

**Oversight Plan**  
**Committee on Oversight and Government Reform**  
**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**112<sup>th</sup> Congress**

Rule X, Clause 2(d) of the Rules of the House requires each standing committee of the House to adopt and submit a two-year oversight plan to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and the Committee on House Administration by February 15 of the first session of each Congress.

The following is the oversight plan for the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform for the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress and its subcommittees. It details subjects designated for investigation, evaluation, and review by the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, but does not preclude oversight or investigation of other matters as the need arises.

Below are descriptions of some of the issues the Committee intends to investigate during the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress. The list is not exhaustive, but highlights significant areas for Committee oversight. The Committee will retain the flexibility to investigate emerging abuses and other issues as appropriate.

### **Economic Stimulus**

The Committee will continue oversight of the Administration's implementation of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) to ensure that the massive and rapid expenditure of taxpayer money is subject to the highest possible degree of transparency and the lowest possible levels of waste, fraud, and abuse. The Committee also will seek to evaluate through hearings and other efforts ARRA's success in achieving its stated goals of enabling job creation and economic growth.

Additionally, the Committee intends to evaluate both oversight and fraud detection systems as well as mechanisms developed during the implementation of ARRA, such as those created under the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board. The Committee will examine whether those systems and mechanisms could and should be applied to a broader range of government spending and other activities.

### **Financial Sector**

The Committee will continue oversight of the financial sector, focusing on those regulatory agencies whose failures were implicated in the financial crisis and those agencies that were created, or saw their powers expanded, by the Dodd-Frank Act of

2010. The Committee will monitor financial regulators' management, technological initiatives and rulemaking, with a view towards ensuring protection of investors, predictable and efficient markets, and vigorous capital formation.

The Committee will consider the findings of the Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission (FCIC), and monitor the work of the Financial Stability Oversight Council (FSOC) and the Office of Financial Research (OFR).

Key topics for oversight include the need for technology-driven transparency in financial regulatory filings so that markets can quickly digest crucial information, management and communications challenges at key agencies – including the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and the implementation of the Dodd-Frank Act.

The Committee will continue to review the administration of the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), including the implementation of recommendations made by the Special Inspector General for the Troubled Asset Relief Program (SIGTARP). The Committee will also monitor the Home Affordable Modification Program (HAMP) and other efforts intended to assist home owners in distress.

The Committee will also review financial services regulations that could undermine economic recovery. The Committee will review existing and new regulations imposed by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC).

The Committee will also monitor new developments concerning state and municipal financing and related pension funding issues.

The Committee will conduct oversight of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac and their regulator, the Federal Housing Finance Agency. The Committee will further explore the risks to taxpayers associated with the role of Fannie Mae, Freddie Mac, and government housing policies and will work to ensure that additional taxpayer money is spent efficiently and effectively.

The Committee will continue to investigate the VIP loan program operated by Countrywide Financial Corporation (now Bank of America). During the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Committee issued a subpoena to Bank of America to compel production of VIP program records. Documents produced in response to the subpoena show Countrywide gave discounted loans and preferential treatment to policy makers positioned to protect the company's status as the nation's largest residential mortgage lender.

The Committee will investigate the scope and purpose of the VIP program, and will examine whether VIP loan recipients influenced legislation and policy that allowed Countrywide to preserve its strategic partnership with Fannie Mae.

## **Consumer Protection**

As part of the Committee's overarching examination into the regulatory process, the Committee will examine the regulations issued by the Consumer Product Safety

Commission (CPSC) to ensure that the agency is executing its responsibilities under the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008 (CPSIA) to safeguard consumers, particularly children, from faulty or dangerous products in a responsible and transparent manner. This will include review of the CPSC's implementation of Section 15(b) of the Consumer Product Safety Act pertaining to Substantial Product Hazard Reports, other data gathering and dissemination efforts with respect to products within its jurisdiction, the assessment of civil penalties to enforce safety, CPSC work on emerging hazards and the relationship of CPSC orders to common law.

