

An Excerpt from the White House Open Government Initiative [Blog](#)

We're not the only ones who think this is big. An array of experts on government transparency and accountability are praising the Obama Administration's unprecedented Open Government Directive. The following is just a sample of their reactions

U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy, Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee: *"I commend President Obama for issuing an historic directive on government transparency, participation and collaboration that will make our government more accessible and accountable to the American people. I am particularly pleased that, for the first time, the public will have immediate access to government data that for too long had been shielded from view by excessive secrecy and outdated technologies."* [[Press Release, 12/8/09](#)]

U.S. Senator Joe Lieberman, Chairman, Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee: *"The President's Open Government Directive is heartily welcomed by those of us who have worked to make government more transparent and accountable to the American people. Back in 2002, I authored and Congress passed the E-Government Act, which helped spur Federal agencies to make documents and services more accessible to the general public. The Federal government has come a long way since 2002 and today, it takes a giant step closer to taking full advantage of available information technologies to maximize not just the transparency, participation, and collaboration of people with their government but also to maximize management efficiency."* [[Press Release, 12/8/09](#)]

In alphabetical order by last name:

Steven Aftergood, Federation of American Scientists: *"It's an ambitious attempt to open up the government and to change the way that agencies do business."* [[USA Today, 12/8/09](#)]

Gary D. Bass, Executive Director, OMB Watch: *"The results appear to be well worth the wait. The president demanded the directive be built around three main principles -- transparency, participation, and collaboration. The new directive, issued today, delivers on all three principles with specific requirements and deadlines for all agencies."* [[Washington Post, 12/8/09](#)]

Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer, President and Founder, AmericaSpeaks: *"I applaud the Obama Administration for taking bold steps today to open the government and make it more transparent and accountable. Clearly the President and his team have listened and taken seriously Americans all across the country who want a stronger voice and a seat at the table in American democracy."*

Patrice McDermott, Director, OpenTheGovernment.org: *"The Open Government Directive, when fully implemented, will take the Federal government many steps toward real openness. Far from representing the end of the process, today's announcement is the beginning of an on-going effort to build transparency and accountability into the way government operates."* [[Press Release, 12/8/09](#)]

Ellen Miller, Executive Director and Co-Founder, Sunlight Foundation: *"The Open Government Directive issued today demonstrates the seriousness of administration's commitment to data transparency and citizen engagement. It is evidence that the administration recognizes that transparency is government's responsibility. At the same time, it shows the administration is matching aspirational goals with concrete policies and accountability measures."* [[Washington Post, 12/8/09](#)]

Peter M. Shane, Author of Madison's Nightmare: *"What is arguably most impressive about the Directive, as highlighted in a public briefing by CIO Vivek Kundra and [sic] CTO Aneesh Chopra, is its specificity and focus on execution."* [[Huffington Post, 12/8/09](#)]

Jim Tozzi, Advisory Board, Center for Regulatory Effectiveness: “The Open Government initiative is a real piece of work – an excellent document.” [Communication to opengov@ostp.gov, 12/9/2009]

Anne Weismann, Chief Counsel, Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW): “This directive represents the kind of bold and far reaching initiative President Obama promised on his first full day in office. By establishing a new paradigm of public access to government information, the administration has paved the way for a truly transparent and accountable government.” [[CREW Press Release, 12/8/09](#)]

John Wonderlich, Policy Director, Sunlight Foundation: “[W]e are very excited. They're really taking on a lot of initiatives and doing so in an aggressive fashion. We couldn't have written it better ourselves. It's very ambitious.” [[CNET.com, 12/8/09](#)]