

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 24, 2017

The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Committee on Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 340  
United States Senate

The Honorable Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs  
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 340  
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member McCaskill,

We write to respectfully request that the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs mark up the *Modernizing Government Technology (MGT) Act of 2017* (S. 990 / H.R. 2227).

We believe our bipartisan legislation complements your interest in improving how the federal government acquires, implements, and manages information technology (IT). The federal government spends over \$80 billion annually on major IT systems, with more than 75 percent expended on maintaining existing IT rather than investing in development, modernization and enhancement activities.<sup>1</sup>

The rising cost of maintaining such “legacy” IT systems hinders the ability for agencies to replace their aging technology tools with more cost effective solutions. According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), federal IT systems use outdated software languages and hardware parts that are unsupported, making them vulnerable to cyberattacks.<sup>2</sup> Aging federal IT systems may pose other serious security risks due to the inability to use data encryption, multi-factor authentication and other current security best practices.

The MGT Act would establish IT working capital funds at the 24 agencies pursuant to the Chief Financial Officers (CFO) Act of 1990 (P.L. 101-576) and a separate centralized modernization fund within the Department of the Treasury for a federal IT expert board to administer across the federal government. Savings obtained by federal agencies through streamlining IT systems, replacing legacy products and transitioning to cloud computing can be placed in a working capital fund that can be accessed for up to 3 years for further modernization efforts.

The House of Representatives has already approved its companion legislation H.R. 2227, which passed by voice vote on May 17, 2017. The MGT Act garnered endorsements from numerous

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<sup>1</sup> see GAO. *Information Technology: Federal Agencies Need to Address Aging Legacy Systems*. GAO 16-468. available at <http://www.gao.gov/assets/680/677436.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

stakeholder groups, including the IT Alliance for the Public Sector (ITAPS), Professional Services Council (PSC), TechNet, Amazon Web Service, Cisco, and others.

Reporting the MGT Act out of the Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs will help advance our shared goal of preserving national security and ensuring that the federal government uses taxpayer dollars wisely.

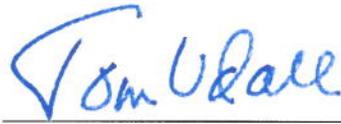
Thank you for your consideration and your continued leadership on these issues.

Sincerely,



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Jerry Moran  
United States Senator



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Tom Udall  
United States Senator



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Steve Daines  
United States Senator



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Mark Warner  
United States Senator