The Committee will examine the foreclosure crisis including wrongful foreclosures and other abuses by mortgage servicing companies.

The Committee will also examine the enforcement activities of the Federal Trade Commission – particularly with respect to false and deceptive advertising by mail and email, telemarketing, identity theft and privacy.

## **The Government Accountability Office**

In February 2011, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) will issue its biannual High Risk report, which identifies government programs that are particularly vulnerable to waste, fraud and abuse. The Committee will provide ongoing oversight of agencies and programs included on the High Risk list by holding hearings, meeting with agency officials responsible for included programs, and monitoring agencies' corrective plans and actions.

In 2010, Congress required GAO to begin conducting "routine investigations to identify programs, agencies, offices, and initiatives with duplicative goals and activities within Departments and government-wide and report annually to Congress on the findings." In February 2011, the GAO will issue its first report under this provision, and the Committee will monitor GAO's findings to determine areas of federal activity that are duplicative and inefficient.

On November 30, 2010, the GAO issued a revised version of a report it had released on August 4, 2010 in testimony to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. The revisions in the report raise a number of questions about GAO's methodology and practices. Acting to preserve the integrity and independence of GAO, the Committee will seek to ensure that this problem does not recur, and that ultimately Congress can continue to rely on GAO's trusted counsel and analysis.

## **Inspectors General**

During 2009, agency Inspectors General (IGs) identified nearly \$10 billion in questioned costs—expenditures that are questionable because they violated a law, regulation, contract or grant, were not adequately documented or were unnecessary or unreasonable. They also identified more than \$45 billion related to instances where funds could be put to more effective or efficient use, including reducing outlays or avoiding unnecessary

expenditures. The Committee will review these reports to identify systemic improvements that could benefit a large number of programs.

In March 2010, Chairman Issa sent letters to 75 IGs requesting an update regarding thousands of open and unimplemented recommendations that, if implemented, have the potential to save taxpayers billions. The Committee will continue to monitor IG recommendations and conduct oversight of agency efforts to implement high priority reforms.

The Committee recognizes the value of an empowered community of IGs and is committed to protecting IGs who aggressively root out waste, fraud and abuse at the agencies through audits and investigations. During the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, controversy surrounded the removal of IGs at the Corporation for National and Community Service and Amtrak. The Committee will conduct oversight to ensure the independence and effectiveness of the IG community.

The Inspector General Reform Act of 2008 amended the Inspector General Act of 1978 by requiring the President to give Congress 30 days notice before dismissing an IG. The IG Reform Act also requires the President to provide Congress an explanation of why such action is necessary. The Committee will evaluate any concerns that the independence and effectiveness of an IG has been impeded as well as allegations of the improper removal of an IG.

## **Federal Financial Management**

The Committee will examine federal financial management. This review will include compliance with financial management and accounting laws, as well as the security and reliability of federal financial systems. The Committee will also focus on agency efforts to reduce improper payments and achieve a clean government-wide audit.

GAO and other federal auditors have found that purchase card programs, through which government employees make small-value procurements using individually issued credit cards, are highly vulnerable to abuse without proper internal controls. The Committee will monitor purchase card programs to ensure that departments and agencies maintain adequate oversight of purchase card spending.

The Committee has jurisdiction over the collection of non-tax debt by the Department of the Treasury's Financial Management Service (FMS) under the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (DCIA). According to FMS in its 2009 Annual Report, the amount of delinquent non-tax debt owed to the government has risen to \$107.2 billion; Treasury's Debt Management Services office was only able to collect \$5.1 billion in 2009. Over the past six years, the average amount Treasury collected annually was about \$4 billion.

This Committee will further investigate improper payments distributed by federal agencies. Under the 2002 Improper Payments Information Act (IPIA), federal agencies are required to annually review all programs and activities to identify those entities

susceptible to significant improper payments. For FY 2010, improper payments totaled \$125 billion, the highest dollar figure since the Act's introduction.

