in Government Act and Inspector General Act both of 1978. Through all these reforms, Congress has decided that less politics inside the federal workforce is good for America.

Neither do the American people believe that politicization of the federal government and its workforce is the answer, despite sagging trust. New research from the Partnership for Public Service bears this out.⁶ They found that 95% of Americans felt civil servants should be hired and promoted based on their merit rather than their political beliefs, 90% supported the idea that civil servants should serve the people more than any individual president, 89% believed the federal government is less effective when decisions are driven by politics, and 70% felt partisan politics make the federal government less effective.

In the 45+ years since the passage of the CSRA, various reform proposals and initiatives have been introduced in Congress or by the White House. (Exhibit 2) Following through on implementation and continuous improvement has always been the challenge, leaving the system largely stuck in place. Moreover, in the absence of significant legislative effort to resolve many longstanding issues facing the civil service, Congress has as a practical matter deferred over the past two decades to the President's Management Agenda to try and move the needle. But Executive Branch leaders only have so much latitude within the bounds of current outdated law. Congress must act – not by simply passing more laws, but by consciously considering what is needed to repeal or update laws and address root causes not merely symptoms.

Recommendations

Given the full set of issues already on this and every committee's plate today, a new approach is needed, with a dedicated group focused on proposing solutions to these issues. SEA proposes the establishment of a blue ribbon, bipartisan and bicameral Commission on Government and Civil Service Modernization, with Members of Congress among those serving on the commission.

Such a Commission could review the history of reform efforts in the context of current and future conditions, as technological, economic, demographic, and other changes transform the context in which government officials develop approaches to implement law and policy -- based on objective evidence about what works for the people served by government programs. SEA and other organizations, such as the Partnership for Public Service and National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA), have documented multiple conditions that limit the effectiveness of the Federal workers to achieve such results, including the need to improve hiring, manage performance, and develop leaders with sufficient skills to lead and manage important public programs. Additionally, senior executives and government officials have a duty to advise

⁶ [Public Trust in Government 2024 \(ourpublicservice.org\)](https://ourpublicservice.org)

politically appointed agency leaders about analysis and information to help them make informed policy decisions.

Proposals to replace civil servants with politically appointees, at the heart of the “Schedule F” issue, will not improve government’s ability to carry out programs and support political leadership with the best independent advice. A Blue-Ribbon Commission would help to sift through the range of ideas and frame recommendations to address longstanding needs to improve government effectiveness.

Executive branch actions on management reform alone absent policy, behavioral, and cultural changes has real limitations. Congress cannot and should not cede the work done by two million employees of the Executive Branch to a future president. Countless ideas have been proposed to reform and modernize the federal civil service. America needs our elected leaders to again recommit to an apolitical government administration that serves all, muster the political willpower and act to modernize the civil service and federal government.

Exhibit 1 – Government Managers Coalition written testimony to House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on Civil Service Modernization, July 2018⁷

GOVERNMENT MANAGERS COALITION

• FAAMA • FMA • NCSSMA • PMA • SEA •

July 16, 2018

The Honorable Mark Meadows
Chairman
Subcommittee on Government Operations
House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Meadows,

In the decades since the 1978 Civil Service Reform Act (CSRA) passed, structural problems have become apparent as both the nature of work and the demand on civil servants have become increasingly complex. Due to the statutory and regulatory frameworks that govern the civil service, the federal government's talent management and personnel system remains stuck in a quagmire. Purported reforms over the years, such as the *Veterans Access, Choice and Accountability Act of 2014* (P.L. 113-146), have made the system harder to manage and have taken the focus away from what is really at the core of staffing any agency or department: identifying the necessary skills for each position, then attracting and identifying the right people for the job at the right time.

The Senior Executives Association (SEA), in conjunction with our partners in the Government Managers Coalition (GMC) – the FAA Managers Association (FAAMA), the Federal Managers Association (FMA), the National Council of Social Security Management Associations (NCSSMA), and the Professional Managers Association (PMA), collectively representing the interests of over 250,000 supervisors, managers, and executives serving throughout the federal government --has long and repeatedly identified ways to address systemic civil service reforms. SEA appreciated the opportunity to address some of these concerns in its May 16, 2018, testimony before the Committee.

