

Pentagon Fighting Anti-Insourcing Proposal

By Scott Amey Feb 17, 2011

Yesterday, POGO blogged about Congressman Pete Sessions' (R-TX) proposed amendment to the Defense Appropriations Act (H.R. 1), which would prevent the government from bringing certain outsourced jobs in-house regardless of whether or not the insourcing would result in savings for the taxpayer.

It's good to see the Department of Defense (DoD) opposing Sessions' amendment. In a statement, the largest federal contract spender declared that the provision would:

1. Limit DoD's ability to manage its Total Force (military, civilian, and contracted support) consistent with the law and with the flexibility needed
2. Prohibit a conversion to government personnel when needed to mitigate risk, ensure continuity of operations, build internal capability, meet readiness requirements, ensure critical career progression, and maintain oversight of operations
3. Prevent the conversion of jobs that shouldn't be performed by contractors
4. Remove DoD's ability to work in a constrained fiscal environment when cost analyses show potential savings

This is welcome news after the Government Accountability Office (GAO) released its latest High-Risk Series report yesterday, which details DoD's lack of sound contracting practices. That report mentioned DoD's reliance on contractors and found that its:

reliance on contractors is not yet fully guided by a systematic determination of which functions and activities should be contracted out and which should be performed by civilian employees or military personnel, or by an assessment of the risks that reliance on contractors may pose.

It sounds like DoD needs to get its house in order, and the Sessions amendment will only hamper the systematic work that is required to better determine who—contractors or government employees—should be performing services at DoD.