

## Congressional Involvement

### *Congress*

#### Requirements

##### *Consultations on Federal Government Priority Goals*

When developing or making adjustments to the federal government priority goals, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is to obtain majority and minority views from specified Congressional committees:

- the Senate and House Committees on Appropriations;
- the Senate and House Committees on the Budget;
- the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs;
- the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform;
- the Senate Committee on Finance;
- the House Committee on Ways and Means; and
- any other committees determined appropriate.

31 U.S.C. § 1120(a)(3).

At least every 2 years, OMB is to consult with the appropriate committees of Congress. 31 U.S.C. § 1120(a)(4).

OMB may make adjustments to the goals to reflect significant changes in the federal government's operating environment, with appropriate notification of Congress. 31 U.S.C. § 1120(a)(2).

##### *Consultations on Agency Strategic Plans*

At least every 2 years, including when developing or making adjustments to a strategic plan, the agency is to consult with Congress, including obtaining majority and minority views from the appropriate authorizing, appropriations, and oversight committees. 5 U.S.C. § 306(d).

As needed, the agency may make adjustments to the strategic plan to reflect significant changes in its operating environment, with appropriate notification of Congress. 5 U.S.C. § 306(b).

##### *Consultations on Reducing Agency Reports*

Each year, based on guidance provided by the Director of OMB, the agency Chief Operating Officer (COO) is to:

- compile a list of all plans and reports the agency produces for Congress;
- analyze the list to identify, and refine the list to, duplicative or outdated plans and reports;
- consult with Congressional committees that receive the duplicative/outdated plans and reports to see if they are no longer useful and could be consolidated or eliminated; and
- submit a total count of all plans and reports, and the list of duplicative and outdated ones, to OMB.

31 U.S.C. § 1125(a).

OMB is to include each agency's list of duplicative and outdated plans and reports in the Budget of the United States Government for consolidation or elimination. In addition, OMB may concurrently submit to Congress legislation to eliminate or consolidate the plans and reports. 31 U.S.C. § 1125(c).

#### Select Legislative History

##### *Consultations on Federal Government Priority Goals*

Successful strategic planning requires the involvement of key stakeholders. This collaboration can serve as a mechanism for building consensus and provides a vehicle for the President to articulate long-term goals and a road map for achieving them. Therefore, when developing or adjusting the goals, and at least once each Congress, the Director is required to consult with key congressional committees and obtain both majority and minority views on the draft goals. S. Rep. No. 111-372, at 8 (2010).

### *Consultations on Agency Strategic Plans*

In waiting to consult with relevant congressional stakeholders until a strategic plan has been substantially drafted and vetted within the executive branch, agencies forego important opportunities to learn early on about specific concerns that will be critical to successful implementation. Therefore, the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs again strongly emphasized that Congressional consultations are to take place during the development of the plan—not after. S. Rep. No. 111-372, at 5 (2010).

This legislation clarifies that the agency shall periodically consult with and obtain majority and minority views from its authorizing, appropriations, and oversight committees when developing or making adjustments to its strategic plan. It also requires Congressional consultations occur at least once every two years; this is to ensure that each Congress has input on the goals, objectives, strategies, and performance measures of the agency. Moreover, it allows the agency to have an opportunity to provide a progress report on its performance and ensures that various committees are getting the types of performance information they need. S. Rep. No. 111-372, at 5 (2010).

### Related GAO Work

GAO has elaborated on and suggested several practices that support this requirement, including:

- using performance information to enhance congressional decision making and oversight ([GAO-12-621SP](#); [GAO-12-215R](#); [GAO-06-378](#); [GAO/T-GGD-97-43](#));
- enhancing the usefulness of consultations between Congress and the Executive Branch ([GAO-12-215R](#), pp. 6-13, [GAO/T-GGD-97-56](#), pp. 4-11); and
- ensuring agency performance information is timely and useful for Congress ([GAO/GGD-00-35](#); [GAO/PEMD-95-1](#)).