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*Public Controversy Over Peer Review*

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Abstract by Melissa Sutton

The article takes a look at the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) proposed peer review policy. In August 2003, OIRA indicated its intention to make significant additions to existing procedures under the Information Quality Act by requiring peer review of regulatory information that agencies intend to publicize. The article examines the public comments received and concludes that the volume and sophistication of the comments received by OIRA suggest that such a policy change will affect many agencies, organizations, and citizens.

Part I of the article discusses the proposed bulletin and criticism and support for implementing peer review. Part II examines the revised bulletin published after a thorough review of the public comment received on the proposed bulletin. It discusses both the criticisms of the revised bulletin and the positive changes. Part III of the article looks at the final bulletin which produced a strong policy addressing public concern. The article concludes that OIRA has demonstrated respect for the importance of public comment with the delayed release of the final bulletin, and that more agencies should follow the example by inviting public participation when they intend to enact a new policy that will have broad-reaching effects.