

2008 Presidential Transition Initiative

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CitiStat. StateStat. FedStat?

States have long been heralded as “laboratories of democracy.” A successful management innovation that began a decade ago seems to be percolating toward the federal level, to the point where it is now being promoted by think tanks.

In April, John Podesta, former chief of staff to President Bill Clinton and now head of the Center for American Progress explored a [federal version](#) an award-winning management approach that started in the New York City Police Department as “[CompStat](#),” spread to the city of Baltimore as “[CitiStat](#),” and is now being adopted at the state level in Maryland as “[StateStat](#).” Maybe a federal version might be named “FedStat!”

In any case, the approach brings together leaders and managers accountable for working together regularly to achieve results that generally reach across agency boundaries – in New York, it was across the different police and law enforcement agencies; in Baltimore, it was across different city departments that touched on a common problem such as lead paint poisoning. Maryland Governor Martin O’Malley – who developed CitiStat when he was Baltimore’s mayor – recently signed [a bill](#) to create StateStat. He says he plans to use it to monitor the performance of state agencies addressing common goals.

Podesta’s think tank wrote a [report](#) recommending a data-driven decision-making approach something like CitiStat at the federal level. Similarly, the National Governor’s Association wrote a [report](#) on the applicability of CitiStat to states based on the experience of the State of Washington in adopting a similar approach more than a year ago. Some federal agencies have adopted it as well. For example, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms has adopted it in its Los Angeles [field office](#).

At what point does a management innovation originating in states and localities reach “prime time” and get adopted at the federal level?

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