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OMB'S PROGRAM ASSESSMENT RATING TOOL WINS AWARD FROM HARVARD

Federal Ratings System Wins \$100,000 Award

Cambridge, Mass., – July 27, 2005 – The Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) has won the prestigious Innovations in American Government Award. The Innovations Award is a program of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, and is administered in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government. The PART was one of six award winners.

The Office of Management and Budget uses the PART to assess every federal program's purpose, design, management and results to determine effectiveness. This method, which helps evaluators identify strengths and weaknesses, has streamlined the process for reviewing program results and helps OMB make more informed budgeting decisions. "Before PART, agencies wasted time and money producing thousands of pages of performance plans every year," said Stephen Goldsmith, Director of the Innovations in American Government Awards. "PART assessments simplify and unify the process, and help federal programs establish clearly defined goals and data to confirm results."

The PART is a 30-item questionnaire that evaluates a federal program's purpose and design, performance measurement, evaluations and strategic planning, program management and results. It also allows programs to show improvements over time. "PART not only requires systematic reporting of federal program results, but also connects performance and results to decisions about

program design and funding.” said Patricia McGinnis, President and CEO of the Council for Excellence in Government.

Half of all federal programs first assessed with the PART could not demonstrate results. That figure dropped by twenty percentage points between 2004 and 2005 after PART’s implementation. During that same timeframe, the percentage of programs that were rated effective or moderately effective increased by ten points. Now, 67% are rated effective, moderately effective, or adequate.

The PART (www.whitehouse.gov/omb/part) was one of more than 1,000 applicants for the 2005 Innovations in American Government Award. Eighteen finalists delivered a public presentation before the National Selection Committee at Harvard University on May 11, 2005. The Committee, chaired by David R. Gergen of the Center for Public Leadership at Harvard, included former Maryland Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, former San Diego Mayor Susan Golding, former White House Deputy Chief of Staff Maria Echaveste, and former Congressman William Clinger. The award was presented today in Washington, D.C.

For 18 years, the Innovations in American Government Award has recognized quality and responsiveness at all levels of government, honored government efforts that are creative, effective and address significant problems, and has fostered the replication of innovative approaches to the challenges facing government. The award is a program of the Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government, and is administered in partnership with the Council for Excellence in Government.

The Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation (www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu) at Harvard University’s John F. Kennedy School of Government fosters excellence in government around the world in order to generate and strengthen democracy. Through its awards program, research, publications, curriculum support, and global network, the Institute champions critical milestones in creative and effective governance and democratic practice.

The Council for Excellence in Government (www.excelgov.org) is a national, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization whose mission is to improve government performance by strengthening results-oriented management and creative leadership in the public sector, and to build understanding by focusing public discussion on government’s role and responsibilities.

For more information on the Innovations in American Government program and this year’s award winners, please visit www.ashinstitute.harvard.edu or www.excelgov.org.

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