

Reston, VA - On October 19, 1998, President Bill Clinton signed into law the Federal Activities Inventory Reform (FAIR) Act of 1998, a federal law that is as relevant today as it was the day it was signed, if not more so.

[Public Law 105-270](#) was to "provide a process for identifying the functions of the Federal Government that are not inherently governmental."

Thanks to the [efforts](#) of Representative John J. "Jimmy" Duncan, Jr. (R-TN), and the late-Senator Craig Thomas (R-WY), BCFC helped get the FAIR Act passed by Congress and signed into law by the President.

BCFC President John Palatiello said, "In 1999, the initial Clinton-Gore Administration inventory of Federal activities found more than 850,000 federal employees were engaged in commercial activities that duplicate and in some cases compete with private enterprise, including small business. These activities range from architecture to zoology and include apparel, audits, buses and motorcoaches, construction, debt and bill collections, engineering, equipment repair and maintenance depots, film and studio movie production, food service including food safety software, furniture, graphics, information technology including healthcare-related software, laboratories, landscaping, laundry and dry cleaning, office products, mapping, meeting planning, marketing research, roofing, printing, public storage, road signage, surveying, tax preparation, transportation and utilities."

"A government that does virtually everything that can be found in the Yellow Pages is simply too big to succeed," Palatiello said.

The Obama Administration's implementation of "insourcing," converting work previously carried out by contractors into agencies for performance by federal employees, has exacerbated the problem of government competition and duplication of the private sector.

Jacques Gansler, undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics in the Clinton Administration said it best. "The surest way to reduce and hold down procurement costs is through competition, whether among commercial providers or between commercial providers and in-house government alternatives. For the latter cases, no matter who wins, the savings have been more than 30 percent."

Or, as former New York governor Mario Cuomo once said, "It is not a government's obligation to provide services, but to see that they are provided."

"It is time to ensure the Executive Branch fully implements the inventory provisions of the 1998 FAIR Act, lower the cost of government, create private sector jobs, reduce the debt and deficit, and focus federal employees on activities and functions only government can perform," Palatiello concluded.