The Committee will continue to track the findings from federal Inspectors General reports and special audits concerning the use of federal funds by ACORN, its related organizations and rebranded affiliates to promote accountability and avert misuse of taxpayer funds.

## **Federal Real Property Disposal**

Since 2003, federal real property management has been on the GAO High Risk list. The Government holds thousands of unneeded properties and spends hundreds of millions on upkeep and maintenance of those properties. A June 2010 Presidential Memorandum on property disposal directed OMB to develop guidance that would include agency-specific targets to achieve \$3 billion in cost savings. The Committee intends to examine what progress has been made toward this goal, and to consider changes that could be made to the Federal Real Property and Administrative Services Act that would expedite real property disposal.

## **Government Contracting**

The size and cost of government contracting has more than doubled in the last decade. From FY 2001 to FY 2010, the total amount spent on contracts increased from \$223 billion to \$534.9 billion. The Committee will examine the causes and effects of both the increase in contracting as well as the importance of safeguards such as competition in the procurement process. The Committee will continue to investigate waste and fraud in federal contracting.

The Committee will continue its examination of transparency requirements essential to the government contracting system, with special attention to transparency regarding past performance and contract oversight concerns. The Committee will also continue its review of contractor ethics and disclosure requirements, as well as the proper role of contracting for preferences and set-aside programs for small and disadvantaged businesses.

The Committee will continue to conduct oversight of contracting issues associated with the transition of important responsibilities from the Defense Department to the State Department in Iraq, as well as oversight of contracting in Afghanistan to prevent corruption.

## **Open Government and Transparency**

The Committee will continue to advocate technological solutions to achieve government transparency. Broadly speaking, the Committee will seek to ensure that the federal government's information – with a few well-defined exceptions, such as national security

– is made available online and that it is formatted in ways that facilitate easy access and analysis. The Committee will evaluate possible legislation to set policy goals for technology-driven transparency for federal spending, program performance, regulatory materials, and legislative documents. The Committee will also examine public access to information through the Freedom of Information Act, examine the implementation of other open government laws, such as the Presidential Records Act and the Federal Advisory Committees Act, and consider whether any statutory mandates may impede public access to information.

The Committee will continue oversight of concerns related to the use by the Executive branch of taxpayer funds for public relations and propaganda activities. Federal appropriations law generally prohibits the expenditures of appropriated funds for partisan purposes.

On January 21, 2009, President Obama issued Executive Order 13490, requiring every appointee in executive departments and agencies to sign an ethics pledge concerning their communications with lobbyists and current participation in matters related to their prior lobbying activities. In April 2010, the Office of Government Ethics issued a memorandum finding “several situations in which ethics officials issued waivers . . . after employees acted in particular matters from which they should have been recused, or otherwise engaged in conduct that was prohibited.” The Committee will conduct oversight related to the Administration’s use of ethics waivers.

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, special interest groups spent over \$3 billion lobbying the federal government last year. The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the District of Columbia, which is charged with enforcing the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 (LDA), receives thousands of referrals from Congress regarding potential LDA violations. According to recent studies, however, the vast majority of these referrals remain pending, with no resolution. The Committee plans to investigate why the U.S. Attorney’s Office has failed to take enforcement actions with respect to congressional referrals.

During the 110th Congress, the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, under the leadership of Chairman Henry A. Waxman, conducted a two-year examination of the practices of the White House Office of Political Affairs (“OPA”). This lengthy investigation culminated in a report concluding that “the extent of political activity by the current [George W. Bush] White House and its deep and systematic reach into the federal agencies appears unprecedented.” The Waxman staff report suggested major reforms to prevent the perceived abuses discovered. The Committee will examine controversies related to OPA and possible Hatch Act violations. In addition, the Committee will evaluate the results of the January 2011 closing of OPA.

