

GAO Highlights

Highlights of [GAO-20-430T](#), a testimony before the Subcommittee on the Legislative Branch, Committee on Appropriations, U. S. Senate

Background

GAO's mission is to support Congress in meeting its constitutional responsibilities and to help improve the performance and ensure the accountability of the federal government for the benefit of the American people. We provide nonpartisan, objective, and reliable information to Congress, federal agencies, and to the public, and recommend improvements across the full breadth and scope of the federal government's responsibilities.

In fiscal year 2019, GAO issued 1,607 new recommendations. Congress used our work extensively to inform its decisions on key fiscal year 2019 and 2020 legislation. Since fiscal year 2000, GAO's work has resulted in over:

- \$1.16 trillion dollars in financial benefits; and
- 24,750 program and operational benefits that helped to change laws, improve public services, and promote sound management throughout government.

GAO remains an employer of choice in the public sector. The Partnership for Public Service announced again in 2019 that GAO was one of the top places to work in the federal government, placing third position among mid-size agencies and first for supporting diversity.

View [GAO-20-430T](#). For more information, contact Gene L. Dodaro at (202) 512-5500 or dodarog@gao.gov.

March 2020

FISCAL YEAR 2021 BUDGET REQUEST

U.S. Government Accountability Office

In fiscal year (FY) 2019, GAO's work yielded a record \$214.7 billion in financial benefits, a return of about \$338 for every dollar invested in GAO. We also identified 1,418 other benefits that led to improved services to the American people, enhanced public safety, and strengthened programs and operations across the government. In addition, GAO reported on 35 areas designated as high risk due to their vulnerabilities to fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement or because they face economy, efficiency, or effectiveness challenges. These FY 2019 High Risk Series products alone resulted in 44 testimonies, \$170.8 billion in financial benefits, and 710 other benefits.

For FY 2021, GAO is requesting \$706 million in appropriated funds, an increase of \$76 million compared with the FY 2020 enacted level, and authority to use \$31.3 million in offsetting receipts and reimbursements. These resources will support 3,250 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. The additional FTE will primarily bolster the Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics team and bring on additional appropriations law attorneys. The funding requested will also support priority investments in our information technology and building infrastructure, security requirements, as well as address long deferred needs. As reported in our FY 2019 financial statements, GAO's backlog of deferred maintenance on its 69 years old Headquarters Building had grown to over \$80 million as of fiscal year end.

This level of funding will enable GAO to meet the highest priority needs of the Congress, as we remain committed in helping Congress meet its constitutional responsibilities for the benefit of the American people. In FY 2019, GAO responded to 671 requests for work from 90 percent of the standing committees of the Congress. Our senior executives were asked to testify 97 times before 50 different committees or subcommittees on a wide range of issues that touched virtually all major federal agencies. The activities planned for FY 2021 will better position GAO to assist the Congress in meeting its legislative and oversight responsibilities, accomplish our mission objectives and goals, and improve government performance and accountability.

In FY 2021, we will continue to support Congressional oversight across the wide array of government programs and operations. In particular, the Science, Technology Assessment, and Analytics team will continue to expand our focus on rapidly evolving science and technology issues. The team focuses on: (1) conducting technology assessments at the request of the Congress; (2) providing technical assistance to Congress on science and technology matters; (3) continuing the development and use of technical guides to assess major federal acquisitions and technology programs in areas such as technology readiness, cost estimating, and schedule planning; (4) supporting Congressional oversight of federal science programs; and (5) advancing GAO's ability to use data analytics in auditing federal programs.

With additional funding we will also bolster our capabilities to review the opportunities and challenges associated with the risks and management needs to address complex and growing cyber security developments; increased investments in the Department of Defense; and rising health care costs.