The most significant challenge facing Congress and the Administration is to resist piecemeal changes to federal human capital modernization, and to instead work together to address comprehensive, long-lasting reforms that will provide agency heads and human resource managers with the necessary tools and guidance on how to recruit, develop, and retain the federal workforce of the future. The GMC believes this more holistic approach is necessary and is developing comprehensive proposals to lead this conversation. Some of the changes needed are regulatory, while others require cultural shifts in how we

⁷ [GMC civil service modernization letter to Chairman Meadows 7-16-18](#)

manage and identify talent -- changes which could be accomplished in absence of legislation. However, there are several core items that require legislation, some of which we have outlined below.

Many of the items that require statutory changes will likely require a deeper review and additional hearings, but we have identified those items we believe could be done now that will open the door for the transformational changes we believe are ultimately necessary. The GMC looks forward to working with you, your colleagues in Congress, the Administration, and other stakeholders on these issues and to discussing these proposals in more detail in the coming months.

The following specific items were identified in the [May 16, 2018](#) testimony by the Partnership for Public Service (Exhibit 1; Number in parentheses correspond to the Partnership list). We have listed them in the order of their importance to the GMC.

Develop Career Leaders (#4)

Many of the government's personnel and performance issues stem from the fact that, often, technicians and subject matter experts are promoted into supervisory roles in order to earn promotions, even as many do not actually wish to manage people and, indeed, often lack the political, negotiation, and interpersonal skills necessary to successfully do so. This problem is not unique to government. The single most important thing Congress can do to alter the trajectory of leadership and management practices in the federal government is to invest in the intentional cultivation of leaders at all levels and to professionalize the practice of leadership.

- Although overall General Schedule reform is needed, a starting place is to create a dual-track system for supervisors/leaders and technical specialists.
- Begin rotational programs for promising GS-11 through GS-13 employees interested in management to provide them with an opportunity to work in different program and management offices, thus developing an enterprise view of how they each work together and contribute to the agency's mission.
- Require joint duty for GS-15 employees, rather than mandatory rotation at the SES level.
- Create a requirement for continuing development of leadership skills and a leadership certification program for all SES.
- Professionalize and develop mission support staff by requiring professional competencies and certification for functions such as HR specialists, acquisition specialists, IT specialists, et al.
- Amend GPRAMA to require that diversity and inclusion be embedded in agency strategic planning and talent management.⁸
- Require the creation of a centralized database of leadership development programs inside and outside government that employees can easily use to identify growth/development opportunities.
- Require the creation of a centralized platform to post details and rotations so employees can more easily move between agencies.
- Require security clearance reciprocity, suitability reciprocity, and paperwork reciprocity, as well as a clear process for details and rotations to better enable the management of employees as an enterprise asset and to better facilitate rotating employees across government.

⁸ [Overcoming Persistent Barriers to Broadening Participation in the Federal Workforce - 2018 \(sagepub.com\)](#)

- Creation of a centralized training center for mandatory/government-wide required check-the box trainings – use a shared services model to save money, rather than having each agency create their own trainings and systems.

Political Appointee Reform (#10), Hold Leaders Accountable (#1) & Address Accountability (#5)

The GMC recommends a reduction in the number of political employees, which would help streamline decision-making and could save taxpayers nearly \$1 billion over ten years, if the number of appointees were capped at 2,000. According to the findings of two National Commissions, multiple task forces, and scholars like Dr. Paul Light, excessive political appointments “actually undermine effective presidential control of the executive branch.” Unnecessary bureaucratic layering of appointments, coupled with underprepared career leaders has proven to be a recipe for breakdowns.⁹

