

# **E-GOVERNMENT:**

**To Connect, Protect, and Serve Us**

*Conducted by*  
**Hart-Teeter**  
1724 Connecticut Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20009

*For*  
**The Council for Excellence in Government**

## With support from EDS

*Hart-Teeter conducted two surveys in November 2001, for the Council for Excellence in Government. The surveys were conducted by telephone, one among 961 adults nationwide, including an oversample of 155 Internet users, the other among 400 government decisionmakers, including 200 decisionmakers at the federal level, 100 in state government, and 100 in local governments at the city or county level. The margin of error is  $\pm 3.5\%$  for the national sample and higher for specific subgroups. This report summarizes the primary findings. The methodology is described in greater depth at the end of this report.*

### I. INTRODUCTION

One year ago e-government was a “revolution” in the making, but now the revolution appears to be going mainstream. E-government is expanding rapidly, particularly at the state and local levels of government. Over the past year alone, nearly one in ten Americans visited a state, county, or city government Web site for the first time. E-government has become an important part of how many Americans interact with government – most Internet users (76%) and over half (51%) of all Americans have now visited a government Web site. Americans are more positive about the idea of e-government, they have higher expectations for what e-government can accomplish, and they are increasingly willing to invest their tax dollars in e-government.

Since September 11<sup>th</sup>, the public sees additional reasons for investing in e-government. The threat of further terrorism has put domestic preparedness at the forefront of Americans’ consciousness and the public believes that e-government has a critical role to play. By improving communication and coordination between government agencies and federal, state, and local government, the public believes that e-government can enhance the government’s ability to apprehend terrorists and respond to public health threats.

This is not to say that the public is unconcerned or unquestioning about e-government. Americans continue to worry about the security of government Web sites, particularly the specter of government-stored personal information and ultimately their identity being stolen. They are less confident about making on-line monetary transactions with the government than they are with commercial entities. Many e-government users remain frustrated with the government’s ability to deliver

services that e-government is intended to improve. Finally, public opinion is divided on the proposal for national identification cards.

There are seven central findings that emerged from this research. These findings are summarized in the following section and described in greater depth in the body of the report. Each finding is an indication of how far e-government has come and where it might go next, and notably, the findings largely concern the limits of e-government, not its beginnings.

**1. The public believes that e-government will help in the war against terrorism.** A large majority (70%) of the public believes that e-government will improve the ability of agencies such as the FBI, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and local police departments to coordinate a response to a public emergency. Ninety percent say that they feel very or fairly favorable toward e-government systems that would help federal, state, and local law enforcement exchange information to help in apprehending and prosecuting criminals and terrorists. The public also is confident that e-government will greatly improve the government's ability to coordinate a response to a public health threat or bioterrorism attack (77%). Finally, mindful of the past few months' events, half (52%) of the public say that they are somewhat or much more likely to use an on-line government service than to go to an office or facility.

Most Americans are willing to sacrifice some of their on-line privacy if it helps in the fight against terrorism: 57% of both Americans and Internet users agree that Internet users should be willing to give up some privacy if it helps law enforcement officials to track down terrorists. Thirty-nine percent of both groups disagree, however, saying that the terrorists ultimately would win if we lost any of our civil liberties.

The public has mixed feelings about other measures that might boost security, such as national identification cards. While a slight plurality (47%) say that a national ID card would make electronic transactions more secure and would help in verifying people's identity in places such as airports or government offices, 44% say that a national ID card would be used to keep track of those who opt to obtain a card and that those without the card would have difficulty proving their identity and making certain transactions.



**2. The public feels more positive toward e-government and its increasingly important role in how the government interacts with citizens.** Americans see benefits of e-government beyond its contribution to homeland security and they are increasingly positive about the government's overall use of Internet and other information technologies. Today two in five (42%) adults say that they feel positive toward e-government compared with 35% who felt positive a year ago. They are more optimistic about e-government's effects on government operations, as 61% expect e-government to have a very or somewhat positive effect on the way that government operates compared with 56% who said so in August 2000. The public also puts a higher priority on government's investing tax dollars in making information and services available over the Internet, as the proportion saying that such investing should be a very high or a high priority has increased seven percentage points since 2000 (from 30% to 37%).

Although Internet use appears to have leveled off, e-government is growing as Internet use filters down from the federal level to state and local governments. Over the past year the proportion of Americans who have access to the Internet increased only slightly from 63% to 67% and Internet use has remained stable, as 77% of users now say that they use the Internet very or fairly regularly, compared with 75% in August 2000. Yet, in August 2000 only 28% of Americans said they had visited a state government Web site and only 23% had visited a local government Web site. Now 36% of Americans have visited a state government Web site and 28% have visited a local government Web site.

