



February 9, 2015

Letters to the Editor
The Washington Post
1150 5th Street NW
Washington, DC 20071

Dear Editor,

I wholeheartedly agree with Jamal Brown of the Office of Management and Budget, who said “wasteful spending is unacceptable” (*What happened with the GSA in Vegas stymies federal workers*, by Lisa Rein, February 8, 2015). While the intention of the administration’s restrictions on government travel and training was obviously to save money, the outcomes have often been something quite different. Instead, these conference attendance guidelines have needlessly increased taxpayer costs in the long run and have made educating today’s government workforce more challenging and more expensive.

The resulting reality of the knee-jerk blanket restrictions in 2012 at first was agencies canceling education conferences at a cost that exceeded what the expense would have been to hold them. Government employees continue to be forced to spend more money for mission-critical training by attending multiple smaller conferences instead of by simply attending one conference at a significantly lower cost.

When planned and executed correctly, government meetings most certainly benefit citizens by making government more effective. There has been a strong increase in government meeting planners pursuing the Society of Government Meeting Professionals’ Certified Government Meeting Professional (“CGMP”) designation, which plays a key part of the solution to wasteful spending by demonstrating a commitment to best practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rob Bergeron', is positioned below the word 'Sincerely,'.

Rob Bergeron
Executive Director & CEO