- Require agencies, in conjunction with PPO and OPM, to provide comprehensive onboarding to all new political appointees, including introduction to agency budgets, strategic plans, human capital requirements, performance management, and agency culture.
- Require all political appointees to have performance plans that conform to OPM and agency standards and align to agency strategic plans.
- Reduce the number of political appointees, making some positions career reserved, especially those positions at the C-Suite level that oversee management, not policy, functions –
 - *Base the percentage of non-career Senior Executives permitted on filled, not allocated positions, and reduce the percentage permitted at any agency from 25% to 15%.*
 - *Require agencies to fill positions that entail direct responsibility for agency-wide administrative functions in the areas of finance, acquisition, information technology, and human resources with career appointees.*
 - *Designate the assistant secretary for administration or management (or comparable position) as career reserved.*
 - *Require all cabinet level agencies to have at least one career Senior Executive at the principal Deputy Assistant Secretary level for each Assistant Secretary or comparable position.*
- Reduce the number of political appointees requiring Senate confirmation for management, not policy focused, jobs – especially at agency components.
- Require Technical Qualifications for certain management-focused jobs, e.g. CFO, CIO, CAO, CHCO to ensure that either career appointees or political appointees have the necessary experience and skillsets to succeed in those positions.
- Increase transparency by publishing all political appointments annually in the Federal Register, regardless of whether the appointment is PAS or not.

Address Accountability (#5)

Facilitate and standardize the termination of poor performers; It should not require an army of lawyers to effectuate a personnel action. The current adverse actions and appeals process is so complex and cumbersome that many managers are reluctant to go through the seemingly endless steps of addressing employee conduct and performance issues. This reluctance is compounded with challenges in the hiring arena, where managers often decide to keep a suboptimal employee because the alternative is having no employee at all to perform necessary duties.

⁹ [Vision + Action = Faithful Execution - The Volcker Alliance](#)

- Eliminate the statutory requirement that creates Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs).
- Require agencies to build out levels of onboarding and training for new employees, new supervisors, and new Senior Level employees that focuses on the expectations of the agency at each level, the tools employees need at each level, and the stewardship of taxpayer dollars through personally and professionally carrying out their duties.
- Amend Title 5 to require mandatory supervisor training every three years.
- Create an ombudsman position within agencies to serve as a liaison to supervisors on personnel actions.
- Provide funding for an online playbook with information on how to handle adverse actions, performance problems, improving employee morale, and other areas supervisors may need guidance.
- Increase the table of penalties for holding Senior Executives accountable.
- Streamline adverse actions appeals and mitigate forum shopping through consolidation of OSC, MSPB, EEOC federal under a single adjudicative entity.
- Probationary period – need to affirmatively decide to keep employee. Manager accountability for making the decision. If manager doesn't make it supervising people, they are kicked back into a functional role instead of getting fired.
- Probationary period – new probationary period for managers moving into jobs with a higher level of complexity. If he/she can't succeed, fall back to prior level.

Use Data (#9)

Currently, there is neither a government-wide set of data standards, nor a standard for data curation to ensure federal data is usable and transparent. Federal employees also lack access to essential training on best practices for data collection, use, and analysis. The GMC believes Congress can help create a data-centric culture in agencies to more effectively and efficiently deliver programs and services – but that to do so requires a focus on ensuring employees throughout the agency understand data and have access to it.

- Create standards and governance for data, along with a named owner (e.g. NIST, Chief Data Officers, U.S. Chief Statistician) to ensure the system is designed to hold agencies accountable for conforming to the new standards.
- Require agencies to train employees on the collection and use of data.
- Empower a central office in each agency to oversee the standards and enterprise use of data to inform agency planning and decision-making.
- Think through datasets and bring together performance data, evidence and evaluation, and other program data in a curated, visually usable, and transparent format; require Performance.gov, USAspending.gov, and Data.gov to create common curation and linkage standards to allow for more transparency for taxpayers; create a data cloud with funding for these sites to ensure any new data systems are interoperable.
- Amend the Paperwork Reduction Act to make quick citizen service satisfaction surveys easier to execute.

Fix Hiring Process (#2) and Make It Easier to Move in/out of Workforce (#6)

The government's hiring and recruiting system is designed to ensure employees can't hire their brother-in-law, rather than to ensure the agency can get the talent it needs. If agencies and departments are to

meet their missions to improve the delivery of services to taxpayers, and if the government is to better compete for talent, this approach must change.