The Committee will continue to investigate the persistent challenges and failures associated with the preservation of presidential and federal records, as required by law. Dating back to the Clinton Administration, changes in technology have challenged each subsequent administration’s ability to capture, manage, and preserve the growing and diverse volume of electronic records. Despite new policies intended to improve

transparency, concerns that problems remain have been raised. In the 111th Congress, Ranking Member Issa sent numerous requests to the White House regarding presidential or federal records requirements; however, these requests remain unanswered. The Committee intends to examine the challenges created by the use of personal email and new, innovative forms of communication such as social media.

Advisory committees play a crucial role in giving the president and agencies advice on complex issues. According to the General Services Administration (GSA), there were more than 900 advisory committees in 2008. The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) is aimed at making these committees accountable, transparent, balanced, and independent from the influence of special interests. However, the courts have created loopholes in FACA that undermine the purposes of the Act and agencies have not consistently implemented FACA. The Committee will continue its oversight to ensure that FACA is implemented in a manner that ensures that advisory committees are appropriately transparent and balanced.

The Committee will focus on compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The Committee will monitor implementation of the memorandum issued by the President on January 21, 2009, reinstating the presumption of disclosure. The Committee will also examine implementation of the OPEN Government Act of 2007. The OPEN Government Act of 2007 made numerous important reforms to FOIA, including incentives to reduce agency backlogs of FOIA requests and the creation of an independent Office of Government Information Services within the National Archives and Records Administration.

The Committee will investigate whether the FOIA response process has been politicized at federal agencies. The Associated Press reported that Department of Homeland Security management required FOIA requests from lawmakers, journalists, activist groups or watchdog organizations to be reviewed by political appointees. Further investigation into FOIA policies at DHS is necessary, and additional agencies where political appointees have a role in the FOIA process may still be identified.

The Committee will seek to ensure that political concerns do not play a role in the proper functioning of executive branch departments and agencies. The Committee will also inquire as to whether relevant officials have properly briefed department and agency employees about their obligations under the Hatch Act, which prohibits partisan political activity among federal employees.

## **Grant Reform**

The Committee will examine federal efforts to reform and streamline the grant process across multiple federal agencies. The Committee may consider the possible reauthorization of the Federal Financial Assistance Management Improvement Act of 1999; investigate allegations of waste, fraud, and abuse in the grants process within specific federal agencies; and examine efforts to adopt consistent government-wide policies for grants applications and reporting.

The total number and dollar amounts of executive branch-administered grants are about 35 times greater than the total number and dollar amounts of Congressional earmarks. Unfortunately, there are no uniform guidelines to ensure open, merit-based competition in federal discretionary grant programs. The Committee intends to examine the efficiency, fairness, and transparency of agency grant-making processes.

## **Technology Policy**

Federal agencies spend more than \$80 billion a year buying information technology products and services, many of which fail to provide the productivity gains expected, or worse, simply fail. The Committee will review the federal government's information technology procurement and management policies to ensure that taxpayers are getting the maximum return for their money. The Committee will closely monitor the executive branch's efforts to stop IT projects that are not on target and streamline those that are wasteful.

The Committee will also review the impact of federal IT mandates under laws such as the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), the E-Government Act of 2002 and the Clinger-Cohen Act. The Committee will seek input from the front lines of procurement and implementation to determine whether these mandates have improved data security, public access, and IT enterprise planning – and at what cost.

The Office of Management and Budget recently changed their approach to managing financial systems, dismantling of the Financial Systems Integration Office (formerly known as the Joint Financial Management Improvement Program Office) and asking federal agencies to segment large projects and show incremental short-term results. Effective oversight of agency financial management IT systems and the use of this new way of procuring and deploying them will be critical and may help to inform possible changes to the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act of 1996 (FFMIA).

The Committee will monitor and conduct oversight of federal agency information security practices that are required under FISMA, and the Office of Management and Budget in this area. We will pay close attention to agency FISMA compliance and overall FISMA effectiveness.

The Committee will examine and evaluate privacy and security practices used by agencies to ensure privacy of confidential data.

