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Insourcing Suits?

By Joe Davidson May 10, 2011

The Obama administration wants to slow the stream of jobs to outside contractors that flowed like the swollen Mississippi River during the last Bush administration. But legal issues could pose a problem.

A new report by the Congressional Research Service says that “recent insourcing initiatives raise several legal questions, including whether agencies complied with their own guidelines.” Insourcing is gov-speak for using federal employees to do jobs previously done by private contractors.

Lawsuits by contractors are possible if the guidelines were not followed, according to the report.

Alan Chvotkin, executive vice president of the Professional Services Council, which represents government contractors, said the report would not necessarily have any real consequences for the Obama administration’s policy.

“These are process questions,” he said. “They are not policy questions in my view.”

Moir Mack, a spokeswoman for the Office of Management and Budget, said the White House “will carefully review the CRS report and will continue to work with agencies to ensure they are taking a measured approach and aware of legal requirements in this area.”

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