**3. The public continues to be concerned about security.** E-government is seen by many as vulnerable to intrusion and attack—64% of adults say that they are extremely concerned about hackers breaking into government computers. The level of concern about the security of e-government systems has changed little over the past year, as 66% said they were extremely concerned in 2000. Identity theft, in particular, is a big concern among Internet users: two-thirds (65%) say that they are extremely concerned about someone obtaining government-stored personal information and using it to steal their identity.

**4. The public continues to want a government that listens and is accountable to them.** Making government more accountable was Americans' biggest hope for e-government last year (36% most important result of e-government) and it remains their biggest hope today (30%). In fact, Americans' belief in e-government's ability to improve government accountability has grown stronger over the past year—62% now say that e-government will make government more accountable, compared with 54% who said so a year ago.

When asked about the most important way that e-government could improve government accountability, 29% say allowing citizens to communicate their opinions on major issues to officials quickly and easily, 21% say allowing citizens to tell government agencies about the information they need or problems they experience and 21% say giving the public more information about the government's policies and decisions. Most Americans (66%) say that it is very or fairly important that their tax dollars be invested in e-government that enables them to stay informed and voice their concerns and opinions to Congress.

**5. The public sees a range of e-government benefits.** The public believes that each of the three types of government applications—government-to-citizen (“G-to-C”), government-to-government (“G-to-G”), and government-to-business (“G-to-B”)—are important. A large majority (70%) of Americans say that it is very or fairly important that government invest tax dollars in methods of providing citizens with access to government information and services that are easier to use. Nearly as many (68%) say that it is important that government invest in ways to improve communication across government agencies and between federal, state, and local government. A smaller majority (62%) say that investing in e-government that helps businesses use government resources and meet regulations is an important use of their tax dollars.

**6. Government leaders recognize the benefits of e-government and are enthusiastic about the possibilities.** Government leaders already are seeing the benefits of e-government. More than three in four (78%) government decisionmakers say that e-government has had a somewhat or very positive effect on the way that government operates. Seeing the benefits, senior government

officials are putting a higher priority on e-government than they did a year ago and they are more likely to say that we should move quickly to develop e-government rather than slowly. Three in four (76%) officials think that investing tax dollars in making information and services available over the Internet should be a very high or high priority (69% in August 2000). The proportion of government officials saying that we should proceed quickly versus slowly in expanding e-government rose from 56% in 2000 to 62% today.

**7. The public draws the line at on-line voting.** A large majority (63%) of the public rejects the idea of allowing people to vote on-line for federal offices such as the presidency or Congress. Not only do 51% strongly oppose on-line voting, but support for this proposal has dropped five percentage points over the past year, from 38% in August 2000 to 33% today.

## II. RESEARCH FINDINGS

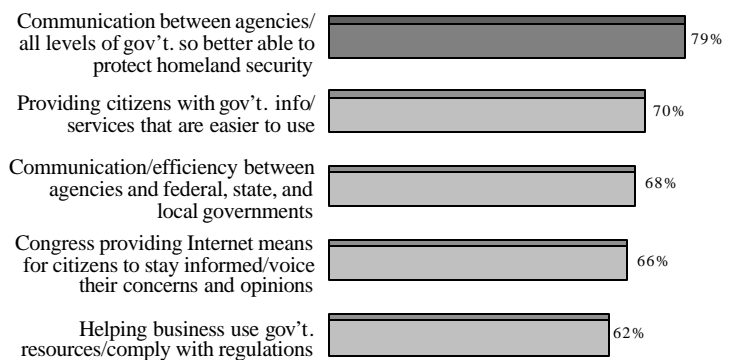
### **The public believes that e-government will contribute to the war against terrorism.**

Seven in ten (71%) Americans believe that e-government can improve the government’s ability to communicate across agencies, divisions, and federal, state, and local government. Seventy percent also believe that agencies such as the FBI, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and local police departments will be better able to coordinate a response to a public emergency. Only 24% of adults say that investing in e-government will require resources that could be better used elsewhere and that e-government would be vulnerable to attack.

E-government that contributes to homeland defense is a priority—79% of the public says that it is very

### **E-Government Has New Significance: Homeland Security**

*(% saying government’s investing in each e-government area is very/fairly important)*



important that government invest tax dollars in applications that improve communication between government agencies and federal, state, and local government so that government as a whole is better able to protect the nation. By comparison, 70% say that it is very important to invest in e-government that provides individual citizens with government information and services and 62% say that it is very important to invest in e-government that helps businesses use government resources and comply with government.

