



For immediate release

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****Press Release****

**DATA Act Leadership Optimistic about May 2017 Reporting
Deadline Amidst Administrative Transition**

Washington, D.C. -- The House Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Operations held a hearing this morning to explore the status of implementing the 2014 [Digital Accountability and Transparency Act](#) (DATA Act) ([PL 113-101](#)). The hearing, titled "[DATA Act Implementation Check-in](#)", was the second this year in which the subcommittee called upon the leadership of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Treasury Department's Fiscal Service to explain how federal agencies are progressing to comply with the DATA Act's May 2017 deadline to report their spending information as open data.

Subcommittee Chairman Mark Meadows (NC-11) opened the hearing stating that while agencies are ultimately responsible for their own data reporting, his committee is dedicated to conducting oversight and exploring what needs to be tweaked to assure success. The Chairman recognized the [Data Coalition](#)'s efforts to bring these issues to the Subcommittee's attention.

OMB Controller Dave Mader defended his office's decision to primarily focus on the [24 CFO Act agencies](#), which account for more than 90% of federal funding. Mader did say that OMB has records of 83 federal agencies which have self-determined they are legally obligated to report under the law. In April's hearing, the Committee requested that OMB provide a comprehensive list of covered agencies. The Government Accountability Office's (GAO) July [report](#) on agency readiness was critical of OMB's failure to explicitly identify those agencies covered by the law.

In his opening remarks, subcommittee Ranking Member Gerry Connolly (VA-11) expressed his excitement at anticipating "one consolidated electronic data set" and called for the "next Congress to make implementation of the DATA Act a priority." GAO's Paula Rascano, Director of Financial Management and Assurance, warned that an Administration transition is a threat while stating how the DATA Act highlights the real need and possibility for achieving a "robust data governance structure, to provide consistent data management during a change in transition."

To help with this transition, Meadows called for the OMB and Treasury witnesses to provide the Committee with a full listing of all agency contacts responsible for implementing the law. Meadows also asked for GAO to work with OMB to identify any lingering implementation hurdles.

Also of concern to the Committee was a recently published [Washington Post article](#) covering a leaked independent report finding \$125 billion in bureaucratic waste at the Department of Defense. The Vice Chair of the Subcommittee, Congressman Walberg (MI-07) directed his line of questioning to Roscana. “[H]ow might full implementation of the DATA Act improve our ability to identify that kind of savings at DoD?” probed Congressman Walberg (MI-07).

“The DATA Act will not only provide more transparency to where the funds are being spent but hopefully also ... provide a vehicle for DoD management and other agencies to manage their funds and manage their programs,” Ms. Rascona responded.

On whether DoD will comply with the DATA Act, David Mader, Controller of the Office of Management and Budget, added, “They [DoD] are cooperating... They are not sitting back and saying we’re exempt, they are working on it.”

It was Rep. Jim Jordan’s (OH-4) questioning of the witnesses seeking clarification around the government’s collection of data on agency fines, fees, and settlement collections that highlights the need to continue the work started by the DATA Act, and expand this data driven oversight into additional realms of federal activity.

Hudson Hollister, Executive Director of the Data Coalition, [testified](#) before the same subcommittee last week: “This Committee began this work by passing the DATA Act. By holding the executive branch accountable to follow the law, and by expanding the law where necessary, this Committee can finish it.”

About the Data Coalition:The Data Coalition advocates on behalf of the private sector and the public interest for the publication of government information as standardized, open data. Open data enhances accountability, improves government management, reduces compliance costs, and stimulates innovation. Representing a cross-section of the technology industry and implementers, the Coalition’s membership includes market leaders such as Workiva, Donnelley Financial Solutions, Booz Allen Hamilton, and CGI Federal and growing start-ups such as idaciti and CBeyondData. For more information, visit datacoalition.org.

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