For 17 years, the Partnership for Public Service has brought people together for constructive conversations and action to improve the way government works. The federal government is the one institution in our democracy with the public mandate, resources and ability to address the nation’s most difficult problems. Our nation needs a government that’s effective at delivering results for the public.

In this moment, however, our government has reached a tipping point. Our federal institutions and hardworking civil servants are still reeling from the longest government shutdown in the nation’s history, when a significant portion of the civilian workforce was out of work and vital federal services were halted or delayed. Until the administration and Congress take steps to fix the broken annual budget process, there is no assurance that the government won’t be plunged into chaos again this fall by another shutdown. Meanwhile, the harmful impact on the government’s long-term health from the last one is only beginning to be understood.
Michael Lewis’ latest best-selling book, “The Fifth Risk,” which features the Partnership, reinforces why people should care about the state of our government. It starkly outlines the many risks that come with politicizing or underinvesting in our federal institutions. Decades of persistent neglect, antiquated systems and political division have left much of the federal government unable to meet the demands of today’s interconnected, technology-driven world or prepare for the challenges of tomorrow.

The media focus on the government shutdown fueled public interest in the government, how it operates and the services it provides. At the Partnership, we believe there has never been a more important time for individuals and institutions that care about the integrity of our government to get involved.

Our government can move beyond this moment, and with a steady focus on what works, our federal institutions and workforce can succeed. The Partnership’s new strategic plan reaffirms our organization’s areas of proven expertise—a deep knowledge of the federal workforce and environment, the fundamentals of leadership development, and smart management principles. It also embraces exciting new areas—improving the customer experience, fostering government innovation, strengthening government’s use of data and analysis, and expanding our services outside of Washington, D.C.—to meet the evolving needs of federal leaders, the workforce and the public.

In the following report, we share the Partnership’s strategies for a more effective government and highlight our accomplishments over the past year. Our organization’s achievements would not be possible without the generous support of our donors and partners, whom we thank for investing in and supporting our work.

We look forward to a promising year for our organization and our government.