The public identifies at least three contributions that e-government can make to the fight against terrorism:

*1. Apprehending terrorists*

Americans strongly endorse e-government that would help law enforcement fight terrorism. Nine in ten (90%) adults say that they are very or fairly favorable toward e-government systems that would help federal, state, and local law enforcement exchange information to help apprehend and prosecute criminals and terrorists. They are confident that investing in e-government will enhance law enforcement—67% of all Americans say that e-government will improve the government’s ability to protect the public from terrorist attacks, including 72% of those with no Internet access and 64% of those who have some or very little confidence in the federal government.

**“For six months these terrorists were in Florida in a flight training school, and all their names were on one of those lists you just mentioned, and we didn’t even know they were there training to fly. If they had cross-communicated they might have been found out.”**  
—Internet user, Towson, MD

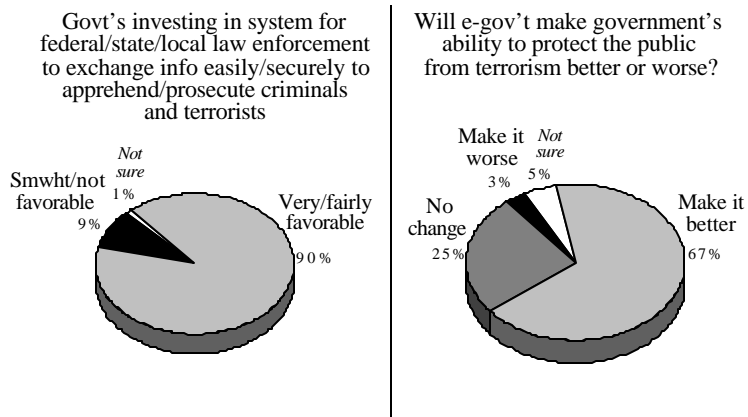


## 2. Responding to public health crises

The public's top priority for investing in e-government is expanding systems that will help government protect the health and safety of the public (81% top priority). Lower priorities for e-government include providing for defense and national security (77%) and informing and involving citizens in government (49%).

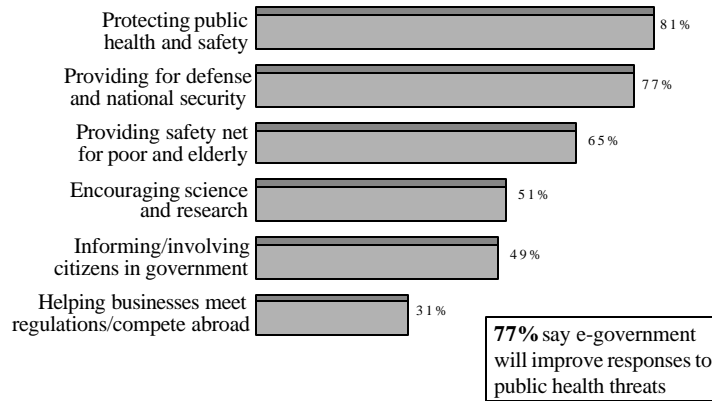
The public is confident that e-government will contribute to government's ability to respond to a bioterrorism attack (77% e-government will improve). Support for this kind of application is overwhelming—88% are very or fairly favorable toward a public health system that would allow local, state, and federal health authorities to exchange information and coordinate their activities.

### Public Sees E-Government Contributing to Fight Against Terrorism



## E-Government and Public Health

*(% saying each should be top priority of investment in e-government)*



### 3. *Providing health information and on-line services to the public*

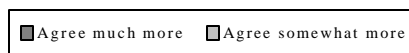
Finally, e-government can help to satisfy the demands of the public for information about threats. Two-thirds (67%) of Internet users say that they are very or fairly likely to look for on-line health information from agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Many of them indicate that they may use e-government more as a result of the past few months' events, half (52%) of the public say that they are somewhat or much more likely to use an on-line government service than to go to a government office or facility. College graduates (60%) and those who already use e-government (69%) are most likely to turn to use e-government as an alternative to visiting a government facility.

**Most Americans are willing to give up some privacy if doing so contributes to homeland security, but they are not certain that it is necessary to trade privacy for a secure Internet.**

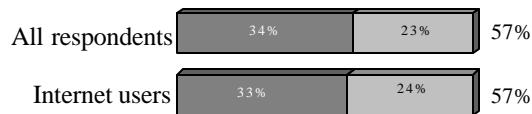
Nearly three in five Americans (57%) and Internet users (57%) say that it is worth giving up a little on-line privacy if it helps law-enforcement officials track down terrorists. Thirty-nine percent of both groups disagree, however, saying that the terrorists ultimately would win if we lost any of our civil liberties.