- Require agencies to routinely assess the skills necessary for jobs, especially at the senior levels, and create an overall talent management plan aligned to the specific agency's strategic plan.
- Agencies should have a comprehensive manpower function enabling them to understand the requirements and costs for jobs at all levels – whether those jobs are accomplished by a federal employee, contractor, or other type of personnel (i.e. military or reservist).
- Require the use of shared certificates for most hiring actions and create a federal Talent Assessment Center that can help agencies identify skills needed for jobs and the skills of incoming applicant to provide better matches.
- Create a task force to explore total compensation packages and the possibility of portable benefits in the federal sector.
- Establish career passports to allow exit and reentry from public service, ensuring the federal government benefits from the skills federal employees gain in the private sector and simplifying a return to federal service at a higher level.
- Address appropriations issues that stymie project-based work and HR planning.
- The GMC supports several important government-wide provisions in the House and/or Senate National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAA's) currently in conference, including:
 - House Section 1106, Extension of authority to conduct telework travel expenses test programs
 - House Section 1107, Personnel demonstration projects
 - House Section 1108, Expanded flexibility in selecting candidates from referral lists
 - House Section 1109, Temporary and term appointments in the competitive service
 - House Section 1110, Expedited hiring authority for college graduates and post-secondary students
 - House Section 1112, Reporting requirement
 - Senate Section 1122, Expedited hiring authority for college graduates and post-secondary students
 - Senate Section 1123, Increase maximum amount of voluntary separation incentive pay authorized for civilian employees
 - Senate Section 1124, One-year extension of temporary authority to grant allowances, benefits, and gratuities to civilian personnel on official duty in a combat zone
 - Senate Section 1125, One-year extension of authority to waive annual limitation on premium pay and aggregate limitation on pay for Federal civilian employees working overseas

Fill Critical Vacancies (#4/10)

Leadership vacuums stymie the ability of organizations to seamlessly execute mission and provide service to taxpayers. Acting leaders are not fully empowered to make all necessary decisions, therefore succession planning and thoughtful/intentional alignment of key staff and positions – for both career and political leaders – are two important areas of focus.

- Review the above proposals around converting management positions to career reserved. This would cut down on the number of vacancies across a presidential transition and would also provide for continuity of agency operations.

- At the career level, agencies should be required to have comprehensive talent management IT systems that allow them to track vacancies, hiring efforts, and skillsets required for each vacancy.
- Congress should appropriate funding for agencies to modernize their human capital systems, but require agencies to employ a shared services model to ensure interoperability and to more easily allow employees to transfer between jobs and agencies.
- There are currently 13 agencies without permanent Inspectors General – Presidents and Congress alike must prioritize filling key oversight roles.

Overhaul the Pay & Classification System (#3)

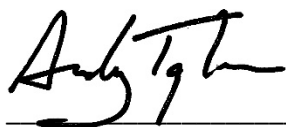
The GMC agrees that it is time for a comprehensive overhaul of the pay and classification system; federal agencies and personnel are currently governed by a byzantine morass of over one hundred systems. Discrete proposals are listed below. However, absent the creation of a strong and professionalized talent management and assessment system, pay reform will not be as effective in meeting government needs as it could and should be.

- Implement market incentive pay that address market realities such as shortages in particular skills or regional considerations.
- Modify or phase out, as appropriate, the General Schedule (GS) to ensure flexible pay bands for a variety of occupations, with the ability to allow for performance-based salary adjustments.
- Allow for two salary adjustments per year – an annual comparability increase and a performance-based increase.
- Revamp the classification system through assessments of jobs, position descriptions, and skills to determine the pay band level for each position.
- Any changes to the GS should be conducted through agency pilots and a ten-year phase-in period.
- Eliminate time-in-grade requirements, which impede the early promotion of highly-skilled employees.
- Delink SES pay from the Executive Schedule.
- Restore locality pay to the SES.
- Provide annual increases (based off the GS increases) to Senior Executives rated Fully Successful or higher.
- Increase the floor of SES pay to 5% above the top GS pay level.
- Create a pay system sunset board – every 5 years agencies need to prove their existing statutory personnel flexibilities are giving them the capabilities they claim they needed, or the authority lapses and they revert to a more common system.

