

June 21, 2017

The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Claire McCaskill
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member McCaskill:

On behalf of the over 400 member companies of the Professional Services Council (PSC), I write to express our support for the Modernizing Government Technology Act of 2017 (“MGT Act,” S. 990 / H.R. 2227) and urge you to mark up this bipartisan legislation as soon as possible.

The United States is a world leader in innovation, but our government lags behind commercial best practices when it comes to harnessing new technologies to reduce costs and improve performance. The federal government spends more than \$80 billion each year on major information technology (IT) systems. Yet most of that spending is on maintaining existing IT rather than investing in development, modernization and enhancement activities. According to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), the use of outdated software languages and hardware parts that are unsupported increases federal agencies’ vulnerability to cyberattacks. The recent WannaCry ransomware attack that infected 230,000 computers in 150 countries within a day highlights the importance of modernizing vulnerable IT systems.

The MGT Act will help replace aging “legacy” IT systems and reduce cybersecurity risks across the federal government. The MGT Act encourages the transition to modern technologies like cloud computing by allowing major federal agencies to set up IT working capital funds that provide greater flexibility. The bill also authorizes a centralized Technology Modernization Fund administered by the General Services Administration (GSA)¹ to support the modernization of IT systems across the federal government. A Technology Modernization Board will evaluate and make recommendations for proposals submitted by agencies and also help identify opportunities

¹ PSC would support a technical amendment at mark up to designate the GSA Administrator, rather than the Commissioner of the GSA Technology Transformation Service, as the administrator of the Fund.

to replace multiple information technology systems with common platforms that can meet the needs of multiple agencies.

Senators Moran, Udall, Daines, and Warner introduced S. 990, and the full House of Representatives approved H.R. 2227 by voice vote on May 17, 2017. The Administration supports the bill, and the President's fiscal year 2018 budget request includes funding for the IT modernization fund envisioned by the MGT Act. This bicameral, bipartisan legislative effort builds on the enactment of the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act (FITARA, P.L. 113-291) and will continue progress toward making government more effective and its networks more secure, while reducing overall costs.

Accordingly, PSC urges the Committee to act expeditiously to move the MGT Act forward and respectfully request a meeting with you or your designee from the Committee staff to discuss how we can work together to help to advance this legislation.

Thank you for your leadership and attention to this important issue. If you or your colleagues have any questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David J. Berteau". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

David J. Berteau
President and CEO