## **Federal Regulation and the Regulatory Process**

While federal regulations are necessary to effectively implement the laws that Congress passes to protect human health, consumers, and the environment, federal regulations also impose burdens on job creators. The Committee will place special emphasis on oversight of federal regulations to minimize unnecessary burdens on small businesses, job creation, and economic growth and competitiveness.

The integrity of a rule can be compromised if the process in which it is developed is not open and transparent, allowing adequate time for stakeholders to participate in a meaningful way. The Committee will focus on the role of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) in agency rulemakings and the transparency of OIRA's interactions with agencies and outside entities. Moreover, the Committee will scrutinize the effectiveness of the agency and interagency review process in ensuring that all required review and analysis is conducted and utilized in the development of federal regulations.

The Committee will also examine agencies' performance under the Data Quality Act in terms of responding to petitions for correction in a timely and reasonable manner.

The Committee will examine the impact of unfunded mandates on state and local governments, and private entities, and explore the role and impact of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 and ways to potentially enhance its effectiveness.

## **Rating Agency Performance**

The Committee will examine Administration efforts to rate the performance of federal programs including the extent to which such efforts incorporate input from Congress, agencies, independent analysts, and the public. The Committee will evaluate the impact of recent amendments to the Government Performance and Results Act and monitor the planned implementation of government-wide performance reporting via Performance.gov.

## **Energy**

The Committee will conduct oversight over the Department of Energy's (DOE) effectiveness in managing its broad mission. In addition, the Committee will review DOE's management and distribution of stimulus funds, including numerous reports from IGs regarding problems in the Department's weatherization program.

The Committee will also review the Administration's decision to terminate the proposed nuclear waste repository at Yucca Mountain and the actions of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in evaluating this conclusion.

The Committee will also examine whether federal policies and regulations create roadblocks to the development of critical energy resources such as nuclear energy.

## **Environment**

In previous Congresses, the Committee has taken an active role in overseeing the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) implementation of the Clean Air Act and various amendments to this Act, including such matters as ozone standards, the development and issuance of the Endangerment Finding for Greenhouse Gases, and the

issuance of the California Waiver. The Committee will continue to conduct oversight into these matters, with a particular focus on agency process, adequate economic analysis of proposed rules, and cumulative impact analysis. In addition, the Committee will conduct oversight of the enforcement and permitting decisions conducted by the agency and will monitor the EPA's commitment to improving the agency's long-term relationship with states.

## **Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Regulation and Enforcement**

In 2006, this Committee began an investigation of the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management Regulation and Enforcement (BOEMRE), formerly the Minerals Management Service (MMS) for corruption and cover-ups surrounding faulty oil and gas leases signed in 1998 and 1999. The investigation revealed that Interior Department officials knew the leases were faulty, yet chose to conceal the truth. Moreover, the Committee repeatedly raised questions over the relationship between the regulators and industry.

In the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Committee investigated the Federal response to the BP oil spill that resulted from the explosion aboard the Deepwater Horizon. This investigation revealed a breakdown in the chain of command, limiting the effectiveness of the federal response and causing frustration among local residents. In the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Committee will continue its oversight of BOEMRE, paying particular attention to the effectiveness of the proposed reforms in eliminating the previously identified abuses and conflicts of interest, and to the ability of the agency to effectively oversee and regulate the oil and gas industry.

Particular attention will be paid to the agency's performance with respect to permitting decisions for deep and shallow water drillers, and the impact of this regulatory approval process on economic growth and job creation.

## **Healthcare**

The Committee will investigate waste, fraud, and abuse in government-funded health programs, with special attention to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will remain a major subject of oversight, including in key areas related to drug safety and medical devices.

In order to improve the quality of care in the United States, the Committee will conduct oversight into federal efforts to prevent medical errors and health care associated infections that result in significant injury and death in the United States as well as unproductive health care spending.

The Committee will conduct oversight of the implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) as well as the Health Care Education and Reconciliation Act (HCERA). Specifically, the Committee will address any waivers

granted, to any individual or entity, from complying with the mandates set forth in PPACA and the HCERA to ensure fairness and uniformity in the process.

