

OPENING STATEMENT

Technology & Innovation Subcommittee
The Next IT Revolution?: Cloud Computing Opportunities and Challenges
September 21, 2011

Thank you, Chairman Quayle, and good morning to our witnesses. I want to thank you all for being with us today for this important hearing to examine both the benefits and risks of cloud computing.

As you all know, and as I expect we will hear from our witnesses today, cloud computing has **many potential benefits**. By sharing I-T capabilities in the cloud, individuals, businesses, and government agencies are able to leverage their resources more effectively. They only need to pay for what they use and can easily scale up or ramp down the computing power or amount of data storage they need.

In addition to lowering capital investment, cloud computing allows people to access their files and applications from anywhere at any time, using everything from their home computer to their iPad or smart phone. In addition to being convenient, the mobility that cloud computing offers has the potential to increase the productivity of individuals.

The cloud also has the potential to drive innovation not only by changing the way businesses operate, but also how research is conducted. I look forward to hearing more about how cloud computing can advance basic research from Dr. Reed later this morning.

However, despite all of the promise cloud computing offers, there are a number of security concerns associated with moving information to a remote data server that is operated by a third party and may be located in a foreign country with less stringent data protection laws.

In fact, according to a recent report, 71 percent of federal chief information officers stated that security concerns were preventing them from adopting cloud solutions. However, that same report found that the federal government could save over \$14 billion within the first year if it were to embrace cloud computing.

It's essential that we find a way to ensure the security and privacy of the cloud so that the federal government can reap the full benefits of this emerging technology. I am pleased that the Administration is focusing its efforts on achieving this goal. As I understand it, this effort by GSA and NIST will provide federal agencies with tools to assess and select cloud computing services and products that satisfy federal security requirements.

In addition, I am pleased that NIST has taken an active role in the development of cloud computing standards for the federal government and is working closely with industry on the development of standards to support cloud computing infrastructure, metrics, interoperability, and assurance, as mandated in the *America COMPETES Reauthorization Act*. Standards are a critical component of our ability to realize the true potential of cloud computing and I am pleased that NIST has hit the ground running with these efforts and is well on its way to delivering the required standards.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about the Administration's efforts and what we here in Congress can or should do to ensure that progress continues and that the federal agencies have the tools and resources they need to adopt secure cloud computing solutions.

I'd like to again thank the witnesses for being here today and I look forward to your testimony. Thank you, Chairman Quayle. I yield back the balance of my time.