INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF INVESTIGATION

At the beginning of the second session of the 106th Congress, Senate Governmental Affairs Committee Chairman Fred Thompson began an investigation of how Federal agencies were complying with the requirements of the Clinger-Cohen Act. This review was undertaken as part of the Committee's oversight of Federal agency information technology procurement and management.

As part of the investigation, Chairman Thompson reviewed responses to certain questions posed to the agencies[1] as well as 31 reports on information technology management conducted by the General Accounting Office (GAO) since enactment of the CCA[2].

BACKGROUND

During the 104th Congress, the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee reviewed the way information was being managed by Federal agencies. Realizing that information technology, particularly network computers, were changing the way Federal managers compiled, distributed, and maintained information, as well managed Federal programs, the Committee developed legislation (which became the CCA) to remedy some of the central problems underlying the way the government does business. For example, the Committee's Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management found that the government was falling further behind the private sector in its ability to successfully use information technology. According to a 1995 statement by then Senator William Cohen:

> "The Federal government rarely if ever examines how its does business before it automates. I recently held hearings which examined how the Pentagon could save more than $4 billion over 5 years simply by changing the way it processed travel vouchers. Automating the current voucher processing system will neither achieve the projected savings nor the efficiencies that are accomplished through reengineering. Second, the Federal government has wasted billions of dollars by maintaining and updating so-called legacy or antiquated computers from the 1960's and 1970's which are ill-suited for the government's needs and by today's standards will never be efficient or reliable."[3]

These findings and others led to the development of legislation intended to make

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[1] By letter dated April 6, 2000 from Chairman Thompson and Ranking Minority Member Lieberman (see Appendix A).

[2] See Appendix B.

[3] Statement of Senator William Cohen, Vol. 141, No. 101 Cong.Rec. S8686, June 20, 1995.

it easier for the government to buy and manage information technology. Most importantly, the CCA was designed to make sure that, before the government invests in technology, agencies will have carefully planned and justified their expenditures.

Since enactment of the CCA, GAO has conducted a number of audits at specific agencies to review the status of compliance with various provisions, including progress in implementing information technology investment controls, information security, and the status and role of the agency CIOs. Approximately 31 reports detailing agency strengths and weaknesses have been completed. However, this report details, for the first time, a governmentwide outline of agency compliance efforts with the CCA.