

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2102

October 26, 2011

Mr. Steven VanRoekel
U.S. Chief Information Officer
Office of Management and Budget
1650 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Eisenhower Executive Office Building, Room 412
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Mr. VanRoekel:

Last year I wrote to Director Berry after I learned of OPM's decision to rebuild and re-launch the USAJOBS site from inside the government, and I strongly suggested that the agency instead seek a vendor through a competitive bidding process. In response to that letter, Director Berry assured me that having OPM own, develop, and control USAJOBS would lead to a better experience for job seekers and better serve the needs of the agencies.

I'm writing to you again today with concerns that what Director Berry predicted simply has not happened. Since OPM took over and re-launched the USAJOBS site two weeks ago, agencies and job seekers have encountered great difficulties, facing repeated outages and numerous glitches. Disgruntled constituents have used Facebook and the media to express their frustration. These breakdowns again raise real questions about the decision to take this operation in-house, and in light of the poor transition and launch, I am renewing the recommendation for the Administration to seek a vendor through a competitive bidding process to manage this service.

It is no secret that, since 2004, a company headquartered in my state of Massachusetts had effectively managed the site in partnership with the agency, encountering few problems and winning numerous awards. While Massachusetts remains very proud of Monster.com, this is a bigger issue than a single constituent concern. There are many commercial firms with expertise and experience far beyond the federal government in designing and successfully managing online job websites and any number of them is better equipped to manage this service than the government. Furthermore, while OPM has assured me that its decision to a government owned and operated system would save us money, at a time when Congress and the Administration are focused on decreasing spending, OPM is imposing a 19% increase in fees charged to federal agencies using the site. It seems to me that if it was going to cost less to operate the service, then the fees to agencies should not be going up.

I respectfully request that you, as the Federal CIO, intervene, investigate and resolve the problems with USAJOBS as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



John F. Kerry