Particular focus will be given to investigating waste, fraud and abuse in government healthcare programs at the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The Committee will review the issue of tort reform as it relates to medical malpractice.

The Committee will continue its oversight of Administration efforts to improve health preparedness for terrorist attacks and naturally occurring disease outbreaks, such as pandemic influenza.

## **Food Safety**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) estimates that nearly 56 million Americans suffer from food poisoning each year, with 5,000 deaths related to food borne illnesses. The Committee will investigate the safety and security of our nation's food supply.

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) has identified 15 federal agencies responsible for administering 30 food safety related laws. The Committee will conduct oversight into the federal food safety regulatory structure to address fragmentation and ensure that federal efforts are coordinated and that agencies are effectively and efficiently using resources to improve food safety.

The Committee will also investigate the adequacy of food safety law enforcement by the 15 federal departments and agencies with jurisdiction including the Food and Drug Administration, the Department of Agriculture, and Customs and Border Protection.

## **District of Columbia**

The Committee will review the fiscal situation of the District of Columbia. About 65 percent of the District budget comes from locally generated revenue, while the remaining 35-percent comes from federal funds. According to Mayor Vincent Gray, D.C. revenue began dropping in May 2008, and has declined by 16 percent since that time. Gray said that FY 2011 is the fourth year in a row that the District's expenditures will exceed its revenue, and the District faces a budget gap of \$345 million for FY 2012.

The Committee will review the District's use of federal education funds provided to its traditional public schools and its public charter schools (the subject of a recently-issued GAO report). The Committee will monitor implementation of public school reforms begun under the tenure of former Mayor Adrian Fenty and former D.C. Public Schools Chancellor Michelle Rhee, including the use of the IMPACT teacher assessment system and its effect on teacher quality in the District. The Committee will also review the effectiveness of the federally-funded D.C. Opportunity Scholarship Program in enhancing educational opportunities for low-income D.C. residents, including its effect on student performance and graduation rates. This is particularly important now, since

the program's authorization expired in 2008 and the Administration has proposed that no funding be provided for new students to enroll in the program.

The Committee will also review firearms regulation in the District following the Supreme Court's decision in *District of Columbia, et al. v. Dick Anthony Heller* (554 U.S. 570).

The Committee will review the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). WMATA has experienced numerous problems relating to customer safety and Metrorail accidents over the past several years. While WMATA has publicly committed itself to taking the necessary steps to address operational and safety deficiencies, routine and rigorous oversight of the agency remains warranted.

In accordance with the National Capital Revitalization and Self-Government Improvement Act of 1997, the Committee also plans to conduct oversight of the US Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, which is charged with prosecution of all serious local crimes committed by adults in the District.

## **Census**

The Committee will review the process by which the 2010 Decennial Census was conducted, its level of accuracy, and the appropriateness of the level of expenditures incurred. The Committee will also review the non-decennial operations of the Census Bureau to determine if there can be savings through better efficiencies. The Committee will also seek to determine if the Bureau's data collection activities are overly broad and still serve the people in the appropriate manner.

## **National Archives and Federal Records**

In October 2010, GAO released two reports highlighting failures at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). The Committee will conduct oversight of NARA's management of government records and the procedures NARA is putting in place to handle and archive records generated by new technologies, including social media.

The Committee will examine the Presidential Library system, specifically looking at the governance of the Presidential Libraries, how the foundations interact with NARA, and how the foundations and NARA coordinate and cooperate to fulfill the mission of the Presidential Library system.

## **Federal Workforce**

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) listed Strategic Human Capital Management on its High-Risk Series List again for 2009. GAO designated strategic human capital management as a high-risk area in 2001 because of the federal government's long-standing lack of a consistent approach to human capital management.

(GAO, *High-Risk Series: An Update* (January 2009) (GAO-09-271)). GAO cited leadership, strategic human capital planning, acquiring, developing and retaining talent, and results-oriented culture as areas in need of improvement. The report also noted the United States Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) need to provide leadership in these areas.

