



Senators Press for Broader Definition of 'Inherently Governmental' Jobs

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A contingent of 11 Democratic senators urged the Office of Management and Budget to more broadly define what constitutes inherently governmental job categories that can be performed only by federal civil servants.

In a March 18 letter, the senators urged OMB Director Peter Orszag to define "inherently governmental" work in expansive terms "to cover all sensitive functions so managers won't need designations like 'core,' 'critical' and 'mission-essential' to shield jobs they know are best performed by federal workers."

The letter is part of the larger effort launched last year by President Obama to rein in the number of jobs that are contracted out to the private sector. Outsourcing of federal government work went too far in the previous administration, said the letter, which suggested that Orszag issue restrictions to more tightly constrain the type of work that subcontractors can perform.

"We can't continue to allow federal agencies to lose control of mission-relevant functions by giving contractors a decisive role in how they are executed," the letter said.

Lawmakers also urged Orszag to set deadlines for each agency to identify and in-source any such work that was contracted out. OMB is expected to publish the new guidelines next month. Among those signing the letter were Sens. Barbara Mikulski of Maryland and Robert Byrd of West Virginia.