

Remarks at the NIST Cloud Computing Forum and Workshop

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Commerce Secretary John Bryson

Remarks at the NIST Cloud Computing Forum and Workshop

Thank you, Dawn. Good morning, everyone. On behalf of the Administration, it's my pleasure to welcome all of you to the Commerce Department for this two-day forum on cloud computing.

It's great to see my colleagues from the Administration. This includes Ambassador Philip Verveer, the Coordinator of International Communications and Information Policy at the State Department. I'd also like to recognize the U.S. Chief Information Officer, Steve VanRoekel.

It is also an honor to welcome senior government officials who lead in the IT space in various countries around the world. Thank you for being here today. We look forward to the unique insights and perspectives that you bring.

Today, it's clear that America's entrepreneurs and businesses have more technologies at their fingertips than ever before. They're swiping customers' credit cards on their iPads. They're driving sales through social media. And, of course, they're using cloud computing. Through cloud computing, they can start a business faster, they can adjust to changes in demand more quickly, and they can share the costs of their infrastructure and services with other entrepreneurs and business owners. Each day, it becomes clearer and clearer that cloud computing is a critical tool to help businesses drive innovation and strengthen our global economy. But today, we want to focus on how the public sector can take full advantage of cloud computing.

We want to answer tough questions, such as: How can cloud computing help lower costs for taxpayers? How can cloud computing speed the delivery of services that a government provides? Could cloud computing actually increase the level of security of our data? And – especially in this challenging fiscal environment – how can the cloud transform government to be more nimble, efficient, and effective than ever before?

The Obama Administration has already started exploring the answers to these questions in earnest. For example, cloud computing played two essential roles in helping us ensure that the

2010 Census was a resounding success. First, we knew there would be unprecedented public demand for this data on our website. Instead of buying expensive infrastructure to support this once-in-a-decade need, we used the cloud to provide scalable support. Second, we had a private cloud, accessible to the Census internally, which helped us ensure that we had the capacity and the security to store a large load of sensitive information.

The Commerce Department isn't alone. Agencies like NASA and the Defense Department are also adopting cloud computing solutions. And, in fact, last year, the Administration instituted a "Cloud-First" policy. This requires federal agencies to use cloud-based solutions whenever a secure, reliable, and cost-effective option exists.

All of us are looking to reduce the costs of IT and the associated equipment, real estate, office space, and energy costs associated with it. That's smart government.

Cloud computing can and should become part of the government's DNA. And, in fact, through the Federal Cloud Computing Strategy, it is. Throughout the civilian agencies in the federal government, we might have the potential to shift up to \$20 billion of our \$80 billion in annual IT expenditures to the cloud. As a result, we can achieve substantial savings while also helping usher in a new multi-billion-dollar industry. Some call it the cloud marketplace. This is all good news, but the migration to cloud computing is not without challenges.

We must continue to address issues surrounding interoperability, portability, and security. And today – that's why we need your help. Working alone, none of us has all the answers to the questions in this emerging industry. But when we bring together the best minds in the public, private, academic, and nonprofit worlds – I believe we can move forward more quickly and effectively.

Already, NIST has a lead role in accelerating the adoption of safe and effective cloud computing across the federal government. Through meetings like this, NIST is working with businesses, standards groups, governments, and other stakeholders. Their goal is to develop standards and guidelines that will strengthen cloud computing and its technologies in both the public and private sectors. And they are excited to hear from all of you today – as they continue to take steps forward.

So let's get started. Today, you're going to hear about everything from standards development to progress on the new Roadmap and priority action plans. And, of course, you'll hear new ideas related to ensuring that cloud computing can be interoperable, portable, and secure – on a global scale.

I look forward to hearing the next steps that come out of this dialogue. In particular, I hope that there will be discussions – both formal and informal – related to how cloud computing can contribute to entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic growth overall.

And I should note that this industry holds tremendous potential not only for U.S. firms and our economy, but also for our trading partners as well. So, thanks again to all of you for being part of this important conversation. Now, it's my pleasure to turn the podium over to Pat Gallagher, our

outstanding Under Secretary of Standards and Technology and the Director of NIST. As we welcome him, let's give a round of applause to Pat and his team for putting together such a great program. Thank you all, and have a great conference, everyone.