

AMENDMENT 794 -- Requires an annual listing of every government program to end duplication and increase government efficiency.

This amendment would require every federal agency to provide taxpayers an annual report card for all of its programs. Each government program would be identified and described. The description would provide the total:

- Administrative costs of the program;
- Expenditures for services;
- Number of beneficiaries who receive assistance from the program; and
- An estimate of the number of staff who administer the program, including contractor staff.

It would also include:

- A listing of other programs within the federal government with duplicative or overlapping missions and services;
- The latest performance reviews for the program, including the metrics used to review the program;
- The latest improper payment rate for the program, including fraudulent payments; and
- The total amount of unspent and unobligated program funds held by the agency and grant recipients.

This information would be updated annually and posted on-line, along with recommendations from the agency to consolidate duplicative and overlapping programs, eliminate waste and inefficiency, and terminate lower priority, outdated and unnecessary programs.

No one knows for certain the total number of federal government programs.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) provides a listing of **2,179** federal assistance programs available to State and local governments. This represents only one component of all government programs. Foreign aid programs and programs that provide services other than financial assistance, for example, are omitted from the Catalogue.

The Government Accountability Office released a report earlier this year that found “overlap and fragmentation among government programs or activities can be harbingers of unnecessary duplication. Reducing or eliminating duplication, overlap, or fragmentation could potentially save billions of taxpayer dollars annually and help agencies provide more efficient and effective services.”

According to GAO, “financial benefits ranging from the tens of millions to several billion dollars annually may be realized” by addressing the problem of duplication and that “even limited adjustments could result in significant savings.”

Included in GAO’s finding related to the agencies and programs funded by this bill:

- **There are 15 agencies involved in food safety.** “Fragmented food safety systems have caused inconsistent oversight, ineffective coordination, and inefficient use of resources.”¹
- **There are three departments and 18 programs providing domestic food assistance.**² GAO found the overlap among these programs results in an “increase in administrative costs” as well as “inefficient use of federal funds, duplication of effort, and confusion among those seeking services.”³ Furthermore, GAO concluded “not enough is known about the effectiveness of many of these programs.”⁴

¹ “Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue,” Government Accountability Office, March 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11318sp.pdf>, page 7.

² “Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue,” Government Accountability Office, March 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11318sp.pdf>, page 7.

³ “Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue,” Government Accountability Office, March 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11318sp.pdf>, page 125.

⁴ “Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue,” Government Accountability Office, March 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11318sp.pdf>, page 126.

- **There are three departments and over 20 programs that address homelessness.**⁵ “This fragmentation can create difficulties for people in accessing services as well as administrative burdens for providers who must navigate various application requirements, selection criteria, and reporting requirements,” according to GAO. “The lack of federal coordination is still viewed by some local service providers as an important barrier to the effective delivery of services to those experiencing homelessness.”⁶

To achieve these savings and make government services more efficient and effective, a list of the existing programs and their missions must first be compiled and then maintained.

This amendment would apply to all programs and, when enacted, would for the first time provide taxpayers a listing of every program along with an evaluation of how well each program is working and how much it costs.

This will allow Congress to make government programs more effective and efficient by streamlining redundant, outdated, and unnecessary programs while improving services and outcomes.

It will also benefit taxpayers by increasing accountability and transparency of how the federal government is spending money and providing greater access to information about government programs and federal assistance.

⁵ “Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue,” Government Accountability Office, March 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11318sp.pdf>, page 7.

⁶ “Opportunities to Reduce Potential Duplication in Government Programs, Save Tax Dollars, and Enhance Revenue,” Government Accountability Office, March 2011, <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11318sp.pdf>, page 130.