Almost every segment of the public, including 18- to 34-year-olds (55%), adults 65 and over (55%), Democrats (59%), Republicans (66%), whites (57%) and African Americans (58%) say that a loss of privacy is a price they are willing to pay. The only group among whom a plurality is reluctant to give up any on-line privacy is independents, who, by 49% to 44%, say that on-line privacy and civil liberties should be remain sacrosanct.

### Majorities Support Loss of Privacy If It Helps in Effort Against Terrorism



Internet users should be willing to give up a little privacy of on-line communications so law enforcement better able to track down terrorists:



Internet users should NOT be willing to give up any privacy of on-line communications because terrorists win if privacy/civil liberties are lost:



The public is not sure, however, whether securing the Internet against illegal activities requires that Internet users lose some of their privacy. While 49% of the public say that the Internet cannot be secured against illegal activities without a loss of privacy, 44% believe that the government can secure the Internet against hackers, terrorists, or other criminals without having to compromise on-line privacy.

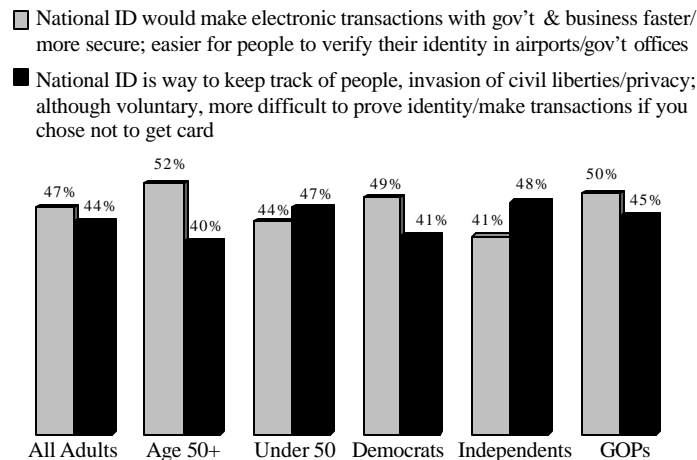
Among Internet users, 51% say that the Internet cannot be secured against illegal activities without their losing some privacy while 43% believe that the Internet can be secured at no cost to their privacy.

Men and women differ on this issue. Men, by a 57% to 39% margin, say that security comes at a price. Women, on the other hand, are more likely to say that the Internet can be secure and private at the same time (by a 49% to 41% margin).

**Opinion is divided on national identification cards.**

The public has mixed feelings about national identification cards, even if the ID cards would help make travel or electronic transactions more secure. A slight plurality of 47% say that a national ID card would make electronic transactions more secure and would help people verify their identity in places such as airports or government offices, but 44% say that a national ID card would be used to keep track of those who opt to obtain a card and that those without the card would have difficulty proving their identity and making certain transactions.

### Public Has Mixed Feelings About National ID Cards



Several factors appear to be important in determining support for the national ID card, including age and party affiliation: 52% of those age 50 and over and only 44% of adults under 50 support a national ID card, as do 50% of Republicans and 49% of Democrats, while only 41% of independents are for it.

### The public is increasingly positive toward e-government.

Overall, the public’s concerns about e-government are receding as they begin to see the potential in government’s using the Internet and other information technologies. Two in five (42%) Americans say that they feel positive toward e-government, compared with 35% who felt that way a year ago. Likewise, 61% of Americans expect e-government to have a very or somewhat positive effect on the way that government operates compared to 56% a year ago. More Americans put a high priority on government’s investing tax dollars in making information and services available over the Internet, as the proportion saying that such investing should be a very high or a high priority has increased seven

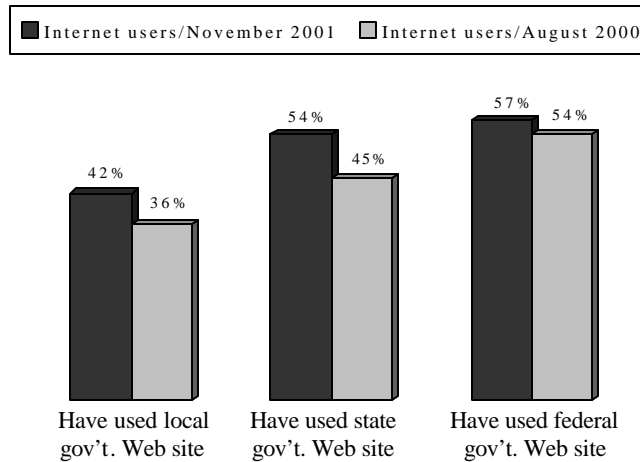
percentage points since 2000, from 30% to 37%. Meanwhile, the proportion of skeptics who put a low priority on e-government has dropped from 30% to 19% of the American public.

