

American Evaluation Association

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October 16, 2009

The Honorable Peter Orszag
Director, Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. Orszag,

On behalf of the American Evaluation Association, we want to applaud you for calling for an increased emphasis on program evaluation in federal programs as per your [memorandum of October 7, 2009](#). As we wrote to you in February, “evaluation can be used to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Federal programs, assess which programs are working and which are not, and provide critical information needed for making difficult decisions about them.” Your memorandum represents an important contribution in putting the tools of evaluation to use in meeting these objectives.

We are particularly pleased to note your emphasis on selecting the best methods for answering specific evaluation questions. The American Evaluation Association long has recognized the value of appropriate, rigorous designs for conducting sound, useful evaluations. A range of designs have been developed and used by evaluators to accommodate the variety of evaluation situations.

We appreciate your support for increased independence and transparency in evaluation. These are important for evaluation to be both credible and useful for policy development and implementation.


We also commend your efforts to improve agency evaluation capacity and cross-agency cooperation. Capacity constraints and lack of cooperation have hindered federal evaluation activities in the past, and addressing these impediments can be a significant step forward.

Finally, we are pleased to note that these initiatives are congruent with the recommendations we made in “[An Evaluation Roadmap for a More Effective Government](#),” a paper that we provided to you in February. If we can be of assistance as you implement this policy, please do not hesitate to call on us or to contact George Grob, our senior advisor for evaluation policy (GeorgeFGrob@cs.com, 540-454-2888).

Sincerely,



Debra Rog
President



William Trochim
Immediate Past President



Leslie Cooksy
President Elect