Given what federal employees are able to accomplish within the current system, just imagine what they could do without the unnecessary red tape and bureaucracy hindering their work to deliver on their agencies' missions on behalf of the American people. The GMC is eager to roll up our sleeves and help drive the important conversation around the need for comprehensive civil service modernization. As we hope this communication demonstrates, many federal employees are eager – and indeed have been waiting years or even decades – to see meaningful updates enacted in the civil service.

SEA Executive Director Jason Briefel (jason.briefel@seniorexecs.org) may be contacted with questions and to coordinate further engagement with the GMC on this letter and these proposals. Thank you again for the opportunity to weigh in on this very important topic.

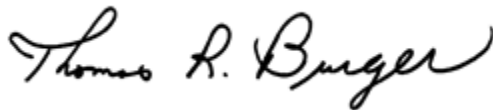
Sincerely,



ANDY TAYLOR
President
FAA Managers Association



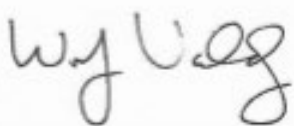
RENEE M. JOHNSON
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CHRISTOPHER DETZLER
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Management Associations



BILL VALDEZ
President
Senior Executives Association

CC: Members of House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Exhibit 1 - Partnership for Public Service President/CEO Max Stier 10 Civil Service Modernization Ideas

1. Hold leaders accountable

- a. Leader ownership by political leaders is critical – and this includes Congress. Need to be accountable for management; not just rewarded for policy development and crisis management
- b. Establish clear performance plans for political leaders and hold more hearings and meetings with agencies on management issues

2. Fix hiring

- a. On average, it takes the federal government 106 days to hire an employee, well over double the private sector
- b. Quick – direct hire for recent grads, change the standard for OPM approval of direct hire authority to the need to demonstrate a shortage of highly qualified candidates versus a shortage of minimally qualified candidates.
- c. Use student interns as a pipeline for entry level talent.

3. Market Pay

- a. Pay system was last overhauled in 1949 and does not reflect the realities of the modern labor market. Must move to more market sensitive system

4. Develop better career leaders

- a. More and better training for new supervisors and managers
- b. Create a dual promotional track for technical experts
- c. Strengthen the SES

5. Address accountability

- a. Only 28.2 percent of federal employees agree that their work unit takes steps to deal with poor performers who cannot or will not improve
- b. Firing feds faster not the answer, better management is. Use the probationary period and require managers to make an affirmative decision to retain someone

6. Mobility

- a. Public-private talent exchange
- b. Create a “passport” to make it easier for former feds to return noncompetitively at level for which they are qualified not at what they left

7. Customer service

- a. Exempt voluntary citizen feedback from the PRA so that agencies can build the voice of the customer into their programs.

8. Create a culture of recognition

- a. Visit agencies – shout out to Meadows & Connolly
- b. Require IGs to focus not just on what is going wrong in agencies, but what agencies are doing well that can be expanded to other agencies.

9. Use data

- a. Data can be a powerful management tool and a means by which Congress can hold agency leaders accountable for the health of their organizations.
- b. FEVS represents the most comprehensive data on employee views that government has.
- c. Benchmark data for administrative processes provides to highlight and build upon management efficiencies.

10. Address lack of political leadership

- a. Reduce the number of political appointees and those that require Senate confirmation.

