



David McClure (X)
Associate Administrator
Citizen Services and Innovative Technologies
1800 F Street NW 2152C
Washington DC 20405-001

May 5, 2014

Subject: 18F

Dear David:

The Coalition for Government Procurement (the Coalition) is a trade association comprised of commercial firms from across multiple industry sectors. Our members collectively account for approximately 70 percent of the sales under GSA's GSA Multiple Award Schedule program and about half the commercial solution purchased annually by the Federal Government. Our members include firms who participate in on information technology contracts across the federal enterprise, including GSA's, NASA's and NIH's IT GWAC contract programs.

The Coalition welcomes GSA's efforts to innovate information delivery for the Federal Government. As we understand it, "18F" will serve as a center for groundbreaking approaches to the delivery of digital services that support efficient and effective government interaction with the American people and American businesses. We are hopeful that "18F" will provide an opportunity to spark innovation across the Federal Government that will reduce barriers to entry and transactional costs for commercial firms seeking to do business in the federal market place.

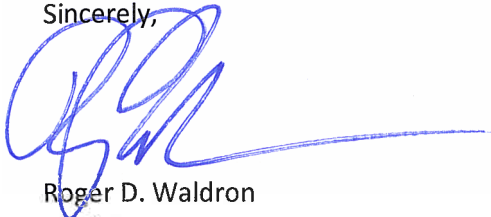
As you know, the Coalition supports improving requirements development and streamlining the acquisition process as the keys to delivering best value outcomes for customer agencies and the American people. The Coalition and its members are also strong supporters of the fundamental operating principles that make our federal procurement system the best world: (1) Full and open competition; (2) Transparency; (3) Accountability; and (4) Fairness. As President Obama stated in his March 4, 2009 Memorandum on Government Contracting, when the Federal Government awards contracts it "must strive for an open and competitive process." We are confident that to the extent "18F" seeks to acquire or otherwise utilize tools from the commercial or open market, it will employ procurement practices consistent with this underlying procurement principle.

We believe that the Government should make its acquisition decisions in an open and transparent manner, consistent with national security needs, to obtain the best solutions and to avoid appearances of favoritism and technology pre-selection. Moreover, consistent with Office of Management and Budget guidance, we believe agencies must continue to make technology-neutral decisions on IT and use voluntary, consensus-based industry standards to the maximum extent practicable. Public service through the performance of a Government contract is a valuable privilege that should be conferred only through a fair, open, and transparent process.

Finally, at the commencement of an acquisition of a system or capability, the Government should understand the existence of any fees, costs, or charges attendant to that acquisition in order to protect the Government's financial interests and to avoid violations of appropriations laws. The Government should assess costs of a technology or a system over time, rather than focus solely on upfront acquisition costs (price alone). The time and resources to maintain technology or a system substantially may exceed the upfront acquisition costs.

We look forward to working with you and "18F" toward our common goal of best value mission support for customer agencies and the American people. I will be reaching out to your office to invite the 18F management team to speak to our members regarding the vision, goals and operating principles of 18F.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RW', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Roger D. Waldron
President

Cc: Jeffrey Koses
Senior Procurement Executive
General Services Administration