The Committee will work with federal employee stakeholders to research and evaluate the effectiveness of OPM, existing federal pay systems, and human resources processes. The Committee will encourage the implementation of policies and strategies that will enhance federal human resource systems government-wide.

The Committee will examine the federal government's compensation, classification and performance management systems. The Committee will track OPM's announced review of the data and computations long used by the government to determine pay gaps.

Performance management will be a central feature of the Committee's review, including existing demonstration projects through the personnel labs and the Department of Defense's recent efforts to provide meaningful distinctions in employee performance. The Committee will also examine the existing probationary period for new hires and the use of existing noncompetitive appointment authorities as part of its focus on ensuring highly skilled, motivated workers are suitably compensated.

The Committee will review staffing plans of agencies to determine appropriate workforce alignment and size. The Committee will look to ensure agency hiring decisions are driven by critical needs, stem from their strategic human capital plans and result in increased productivity.

The Committee will examine the array of benefits provided to federal employees and annuitants as part of Congress' overall deficit reduction efforts. The review will include the recommendations of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform.

The Committee will examine the roles and responsibilities of the Office of Personnel Management in determining whether the agency is providing strategic human capital policies that result in a highly skilled workforce sufficiently nimble to meet the federal government's many missions. The Committee will review OPM's policy-making and benefits administration functions to ensure agencies receive the guidance necessary to manage their respective workforces and employees receive timely benefits processing. In addition, the Committee will examine the use of existing personnel authorities, such as category rating and dual compensation waivers, to meet critical staffing needs.

## **United States Postal Service**

The United States Postal Service (USPS) lost \$8.5 billion in FY 2010, and its financial situation is becoming increasingly dire.

The Postal Service is "facing a major financial crisis," according to a report issued last year by GAO. The report stated that, "we continue to believe that major restructuring is

necessary and not doing so will increase the risk that taxpayers and the U.S. Treasury will have to provide financial relief.”

GAO added USPS’s financial condition to its high-risk list in 2009. Mail volume declined by 42 billion pieces (about 20 percent) from FY 2006 through FY 2010, and continues to decline. The USPS itself stated last year that, absent necessary changes, USPS was on track to lose more than \$200 billion over the course of a decade.

The Committee will examine actions and plans USPS is taking going forward, as it attempts to meet its public purpose and avoid fiscal insolvency. The Committee will also investigate ways in which Congress can address statutory obstacles that may be hindering the ability of the Postal Service to implement necessary changes. To assist in its oversight efforts, the Committee intends to work collaboratively with USPS, the Postal Regulatory Commission, the USPS Inspector General, the Government Accountability Office and non-governmental experts.

## **National Security and Foreign Operations**

Because of its interagency jurisdiction, the Committee is uniquely positioned to examine the effectiveness, efficiency and cooperation of all U.S. Government agencies and departments involved in national security and foreign operations issues.

The Committee will examine diplomatic, military and development policy and related expenditures concerning U.S. relations with Afghanistan, Pakistan, India, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Venezuela, Cuba, China, North Korea and others. Where appropriate, investigations of expenditures for reconstruction of infrastructure, training of personnel, and other related issues will be examined.

The Committee’s oversight of U.S. diplomatic, military, and development efforts in Afghanistan will include, but not be limited to: investigations of the training and equipping of the Afghan National Security Forces; counterinsurgency strategy (COIN); the efficiency, accountability and efficacy of a variety of development and reconstruction efforts, including the use of private contractors; the capacity of various U.S. Government agencies and departments to carry on needed activities in Afghanistan; and the development of the rule of law and justice sector.

The Committee’s oversight of U.S. diplomatic, military, and development efforts in Pakistan will include, but not be limited to: investigations of the efficiency, accountability, and efficacy of the U.S. Coalition Support Fund; U.S. efforts in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA); U.S. efforts to train and equip Pakistan security forces, including the Pakistan Frontier Corps and various Pakistani police entities; U.S. efforts to bolster the rule of law and the justice sector in Pakistan; and development efforts, including U.S. efforts to bolster primary education for Pakistani children.

