

Media (/media/) | Majority News (/media/majority-news/)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2007

GAO IDENTIFIES GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AT HIGH RISK FOR WASTE, FRAUD, ABUSE & MISMANAGEMENT

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) today released its 2007 High Risk List, which identifies federal programs and operations that it considers at high risk for vulnerabilities to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement. The High Risk List serves as a guide for Congress and the Administration to address major economy, efficiency, or effectiveness challenges in government operations. GAO released its report today during a press conference held by Senators Joseph Lieberman (D-CT) and Susan Collins (R-ME), the Chairman and Ranking member, respectively, of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

“It concerns me that some agencies are persistent perennials on GAO’s high risk list, such as DOD’s contract management and financial management, protecting the nation’s critical infrastructures and information systems, and managing federal real property,” said Senator Collins.

Senator Collins announced she is writing legislation to reform contracting laws, which will address a number of the problems identified by GAO.

“My legislation will address problems in the federal contracting process, help protect against waste, fraud, and abuse, and create strong safeguards to ensure that taxpayer dollars are being spent wisely,” said Senator Collins. The legislation will focus on priorities such as increasing competition in government contracting, institutionalizing certain Hurricane Katrina-related emergency management contracting reforms, preventing contracting problems that have arisen in U.S. Government contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan, and improving the recruitment and retention of the acquisition workforce. Senator Collins will also focus her oversight attention on contracting by the Department of Defense.

One government operation that was taken off the High Risk List this year is the U.S Postal Service. GAO credited the Collins-Carper postal reform legislation, which was signed into law in December 2006, with solving many of the problems that had placed the Postal Service on the list in years past.

Program areas that remain on the High Risk List include: Implementing and Transforming the Department of Homeland Security, Protecting the Federal Government’s Information Systems and the Nation’s Critical Infrastructures, Establishing Appropriate and Effective Information-Sharing Mechanisms to Improve Homeland Security, Managing Federal Contracting More Effectively, Managing Federal Real Property, Personnel Security Clearance Program, and Strategic Human Capital Management. Government operations that were added to the High Risk List this year included: Financing the Nation’s Transportation Systems, Protecting the Nation’s Technologies Overseas, Food Safety Oversight, and the National Flood Insurance Program.