

# **Opening Statement Senator Tom Carper**

**Today's hearing will examine the recently enacted Government Performance and Results Modernization Act of 2011 and how progress is being made towards its full implementation.**

**This bipartisan legislation which I sponsored was signed by the President early this year and I want to thank Senator Akaka, one of the bill's cosponsors, for his thoughtful leadership on this issue.**

**Unfortunately, Chairman Akaka broke two ribs in a minor accident at home last week and is unable to attend the hearing today. His statement, and the witnesses' answers to his questions for the record, will be included in the official hearing record. I understand he is recovering quickly and we look forward to seeing him back soon.**

**Seventeen years ago Congress passed the Government Performance and Results Act to help us better manage our finite resources and improve the effectiveness of federal programs. Given our mind boggling budget deficits, there has never been a greater need for more informed and effective management of taxpayer dollars.**

**Since 1993, agencies across the federal government have developed and implemented strategic plans and have routinely generated a tremendous amount of performance data. The question is – have federal agencies actually used their performance data to get better results?**

**Producing information does not by itself improve performance and experts from both sides of the aisle agreed that the solutions developed in 1993 did not work as we had originally hoped. The American people deserve – and our fiscal challenges demand – better results.**

**Vince Lombardi use to say if you're not keeping score, you're just practicing. We haven't been doing a very good job of setting clear goals for federal programs. We've not been doing a very good job of keeping score either. It's time we get into the game and play for real.**

**The Government Performance and Results Modernization Act brings a strategic, government-wide focus to performance management by requiring the Office of Management and Budget to set government-wide goals to align programs from different agencies to work together to reduce overlap and duplication. It also requires OMB to seek majority and minority views from Congress on those goals.**

**With an eye towards eliminating redundancy within government, the law requires agencies to support governmentwide priorities by linking their goals to them and working across agency lines to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their work.**

**I am pleased to hear that OMB is taking the new law seriously. In early April OMB Director Jack Lew along with Deputy Director for Management Jeff Zients, who is with us today, issued a memo to agency and department heads directing them to begin implementing the law. The memo told agencies to submit the name of their agency Chief Operating Officer to OMB by May 2<sup>nd</sup> and the name of their agency Performance Information Officer by June 1<sup>st</sup>. These positions, codified by the new law, are crucial to improving the performance of the federal government. The memo also instructed agencies to begin holding data-driven progress reviews of their goals by the end of June. I look forward to hearing from Mr. Zients today about whether these timelines will be met and about how many agencies have put their Chief Operating Officer into place.**

**Finally, the law requires that all of the results and performance information agencies generate be placed on a single, searchable website. This electronic information would replace much of the large performance-related documents agencies produce today that often goes unread. It will provide the sort of transparency and accountability of agency performance that Congress and the American people demand. It will also allow us to see what's working, fix what's not, and make tough decisions about what programs may be duplicative or not needed.**

**This website – Performance.gov – has yet to be launched and recent cuts to the Electronic Government Fund make its future a bit cloudy. I hope to hear more about the website's status and importance from our witnesses today.**

**Finally, during his State of the Union address, President Obama pledged to merge and reorganize agencies. I believe Mr. Zients is leading these efforts for the President and I hope to hear from him and our other witness about how this new law can serve as a tool for making the tough decisions ahead.**

**Today we face unparalleled challenges both here and abroad, and these require a knowledgeable and nimble federal government that can respond effectively. With concerns growing over the mounting federal deficit and national debt, the American people deserve to know that every dollar they send to Washington is being used to its utmost potential.**

**We need to replace the spending culture that has become all too common in Washing over the past few decades, with a culture of thrift. Making better use of performance information is an invaluable tool that can help us get there. If used effectively, it can**

**identify problems, find solutions, and develop approaches that can help us provide better service to the people who send us here for less money than we're spending today.**