

TOPICS

[NEWS HEADLINES](#)[PAY AND
BENEFITS](#)[RETIREMENT](#)[TELEWORK](#)[PER DIEMS AND
TRAVEL](#)[NSPS](#)[ENERGY](#)[GREEN](#)[GOVERNMENT](#)[FISCAL 2010
BUDGET](#)[THE BASICS](#)[THE MAILBAG](#)[GOVEXEC ON
TWITTER](#)

Administration announces finalists in cost-cutting contest

By Emily Long | elong@govexec.com | November 8, 2010

Obama administration officials on Monday announced the finalists in a contest asking federal employees to share their ideas for curbing unnecessary government spending.

The Securing Americans' Value and Efficiency award, now in its second year, was created to help federal agencies perform better and save taxpayers money. The winner will earn a meeting with President Obama, and his or her proposal will be included in the fiscal 2012 budget.

Federal employees this year submitted more than 18,000 cost-cutting ideas. While in 2009 Office of Management and Budget staff reviewed the proposals, the 2010 contest rules allowed employees to rank the submissions, after which administration officials narrowed the list to these four finalists:

- Advertise property seized by Customs and Border Protection online rather than in newspapers (from Paul Behe, Homeland Security Department, Ohio);
- End automatic delivery of *Federal Register* hard copies to employees and instead require recipients to opt in (from Trudy Givens, Bureau of Prisons, Wisconsin);
- Use regular ground shipping, rather than express service, to return empty lab sample containers to the Agriculture Department's Food Safety and Inspection Service (from Marjorie Cook, Agriculture Department, Michigan);
- Require mine operators to complete quarterly data reports online, rather than on mailed paper forms (from Thomas Koenning, Mine Safety and Health Administration, Colorado).

The public can view and vote on the finalists at SaveAward.gov.

"Make no mistake: the SAVE Award will not balance the budget," [OMB](#) Acting Director Jeffrey Zients wrote in a blog post. "But cutting waste and restoring accountability for taxpayer dollars is important if the budget is in surplus or in deficit."

In its inaugural year, SAVE generated more than 38,000 cost-cutting proposals from federal employees in just three weeks. Though 20 proposals were included in the fiscal 2011 budget, OMB estimates that the winning idea -- letting veterans take home medications that otherwise would have been thrown away after their release from the hospital -- will save \$14.5 million through 2014.

[E-MAIL THIS ARTICLE](#)[PRINTER-FRIENDLY VERSION](#)[COMMENT ON THIS STORY](#)

RELATED STORIES

White House kicks off second cost-cutting contest 07/08/10

Interior plan reduces travel, IT spending 02/01/10

Veterans Affairs employee wins cost-cutting contest 12/11/09

Administration announces finalists in cost-cutting contest 12/07/09

TODAY'S MOST POPULAR

[E-MAILED](#) [READ](#)

1. **Fiscal panel chairs propose three-year civilian pay freeze, hiring slowdown**
2. **Federal workers' pay soars, analysis finds**
3. **Amid changes on Capitol Hill, Postal Service faces uncertain future**
4. **Likely House majority leader calls for hiring freeze**
5. **Survivor Support**

[COMMENTS](#)

[VIEW ALL 35 COMMENTS](#) | [POST COMMENT](#)

These comments suggest the idea was good, but poorly implemented. So let's change the rules, do it again and implement. All doable and non-doable suggestions should be made available for viewing along with evaluations.

Edward Graham | Posted November 11, 2010 | 10:25 AM

Make all the great recommendations you want this about destroying Social Programs and allowing big business/Defense to continue to suck the treasury dry into bankruptcy so they can start again.

dahhuh | Posted November 11, 2010 | 8:44 AM

It would be more cost effective to make changes to travel policies, specifically airfare. For example, take a trip from Pittsburgh to Washington, DC. Driving: 5 hours drive each way, \$280 for a week (Monday - Friday) Flying, Gov't contract airfare: \$1,200 Flying, commercial prices: \$250 The government is willing to pay the \$1,200, and in fact, it is encouraged as it is the "preferred" method of travel. We are supposed to take the cheapest method, but employees are allowed to take a more expensive method if they want. I don't like driving, but it's irresponsible to fly when you can drive for so much less money. The finalists suggestions don't apply to a majority of Gov't agencies, how are they supposed to save money across the board?

DoD Employee | Posted November 10, 2010 | 11:23 AM

[VIEW ALL 35 COMMENTS](#)

Advancing the business of government through analysis, insight and the sharing of best practices.

SPONSORED RESEARCH

Can DoD Be More Collaborative Without Jeopardizing Security? ADOBE

The Challenges of Implementing Sustainability in the Federal Government DELOITTE

Cybersecurity Habits in Federal Agencies: An Assessment of User Responsibility DELL, CITRIX, MICROSOFT and INTEL

Is Cybersecurity Slowing Federal Executives Down? CITRIX in partnership with INTEL

From the Bottom Up: Advice for the Chiefs SYMANTEC and CA

COOP Planning at Your Agency: Keep Systems Running During Disaster CDW-G and EMC

Advancing IT Innovation in Federal Agencies DLT and REDHAT

SPONSORED LINKS

\$14B in Fed Opps for Small Businesses

Free Download: INPUT's Top 10 Federal SMB Set-Aside Opportunities for FY 2011
www.INPUT.com

Defense Contracts Dominate 2011 Opps

Maximize Your Market Position-Free Download Of Top 20 Fed Business Opportunities
www.INPUT.com

Video: Simplify Wi-Fi Troubleshooting

Enterprise Wireless Troubleshooting is Made Easy with AirCheck™ Wi-Fi Tester
www.flukenetworks.com/WirelessVideo

\$112B in Govt IT Opportunities by 2015

Maximize Your Market Position: FREE Summary of Federal IT Forecast 2010-2015
www.INPUT.com

Keep your smile bright with GEHA Connection Dental Federal

Check out the details at www.gehadental.com.

See how Adobe helps agencies become more open and transparent

View case studies and download the Adobe government whitepaper at Adobe.com/OpenGov
ad.doubleclick.net

Do something good for your health: Choose GEHA.

Visit www.geha.com to learn more about 2011 benefits.

Click here to read about Government Acquisition Reform from Oracle

Let Oracle help you Meet Mandates and Achieve Better Results
GovExec.com/Vendor_Solution_Center

[VIEW MORE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES...](#)

[BUY A LINK NOW...](#)



IS TELEWORKING A SECURITY CONCERN?