**E-Government is playing an increasingly important role in how government interacts with citizens.**

Even while the level of access to the Internet and use of the World Wide Web has remained relatively constant, Americans are increasingly using e-government services. Over the past year the proportion of Americans who have access to the Internet increased only slightly from 63% to 67%, and their self-reported Internet use has remained stable, as 77% of users now say that they use the Internet very or fairly regularly, compared with 75% in August 2000. Yet, in August 2000 only 28% of Americans said they had visited a state government Web site and only 23% had visited a local government Web site. Now 36% of Americans have visited a state government Web site, and 28% have visited a local government Web site.

E-government is expanding beyond the early centers of technological development. Regions of the country that were behind in e-government use last year are rapidly catching up to early users. While Westerners led the nation in use of state-level e-government in August 2000 (51% of Internet users), their level of use has remained stable over the past year (50%). Use of state e-government has increased sharply in other areas, particularly in the Northeast (39% to 54%) and Midwest (40% to 53%).

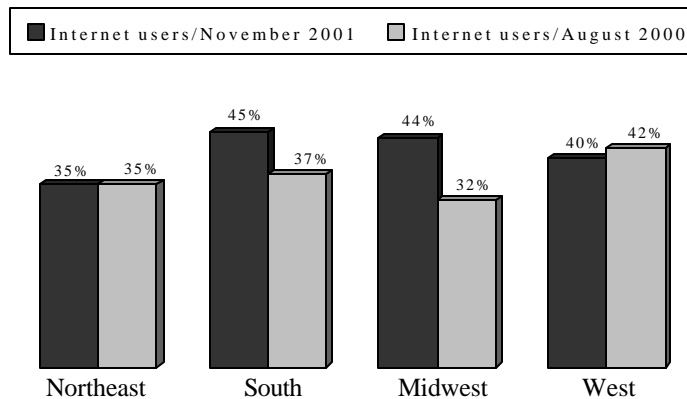
## Use of E-Government Has Increased



Similarly, use of local government Web sites in the West remained relatively stable over the past year (42% to 40%) while increasing significantly in the Midwest (32% to 44%) and the South (37% to 45%). In fact, the South now leads the country in e-government use at the state (59%) and local levels (45%).

## Local E-Government Growing Rapidly in Midwest and South

*Have used local government Web site*



Segments of the public that initially were slower to use state and local e-government have also increased their use of state and local government Web sites. Among adults age 65 and over, use of state level government Web sites more than doubled (from 25% to 54%) while their use of local e-government increased 11 points (from 29% to 40%). Internet users with a high school education or less

also increased their use of local e-government (from 27% to 36%) and state e-government (from 29% to 44%).

### E-government users are satisfied.

Americans across the country are pleased with existing e-government. More than four in five (86%) of those who have visited a federal agency Web site say that the site was helpful. Similarly, 85% of visitors to state government sites and 79% of local e-government visitors say that the sites were helpful.

The vast majority of e-government consumers believe that the information they find on government Web sites is

reliable. Seventy-

eight percent of

those who have visited a government Web site say that most of the information available on-line from the government is very or somewhat reliable. Regular users of government sites put even more trust in on-line

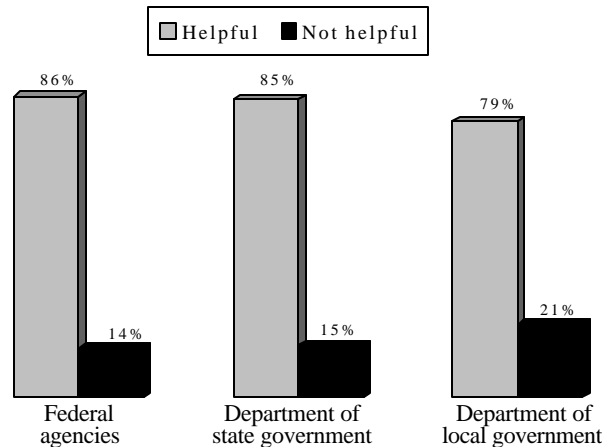
government information, with 92% saying that most of the information is very or somewhat reliable.

