

May 25, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden Jr.
President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden:

As the Administration continues to tackle enormous challenges, from COVID-19 to economic recovery, federal agencies are being asked to do more with less. One way the government can achieve substantial efficiencies and costs savings is by reimagining its approach to government contracting, especially for software and technology.

For too long, the government has prioritized building its own technology solutions over procuring commercial products. These solutions, whether developed directly by a federal agency or with a government contractor, have an incredibly high failure rate - more than 90 percent in some cases. They are almost always more expensive on the front end, difficult and costly to maintain, and quickly become obsolete. That redundancy is an immense cost to the taxpayer and fails to empower civil servants who want to improve and to best serve their agency's mission.

Federal acquisition rules already require agencies to prioritize and procure commercial items, to the maximum extent practicable, over custom development. But those rules are not always followed. Many federal agencies continue to favor custom-built, more expensive solutions, even when there are proven, widely available commercial solutions that, in many cases, can be modified to meet unique requirements. As a result, many technology companies conclude that it is too difficult to work with the government. Rather than miss out on private sector innovations, the government should consistently enforce laws and policies that give preference to commercial software and technology solutions and support these domestic industries, including startups and small businesses.

Meeting the complex challenges of our time will require the best technology solutions – business as usual when it comes to government contracting is no longer acceptable. As a first step, the Administration should ensure that the preference for commercial items is followed. This includes conducting appropriate market research, as is required by the Federal Acquisition Streamlining Act (FASA), prior to making any acquisition decisions when considering comparable commercial and custom-built items.

We specifically request that the Office of Management and Budget provide clear guidance to federal agencies to make certain that the existing statutory requirements for commercial preference are followed. We also encourage the Administration require any software or technology acquisition include the opportunity for the private sector to participate in live technology demonstrations alongside any custom-built options. Ultimately, the best solution should always win.

As leading voices in commercial technology, we stand ready to help and look forward to working with your Administration to help America build back better.

Sincerely,

The Alliance for Digital Innovation
Washington, D.C.
www.alliance4digitalinnovation.org

Silicon Valley Defense Group
San Francisco, CA
www.siliconvalleydefense.org

Infor
New York, NY.
www.infor.com

Telos Corporation
Ashburn, VA.
www.telos.com

Anduril Industries
Orange County, CA.
www.anduril.com

NuAxis Innovations
Tysons, VA.
www.nuaxis.com

Saildrone
Alameda, CA.
www.saildrone.com

Maxar Technologies
Westminster, CO.
www.maxar.com

Clarifai
New York, NY.
www.clarifai.com

CrowdAI
San Francisco, CA
www.crowdai.com

Govini
Arlington, VA.
www.govini.com

Ripcord
Hayward, CA.
www.ripcord.com

The Alliance for Commercial Technology in Government
Washington, D.C.
www.the-alliance.io

Palantir Technologies
Denver, CO.
www.palantir.com

Salesforce.com, Inc.
San Francisco, CA.
www.salesforce.com

Splunk Inc.
San Francisco, CA.
www.splunk.com

Tenable
Columbia, MD.
www.tenable.com

DataRobot
Boston, MA.
www.datarobot.com

WalkMe
San Francisco, CA.
www.walkme.com

Paylt
Kansas City, MO.
www.payitgov.com

ID.me
Mclean, VA.
www.id.me

OwnBackup
Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
www.ownbackup.com

Dinocrates Group, LLC.
Rockville, MD.
www.dinocrates.com

Second Front Systems
San Francisco, CA.
www.secondfront.com

BaseConnect
Enid, OK.
www.baseconnect.com

ICON Technology
Austin, TX.
www.iconbuild.com

Zededa
Santa Clara, CA.
www.zededa.com

Long Capture
Colorado Springs, CO.
www.longcapture.com

Prewitt Ridge
Los Angeles, CA.
www.prewittridge.com

RevaComm
Honolulu, HI.
www.revacomm.com

SimpleSense
New York, NY.
www.simplesense.io

Pison
Boston, MA.
www.pisonotechnology.com

Allosense
San Antonio, TX.
www.allosense.com

SparkCognition Government Systems
Austin, TX.
www.sparkgov.ai

Snorkel AI
Palo Alto, CA.
www.snorkel.ai

Improbable LLC
Arlington, VA.
www.improbable.io

QTS Reality Trust
Overland Park, KS.
www.qtsdatacenters.com

Armory
San Mateo, CA.
www.armory.io

Primer
San Francisco, CA.
www.primer.ai

Five Forks
Chicago, IL.
www.5forks.com

SICDRONE
Peabody, MA.
www.sicdrone.com

Small Business Consulting Corporation
Bossier City, LA.
www.ccih.tech

Raft
Reston, VA.
www.goraft.com

Lilt
San Francisco, CA.
www.lilt.com

Shield AI
San Diego, CA.
www.shield.ai

Corelight
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Copado
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