



## MEDIA ALERT

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### Open Government Groups Release Agency Evaluation Plans for Comment

**Washington, DC, September 21, 2010**— The public has the opportunity to comment on a new proposal to evaluate the openness of federal agencies through October 4. The proposal, which is posted for comment here: <http://bit.ly/ogov-feedback>, is the product of a project by OpenTheGovernment.org to evaluate the Obama Administration's Open Government Initiative.

According to **Patrice McDermott, Director of OpenTheGovernment.org**, "Since the President committed on his first full day in office to have the most open Administration in history, we have been anxious to see how that message would be received by the agencies. Thus far, we have been impressed with the resources agencies have devoted to creating and updating open government plans, and we look forward to evaluating how and if that energy has translated into -more openness and accountability in the agencies and across the government."

Development of the evaluation was led by faculty from the Armstrong Institute for Interactive Media Studies at Miami University of Ohio and the Center for Library and Information Innovation at the University of Maryland. The evaluation framework measures each agency examined according to the availability of information identified by the nongovernment openness community as critical for accountability, progress in implementation of the agency's open government plan, and the accessibility of information on the agency's website.

"We welcome feedback from anyone with an interest in making sure our government is open and accountable, including agency personnel, Administration officials, good government advocates, and others," Dr. McDermott said. "We will consider and respond to the relevant feedback we receive."

OpenTheGovernment.org's project was launched with an audit of the Open Government Plans agencies were required to develop by April 7, 2010, under the [Open Government Directive \(OGD\)](#). [Initial results](#) of the audit were released in May, and [updated results](#) were released at the end of June. To complete the evaluations, OpenTheGovernment.org relies on a group of volunteers with experience working with agencies and evaluating information policies from nonprofit groups, academia, and other organizations that serve the public interest.

**Participating Organizations:** American Association of Law Libraries, American Library Association, faculty at the Armstrong Institute for Interactive Media Studies at Miami University of Ohio, Center for Democracy and Technology, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington, OMB Watch, OpenTheGovernment.org, POGO (Project On Government Oversight), Sunlight Foundation, Union of Concerned Scientists, faculty and students at the University of Maryland College of Information Studies, and volunteer Giovanni Piazza, Digital Strategist and Knowledge Executive.

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OpenTheGovernment.org is a coalition transcending party lines of more than 70 consumer and good government groups, librarians, environmentalists, labor, journalists, and others - focused on pushing back governmental secrecy and promoting openness.