**"I like [it] at tax time . . . because you can print out every form you need and you don't need to run down to the library or Post Office and go, 'they're out of it'."  
-Internet user, Towson, MD**

**"It was more generalized information at first. Now it's targeting more toward things that you really can benefit from. Which makes it much easier than picking up the phone and trying to get the information that you need."  
-Internet user, Towson, MD**

### E-Government Seen as Helpful

*"Were the Web sites you visited helpful or not helpful?"*



**Internet users remain concerned about the security of e-government.**

Government Web sites are viewed as being safer in several respects than private sector Web sites, but the public continues to be concerned about the security of e-government systems. Nearly twice as many Internet users say that health information obtained from a government Web site is safe (56% very or fairly safe) than say that the health information obtained from the Web sites of private companies is safe (31%). People also feel more comfortable submitting personal information to a government Web site (45%) than to a business Web site (38%). Yet, the public also believes that e-government should be developed slowly rather than quickly so that the issue of security can be addressed; and this view has changed little over the past year. In 2000, 65% of the public said that the country should proceed slowly in relying on the Internet for communication between citizens and government, while only 30% said we should proceed quickly. Now, 62% say slowly and 34% say quickly.

The public's concern about the security of e-government may hinder acceptance of some e-government applications, particularly those involving on-line monetary transactions.



1. *Concern about security and government Web sites*

While the proportion saying that they are extremely concerned about hackers breaking into government computers decreased from 66% to 64%, a large majority of adults continue to see e-government as being vulnerable to intrusion and attack. The public's leading concern is identity theft, as 65% are extremely concerned about someone obtaining government-stored personal information and using it to steal their identity.

"I'm not afraid of ordering. I'm not afraid of them overcharging me because the credit card companies will protect you. My concern is that someone . . . wants the information either to ruin my credit, which is very valuable, or to use it for identity theft."

–Internet user, Towson, MD

2. *People are unsure about making on-line monetary transactions with the government.*

Only a third (35%) of Internet users say that it is fairly or very safe to pay a ticket or a fine with a credit card on a government Web site (18% say this is just somewhat safe) while 29% say that doing so is not at all safe. This is despite the fact that the Internet is increasingly perceived as a safe environment for purchasing—45% of Internet users now say that it is very or fairly safe to buy things over the Internet, compared with only 36% who said the same thing in August 2000. In fact, when Internet users are asked about using a credit card at a secure Web site, half (50%) say that it is very or fairly safe. Of course, many Internet users may not have had a chance to pay a ticket or a fine at a government Web site—nearly one in five (18%) Internet users say that they are not sure whether using a credit card at a government Web site would be safe.

**September 11 renewed Americans' trust in government**

It has been widely reported that the events of September 11 and the ongoing war on terrorism have boosted the public's confidence in government. This study's findings echo those reports. Compared with 26% of the public a year ago, nearly half (46%) of Americans now say that they have a great deal or quite a lot of confidence in the federal government. Half of Americans also say that they trust government to do what is right at least most of the time—an increase of 20 percentage points from a year ago. Finally, the public believes that government does more to help families achieve the American dream (54%) than it does to hinder them (34%).

The renewal in public trust has been dramatic both in its size and its scope. Confidence in the federal government has increased among all demographic groups and in every region in the country—the proportion saying that they have some or a great deal of confidence in the federal government increased 20 points among men (to 44%), 20 points among women (to 48%), 23 points in the Northeast (to 50%), 23 points in the South (to 50%), 20 points in the Midwest (to 44%), and 16 points in the West (to 40%). Confidence in the federal government has increased most dramatically among 18- to 34-year-olds, among whom confidence more than doubled (from 25% to 51%), registered Republicans (22% to 53%), and independents (18% to 46%).

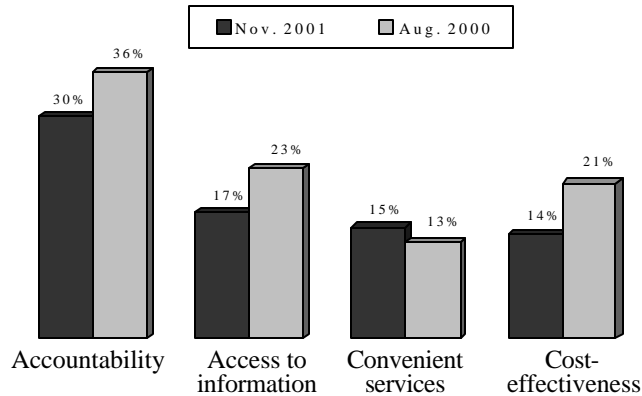
This dramatic increase in public confidence also applies to state and local government, albeit to a lesser extent. In August 2000, 30% of Americans said that they had a great deal or a lot of confidence in state government and 31% said the same about local or community government, currently it is 41% and 40% respectively.

### **Americans want government that listens and is accountable to them.**

The public's biggest hope for e-government a year ago was that it make government more accountable, and this remains the public's biggest hope today, and even after September 11—36% of Americans a year ago and 30% today say that a more accountable government would be the most important result of e-government. When asked about the most important way that e-government could improve government accountability, 29% say allowing citizens to communicate their opinions on major issues to officials quickly and easily, 21% say allowing citizens to tell government agencies about the information they need or problems they experience and 21% say giving the public more information about the government's policies and decisions.