The Committee will conduct oversight of U.S. diplomatic, military, and development efforts to address the issue of global terrorism both in the short-term and long-term. The

oversight will include whether the United States is maximizing the use of all elements of the country's national security potential and how anti-terror efforts, such as the detention and trial of unlawful enemy combatants, are coordinated with other important U.S. national security interests and the rule of law. The Committee's review will include the international standing of the United States, humanitarian assistance, development programs and public diplomacy efforts.

The Committee will conduct oversight over the U.S. Foreign Service, International Broadcasting Bureau, Peace Corps and U.S. Agency for International Development, including an examination of the rightsizing, effectiveness, and cost efficiency of these and related U.S. national security agencies toward satisfying U.S. national security objectives.

U.S. interagency efforts to strengthen the civilian law enforcement professionalism and capabilities (as well as the rule of law and justice sectors more generally) of partner countries will be reviewed.

The Committee will review U.S. military combatant commands, especially AFRICOM and SOUTHCOM that have significant interagency inputs and non-traditional outputs, including the implications for these combatant commands on interagency national security coordination and cooperation.

The Committee will evaluate of the need for interagency reform among the various U.S. national security agencies and departments.

The Committee will examine Defense Department spending, including weapons systems procurement, development, operations, and compliance with statutory and other regulations, testing regimes and efficiency. The Committee will investigate: the nation's missile defense efforts, including the actual threat posed by long-range missiles; the technical capabilities of current systems; the costs and benefits of such systems; and ensuring proper oversight and accountability.

The Committee will review the conduct and efficiency of private contractors in providing security, military intelligence and other endeavors on behalf of U.S. national security.

The Committee will investigate the care, management, and conditions of wounded soldiers at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and other Defense Department and Veterans Affairs medical facilities. The Committee will also examine the implications, intended or otherwise, in the consolidations and closures of such facilities.

## **Homeland Security**

The creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) required one of the largest consolidations of federal agencies in history. The Department was ultimately formed by bringing together 22 different parts of government. Though the Department has made progress in integrating these various agencies, incidents such as the response to Hurricane

Katrina reveal that there is still room to improve efficiency and responsiveness. The Committee will review the operations, management and decision-making at DHS.

The Committee will evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of homeland security strategy, laws, initiatives, and technology. In particular, the Committee will focus on aviation, rail and transit, chemical, nuclear, port, our northern and southwestern borders, and other facilities or critical infrastructure at risk, federal funding interaction with local responders and efforts to strengthen the U.S. public health system.

The Committee will also review visas, passports and other border control and security identification issues, as well as, border and immigration policies and the operations of U.S. consulates.

The Committee will conduct oversight of the federal government's emergency management capabilities to ensure that lessons learned from previous disasters, such as the need for improved planning and execution, communications operability, and coordination between all levels of government and within the federal government, are part of federal agency reform efforts.

The Committee will closely examine laws, regulations, and policies governing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). The Committee's oversight efforts will focus on maximizing the effectiveness and efficiency of airport security, including technology, checkpoint screening, perimeter security, workforce requirements for screening agents, information sharing and private sector solutions for increasing airport security.

## **Drug Policy**

Reducing prescription and illicit drug abuse remains a key concern of the Committee, and therefore the Committee will review the Office of National Drug Control Policy's (ONDCP) efforts to combat both prescription and illicit drug abuse. Since drug abuse and addiction continue to be major contributing factors to criminal activity in America, the Committee will also examine the usefulness of current prevention and treatment programs on rehabilitation and offender reentry. The Committee will also review the efficiency and effectiveness of grant programs overseen by ONDCP.

Additionally, as our experience with Afghanistan has proven, the destabilizing nature of the international drug trade has national security consequences above and beyond its effect on our domestic drug problem. The Committee will continue to monitor ONDCP's coordination of a strategy to disrupt the drug market at its source, through international eradication and interdiction.