Exhibit 2 - Timeline of Illustrative Civil Service Modernization Efforts and Updates Since 1978

- 1978 – President Jimmy Carter made civil service reform a key focus of his presidential administration, suggesting in his first State of the Union address in January 1978 that he considered civil service reform “to be absolutely vital.”¹⁰
- [Civil Service Reform--Where It Stands Today | U.S. GAO 1980](#)
- 1989 – Leadership for America, Rebuilding the Public Service; Report of the National Commission on the Public Service [72f90b643732333a7f4640180f4b383a-1414082145.pdf \(ourpublicservice.org\)](#)
- 1989 - [The Not-So-Quiet Crisis: Paul Volcker on the Public Service | U.S. GAO](#)
- [The History of Civil Service Reform | Pay for Performance: Evaluating Performance Appraisal and Merit Pay | The National Academies Press 1991](#)
- 1998 - [CIVIL SERVICE REFORM: Observations on Demonstration Authority, the Use of Official Time, and the Administrative Redress System GAO/T-GGD-98-160 \(govinfo.gov\)](#)
- 2002 - [Building a Federal Civil Service for the 21st Century: The Challenge of Attracting Great Talent to Government Service - Partnership for Public Service](#)
- 2003 – Biography of an Ideal: A History of the Federal Civil Service published by OPM [OPM-Biography-of-an-Ideal-History-of-Civil-Service-2003.pdf \(armywarcollege.edu\)](#)
- 2003 – Urgent Business for America, Revitalizing the Federal Government for the 21st Century, Report of the National Commission on the Public Service [Volcker Report \(brookings.edu\)](#)
- 2004 - [The State of the Federal Civil Service Today \(sagepub.com\)](#)
- 2009 - [OPM Director John Berry proposes big civil service changes \(federalnewsnetwork.com\)](#)
- 2009 - [Testimony of OPM Director Berry – House Oversight – Public Service in the 21st Century, State of the Federal Workforce](#)
- 2011 - [Enactment and Implementation of the National Security Personnel System: Policy Made and Policy Unmade, Public Administration Review](#)
- 2017 - [The Civil Service Reform Act: Due Process and Misconduct-Related Adverse Actions \(fas.org\)](#)
- 2017 - [Civil Service Reform: Reassert the President’s Constitutional Authority - The American Interest \(the-american-interest.com\)](#)
- 2017 - [Civilian Personnel Reform at the Department of Defense: Lessons from the Failure of the National Security Personnel System, Institute for Defense Analyses](#)
- 2017 & 2018 – National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) No Time To Wait: Building a Public Service for the 21st Century [No Time To Wait, Part 2: Building a Public Service for the 21st - National Academy of Public Administration \(napawash.org\)](#)

¹⁰ [Civil Service Reform: A New Commitment on JSTOR](#)

- 2018 - [Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century Organization Design Principles and Recommendations \(performance.gov\)](#)
- 2018 – 10 Considerations for Civil Service Modernization, SEA [Ten Considerations For Civil Service Modernization \(seniorexecs.org\)](#)
- 2018 - [Recommendations from Renewing America's Civil Service | The Volcker Alliance](#)
- 2018 - [Microsoft Word - Principles to Guide Reform Final.docx \(ourpublicservice.org\)](#)
- 2018 - [Marking 40 Years with the Civil Service Reform Act | U.S. GAO](#)
- 2019 - [Are Declines in U.S. Federal Workforce Capabilities Putting Our Government at Risk of Failing?, SEA](#)
- 2019 - [A Proposal to Help Congress Enact Civil Service Reforms | The Regulatory Review \(theregreview.org\)](#)
- 2019 - [WHO MANAGES THE MANAGERS? A ONE-YEAR LOOKBACK AT PRESIDENT TRUMP’S CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS – The C. Boyden Gray Center \(gmu.edu\)](#)
- 2020 - [Executive Order on Creating Schedule F In The Excepted Service – The White House \(archives.gov\)](#)
- 2021 - [Increasing Accountability in the Civil Service, James Sherk](#)
- 2022 - [Rep. Roy introduces bill to make all federal bureaucrats at-will | Representative Chip Roy \(house.gov\)](#)
- 2022 - [There’s No ‘Easy Button’ to Modernize the Civil Service - Government Executive \(govexec.com\)](#)
- 2023 - [Let’s Rethink the Management of Our Civil Service - Government Executive \(govexec.com\)](#)
- 2023 - Project 2025, Mandate for Leadership chapter on OPM and the civil service [2025_MandateForLeadership_CHAPTER-03.pdf \(project2025.org\)](#)
- 2024 - [Convergence Roundtable on Civil Service Modernization, Blueprint for Action](#)