

## GAO Highlights States, Partnership Fund as Examples of Efficiency Mechanisms

On September 30, 2011 the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a report titled *Streamlining Government: Key Practices from Select Efficiency Initiatives Should be Shared Governmentwide* (GAO-11-908). This report examines selected initiatives that federal and state government agencies are implementing to achieve efficiencies and identifies key practices associated with implementing these efficiency initiatives. The report examined federal initiatives at the Departments of Homeland Security (DHS), Veterans Affairs (VA), Defense (DOD), and Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Five states—Virginia, Iowa, Texas, Washington, and Georgia—were identified by OMB and government management experts as having potentially promising practices. The initiatives in Virginia, Iowa, Texas, and Washington focus on reexamining state programs and their related processes and structures. Along with Georgia, Iowa and Virginia were recognized for initiatives that focus on streamlining or consolidating existing processes and functions.

To assist federal agencies' efforts to improve efficiency, GAO recommended that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) use governmentwide management councils and other venues to share lessons learned and share specific key efficiency practices. OMB notes that it "has been sharing and will continue to share these practices." GAO also recommended that OMB develop proposals for funding mechanisms that provide up-front costs associated with longer-term efficiency improvement projects that are expected to result in more significant cost savings or other efficiencies in the future. The OMB Partnership Fund for Program Integrity Innovation was highlighted as an example of a recommended funding mechanism that potentially saves more than it costs. Efforts to make transformational changes to the way federal agencies operate could include expanding this pilot program. The full report can be accessed at <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11908.pdf>.