## Accountability of Government Remains Top Priority

Most Important Result of E-Government



A 62% majority of the public believes e-government is capable of producing a more accountable government. This belief is shared by majorities of those with access to the Internet (64%) and those without access (57%) and it is an increase over last year when only 54% of Americans said the same thing. The belief in the efficacy of e-government for improving the accountability of government has grown significantly among women (from 53% in August 2000 to 66% today), among those in the Northeast and Midwest (56% and 53% to 67% and 65% respectively) and among younger Americans under age 50 (56% to 66%).

Most Americans believe that it is important that their tax-dollar investments in e-government contribute to the government's accountability—66% say that it is very or fairly important that their tax dollars be invested in e-government that enables them to stay informed and voice their concerns and opinions to Congress.

**"E-mailing congressmen if there's something going on. Like the Memorial Stadium thing is a big deal. So that's available to just e-mail them and express opinions. I think that's what I use [Government Web sites] for most."**  
**—Internet user, Towson, MD**

Notably, even those who view e-government with a degree of skepticism do not believe that e-government will make things worse. For example, nearly one in five (22%) Americans say that e-government will not improve the government's ability to keep the public informed, but only 5% say that e-government will lead to the public's being less informed.

### **The public sees a range of benefits from investment in e-government.**

The public see e-government can make a number of contributions beyond reconnecting citizens to government. E-government applications designed to improve communications can be broken down into government-to-citizen (“G-to-C”), government-to-government (“G-to-G”), and government-to-business (“G-to-B”) and majorities of the public believe that each of these is an important investment. Seventy percent say that it is very or fairly important that government invest tax dollars into methods of providing individual citizens with government information and services that are easier to use. Nearly as many (68%) say that it is important that government invest in ways to improve communication across government agencies and between federal, state, and local government. A smaller majority (62%) say that e-government that helps businesses use government resources and meet regulations is an important investment of their tax dollars.

The public considers these investments worthwhile because it believes in the efficacy of e-government applications—69% of the public say that e-government will enhance the government’s ability to keep the public informed, 60% say that it will improve the government’s ability to involve the public in decisions regarding national policy, and 71% say e-government will improve the level of coordination between local, state, and federal government for the better.

### **Ease of use should be a priority.**

In addition to addressing the public’s concerns about security, government must make its Web sites easier to use. When the public is asked what government’s top priority should be for its Web sites, 28% say making them easier to use and understand, 25% say that government Web sites should be made more secure for conducting business, and 17% say that they should be expanded to include more information and services. Among regular visitors to government Web sites, 33% say that government’s top priority should be making them easier to use, 22% say security, and 20% say that government needs to expand the range of information and services it offers. In fact, just under half (45%) of Internet users who have visited a government Web site say that they are very or somewhat frustrated with the government’s ability to make forms for things such as student aid, disaster relief, and income taxes easy to find, complete, and submit. While people who are frustrated with the traditional process of filing a government form may be looking to e-government as an easier alternative, many Internet users could be

frustrated with what they are finding on-line. Notably, only 35% of Internet users who have never visited a government Web site express the same level of frustration and presumably they are completing government forms the old-fashioned way.

### **The public draws the line at online voting.**

While the public believes that it is important to invest in a range of e-government applications, it draws the line at voting on-line. A large majority (63%) of the public rejects the idea of allowing people to vote on-line for federal offices such as the presidency or Congress. In fact, 51% *strongly* oppose this proposal and overall support for on-line voting dropped by five percentage points over the past year, from 38% to 33%.

### **Government leaders agree with the public on the priorities for e-government but they want to proceed in expanding e-government more quickly than does the public.**

Government officials share the public's goals and belief in e-government as far as homeland security. Government officials' top e-government priority is protecting public health and safety (96%), followed by national defense (90%) and informing and involving citizens in government (68%). Government leaders cite e-government that improves communication between government agencies and federal, state, and local government as being very important (72%) more often than e-government that provides individual citizens with government information and services that are easier to use (66%), or e-government that helps businesses use government resources and comply with government regulations (54%).

Many officials also agree with the public and say that government can do a better job with e-government. For the most part, officials also agree with the public on the priorities for improving government Web sites. Only 27% of the officials interviewed say that their agency or division is doing an excellent job at using the Internet to improve the efficiency and quality of government services, while 51% say that they are doing a good job, and 15% say that they are just doing a fair job. Nearly a third of officials, 30%, say that their top priority should be making the sites easier to use, 27% say that they should be expanded to include more information and services, and 23% say that they should be made more secure

Senior government officials, however, want to move more quickly than the public does in expanding e-government. A majority (62%) of the officials interviewed say that e-government should be developed quickly, compared with only 34% of the public.

