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Mr. Chairman and esteemed Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for this opportunity to testify about the progress I have seen over the past 10 months in how VA manages IT.

Last year I had the honor of facilitating the efforts of over 20 of VA's senior IT and business leaders from all Administrations and Department staff offices, in forming what came to be know as VA's Enterprise Architecture Innovation Team. For 15 days and five very long weekends, they created and unanimously endorsed the document that was approved by Secretary Principi last September and that you know as VA's "Enterprise Architecture: Strategy, Governance, & Implementation." I also participated in an analysis of VA's project

management practices and had the privilege, in October and again just a few weeks ago, of facilitating two working conferences attended by more than 200 of VA's senior IT managers.

The short story is that in these past 10 months I have seen a profound and positive transformation in how VA manages IT. But these are just the critical first steps of a long journey.

In the cover letter to Secretary Principi that accompanied the "Enterprise Architecture" document, John Zachman (the godfather of enterprise architecture), wrote:

Quote" This is not a project. It is a "process." It is different from the Industrial Age past. It is the Information Age present! With that understanding, [here's ...] some advice that may help as you continue down your road to institutionalize ... VA's Enterprise Architecture:

- Do not underestimate the difficulty and complexity ... This will take time and determination.
- This is a new way of life, a revolution in thinking, a discipline, ... Change of this magnitude takes perseverance. Do not get discouraged. ...
- Make executive education and technical training a continuous process. It is easy to forget long-term issues in the short-term stress of daily life.
- And remember,... there is still much to learn and discover, and many opportunities to create advantage and value.

“End Quote

VA is massive in size, enormously complex, and highly decentralized. They have significant workforce development concerns and a long history of independent parts that don't work well together. VA has set the bar high for itself. But VA needs some things from Congress too, and I humbly offer you the following suggestions:

- First: Hold them accountable, but understand and honor their long-term vision: Please don't make the mistake of demanding short-term IT accomplishment without long-term relevance, because the result will only be rework, scrap, replace, and enterprise dis-integration.
- Second: Provide policy guidance and assistance: VA is entering new ground as they strive toward One-VA. Historically they have optimized the parts and sub-optimized the whole. Congress asked them through Clinger-Cohen, and they are asking themselves through One-VA, to shift the balance toward optimizing the whole through massive integration. They will need your patience, help, and guidance.
- Third: Provide them funding for these change: Resources are especially needed for the things that have never been done before in VA. I'm not talking about IT projects – Those will

stand or fall on their own merits. But there is a real need for funding for VA's IT central office and for the Office of the Chief Enterprise Architect, as well as for the establishment of a VA-wide Project Management Office. But all of this will be for naught if there is not funding and acknowledgement of the significant effort in education, training, and organizational culture change required to realize One-VA. These are not IT issues, these are VA issues and they will require the active involvement of VA's business and IT personnel, the assistance of change management professionals, and the continued support and involvement of engaged and competent leadership.

- Fourth: Be realistic: If you want VA to perform to commercial best practice, then realize that you are asking them to do it with 70% of the average commercial IT funding level and with about one-half the IT staff.

The two working conferences are indicative of the kind of change that is going on in VA. For the first time ever, more than 200 professionals responsible for the various pieces of the VA IT pie worked together face-to-face to create a shared vision for One-VA and IT's role in achieving it. And it was not just about enterprise architecture, but also about cyber security, project management, network infrastructure, workforce development, performance measurement, and fulfilling VA's role in homeland security.

It was not about business as usual either, but rather a significant change in mindset from one of dis-integration and fear, to one of collaboration, trust, and accountability. But the vision and planning of 200 managers, no matter how senior, does not suddenly transform an enterprise with over 4,000 IT professionals, several hundred thousand other personnel, millions of customers, and a budget greater than the GDP of 75% of the countries in the world.

This is not a project. There is no silver bullet. This is a new way of life for VA, such change can only happen incrementally, and we are all part of it. The question each must answer is “What part will I play in the creation of One-VA?”

If I can answer any of your questions or provide you with any additional information, I am always at your service.

Thank you.