

**COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM**  
**CONGRESSMAN TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN**



**NEWS RELEASE**

**For Immediate Release**  
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**Government Reform Committee**  
**Approves Services Acquisition Reform Act of 2003**

**Washington, D.C.** – The House Government Reform Committee last night approved H.R. 1837, “The Services Acquisition Reform Act of 2003 (SARA),” legislation introduced by Committee Chairman Tom Davis (R-VA) that builds on the critical procurement reform initiatives of the 1990s by recognizing that the economy and the needs of our government have become increasingly service and technology oriented.

Davis released the following statement on committee approval:

“H.R. 1837 responds to the reality that we do not have the right people with the right skills and the right tools to manage the acquisition of services and technology that the government so desperately needs. Each year our government spends over \$200 billion buying goods and services. More than half of that, over \$135 billion, is now spent on services, making services the government’s single largest spending category. There are serious questions as to whether we’re spending that money wisely.

“SARA is targeted at the root causes of our current dilemma. It consists of a carefully crafted set of interrelated legislative proposals that will address the multiple deficiencies plaguing government acquisition today: (1) the lack of up-to-date, comprehensive training for our acquisition professionals; (2) the inability of the current government structure to reflect business-like practices by integrating the acquisition function into overall agency missions and facilitating cross-agency acquisitions and information sharing; and (3) the lack of good tools and incentives to encourage the participation of the best commercial firms in the government market.

“This legislation will put the tools needed to access the commercial service and technology market in the hands of a trained workforce that will have the discretion

necessary to choose the best value for the government -- and be held accountable for those choices.

“The federal government faces historic challenges. At the same time it sits on the brink of unprecedented opportunity. We need to develop new methods to harness the magic of our dynamic private marketplace to meet the needs of the American people. SARA will do just that.”

The committee approved an amendment in the nature of a substitute that included a number of changes and improvements to the bill:

- The substitute provides that the Office of Federal Procurement Policy and the Office of Personnel Management will develop a program under which Federal employees may be detailed to a non-Federal employer.
- The amendment eliminates a provision that allowed for electronic transmission of certain bi-monthly payments.
- The substitute clarifies that options for extension of contract performance are only exercised within existing limits in law or regulation governing overall contract duration.
- The substitute provides for the collection of data on performance-based contracting for services and sunsets such contracting after 10 years.
- The substitute provides further clarification to the definition of services that would be considered a commercial item.
- The substitute also limits domestic source restrictions in the Buy American Act and the Trade Agreements Act on commercial information technology.

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