FOREWORD

Last year, the National Academy of Public Administration (the Academy) announced 12 Grand Challenges in Public Administration in four critical areas. These challenges resulted from a year-long effort of research and stakeholder engagement led by a Steering Committee with support from the Academy staff. We knew these were important and timely topics, but the global spread of the coronavirus pandemic crystalized the urgency of addressing these challenges.

FOCUS	GRAND CHALLENGE
Protecting and Advancing Democracy	1. Protect Electoral Integrity and Enhance Voter Participation 2. Modernize and Reinvigorate the Public Service 3. Develop New Approaches to Public Governance and Engagement 4. Advance National Interests in a Changing Global Context
Strengthening Social and Economic Development	5. Foster Social Equity 6. Connect Individuals to Meaningful Work 7. Build Resilient Communities 8. Advance the Nation's Long-Term Fiscal Health
Ensuring Environmental Sustainability	9. Steward Natural Resources and Address Climate Change 10. Create Modern Water Systems for Safe and Sustainable Use
Managing Technological Changes	11. Ensure Data Security and Privacy Rights of Individuals 12. Make Government AI Ready

Table 1.
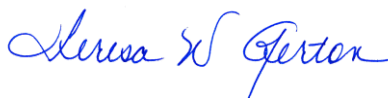**Grand Challenges in Public Administration**

For the public administration field, these 12 Challenges are the biggest issues that government at all levels must address over the next decade, both from a programmatic and an operational standpoint. They are *large in scope* (inter-agency, inter-sectoral, intergovernmental, and multi-disciplinary); require *significant innovation and long-term commitment* (a decade or more); seek to achieve *worthwhile, ambitious, challenging goals*; require *paradigm shifts* in thinking and/or significant change in government functioning; and have significant *individual, governmental, and societal impacts*.

At the beginning of this year, we formed Working Groups of Fellows charged with identifying immediate practical steps that the Administration in 2021—whether a reelected Trump Administration, or a newly elected Biden Administration—should take to begin addressing each Grand Challenge. These papers were released on a rolling basis during the summer and fall of 2020. Although each paper's specific recommendations are tailored to the needs of that particular Grand Challenge, several cross-cutting issues and themes arose, including the importance of:

- Using the early months of 2021 to develop strategies and organize for success;
- Ensuring that social equity is considered across all policy domains and administrative operations;
- Leveraging larger policy and program changes, such as national pandemic response spending or any new national infrastructure investment program;
- Using existing processes such as the Cross-Agency Priority Goals and the President's Management Agenda;
- Strengthening interagency, intergovernmental, and intersectoral coordination and collaboration; and
- Working with Congress on needed longer-term legislative changes.

Nearly 100 of our Fellows were involved in developing this practical nonpartisan agenda for the Administration in 2021. I encourage you to read the papers yourselves and consider how you might support and expand these proposals.

Next year will be an important year as countries around the world attempt to control the coronavirus pandemic and address its social, political, and economic impacts. We believe the proposals included in our action plans lay out important steps in that process for the United States. Our Fellows will advocate for these recommendations and track progress, and they will also begin developing a longer-term strategy for each Grand Challenge. By working together across governmental levels and economic sectors, the nation can address the Grand Challenges in Public Administration—and I believe that the Fellows' recommendations for 2021 are a critical first step in moving us forward.

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