**Government leaders already see the benefits of e-government.**

One reason why government officials may want to move more quickly is that officials are already seeing the benefits and they expect even greater returns. Seventy-eight percent of government decisionmakers say that e-government has had a somewhat or very positive effect on the way that government operates. Nearly all decisionmakers (91%) also say that e-government will continue to positively transform the way government works over the next five to ten years. Last year, 56% of the officials interviewed said that we should proceed quickly in expanding e-government, now it is 62%.

Government officials are putting a higher priority on e-government. Three in four (76%) officials say that investing tax dollars into making information and services available over the Internet should be a very high or high priority, compared with 69% who said the same thing in August 2000.

**Local and state governments are investing in e-government and senior officials are getting involved.**

Nearly all (93%) state officials say that their agency or division has made significant changes or additions to their sites over the past year. Local government is moving a little slower than state level government, but the vast majority (79%) of local government officials also say that they have made significant additions to their sites.

Together, state and local e-government now offer a more diverse set of services than they did in 2000, including feedback mechanisms, search engines, and documents (as indicated in the following table). In fact, state and local governments, for the most part, have erased the early lead of the federal government in developing e-government.

<b>GOVERNMENT IS DEVELOPING ITS ON-LINE SERVICES</b>			
<b>State/Local Government</b>		<b>Federal Government</b>	
<b><u>2000*</u></b>	<b><u>2001</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	<b><u>2001</u></b>

<b>Documents</b>	70	89	+19	96	93	-3
<b>Links to other Gov't sites</b>	-	89	-	-	82	-
<b>Feedback mechanism</b>	58	83	+25	69	76	+7
<b>Calendar/Event Info</b>	69	77	+8	75	78	+3
<b>Search Engine</b>	45	69	+24	69	78	+9
<b>Constituent Services</b>	70	77	+7	63	66	+3
<b>Web-based service apps</b>	-	53	-	-	50	-
<i>*75 state and local government officials were interviewed in the August 2000 study.</i>						

Higher-level government decisionmakers may also be paying more attention to the e-government efforts of their agency or division. In August 2000, only 48% of senior government officials said that they were very or fairly involved in developing or managing e-government in their agency or division. Now 57% of officials say that they are that involved in e-government.

**Government leaders may be facing budgetary constraints.**

While 83% of the officials interviewed say that their agency or division is likely to increase the amount of resources it devotes to e-government over the next year, they increasingly cite a lack of financial resources as a barrier to the development of e-government. In August 2000, 37% said that security issues were the biggest barrier to developing e-government and 26% cited a lack of financial resources. Now 44% of those interviewed say that a lack of financial resources is the biggest barrier and 28% say security issues.

**III. METHODOLOGY**

This study on e-government was conducted by the research firms of Peter D. Hart and Robert M. Teeter for the Council for Excellence in Government. The study comprised four parts: 1) a survey among a representative cross section of 806 adults with an additional oversample of 155 Internet users nationwide; 3) a survey among 400 government officials in federal, state, and local government; and 4) a focus group among Internet users. This research explored all three populations' direct experience with and involvement in e-government, as well as their expectations of and goals for e-government.

### 1) Public Survey

Hart-Teeter conducted a survey among 806 randomly selected adults and an additional 155 Internet users in the United States, from November 12 to 19, 2001. The survey was conducted by telephone using the random-digit-dial (RDD) sampling technique while stratifying by geographic area to ensure a nationally representative sample. The data were weighted in line with the demographic makeup of the U.S. population. The margin of error (MOE) for results among all adults is  $\pm 3.5\%$ .

### 2) Government Officials

For the survey among government officials, Hart-Teeter drew a random sample of government officials from the Leadership Library database, which includes the Yellow Books for federal, state, and municipal government. The sample was stratified by government level: federal, state, and local. Hart-Teeter conducted telephone interviews among 200 officials in the federal government (randomly selected from the 70 or more federal agencies), 100 state government officials, and 100 local officials in city and county governments across the country from November 5 to 20, 2001. Respondents' titles are indicated in the following table.

<b>TITLES OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN SAMPLE</b>	
	<b>Proportion of Sample (N=150) %</b>
Director	40
Chief	13
Manager	9
Deputy	9
All other	29

### 3) Focus Group

Hart-Teeter concluded the study by convening a focus group in Towson, Maryland, a suburb of Baltimore, with male and female Internet users of different ages and ethnicities. The focus group was



used to qualitatively explore the survey findings and gaining additional insights into people's use and perception of e-government.