



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

THE DIRECTOR

August 9, 2006

Elias A. Zerhouni, M.D.
Director
National Institutes of Health
Building 1, Room 126, One Center Drive
Bethesda, Maryland 20892

Dear Dr. Zerhouni:

This letter is in response to your agency's June 19, 2006 request for an extension of the July 5, 2005 designation granted by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to serve as an executive agent for government-wide acquisition of information technology services and products under the Chief Information Officer-Solutions and Partners 2 *Innovations* contract, the Image World 2 *New Dimensions* contract, the Electronic Commodities Store III contract. OMB is extending the July 5, 2005 designation for these government-wide acquisition contracts (GWACs). The designation for each GWAC shall remain in effect until the end of the contract period for that GWAC, including any options, unless the designation is otherwise modified by OMB. The GWACs are subject to existing designation terms and annual reporting requirements. OMB will review the annual reports to ensure the GWACs are producing effective results and work with NIH if any improvements are needed.

The effective management and strategic use of GWACs and other interagency contracts is a priority for OMB's Office of Federal Procurement Policy (OFPP). OFPP is developing guidance to clarify the roles and responsibilities of contract managers and their customers. OFPP is also reviewing how the governance structure for creating and renewing interagency contracts can be improved and will carefully consider the forthcoming recommendations on this issue made by the Acquisition Advisory Panel established under section 1423 of the Services Acquisition Reform Act. OMB appreciates NIH's support of these efforts and will look to the Department of Health and Human Services and the other executive agents to serve as role models as improvements are developed and implemented.

OMB looks forward to working with you and the other executive agents to ensure that GWACs are providing cost-effective, quality results for our taxpayers.

Sincerely,

Rob Portman