



Environmental Data and Governance Initiative Website Tracking Report

enviromatagov.org | edgi.websitemonitoring@protonmail.com

Changes to Office of Science and Technology Policy Mission Statement

March 22, 2017

Writing and review of this report was conducted and overseen by the members of EDGI's Website Monitoring Committee: Maya Anjur-Dietrich, Andrew Bergman, Gretchen Gehrke, Rebecca Lave, and Toly Rinberg.

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Changes to Office of Science and Technology Policy Mission Statement

The wordings of the description and Mission Statement of the Office of Science and Technology policy were changed, and major site reorganization occurred.

Description

Both the “About” statement and Mission Statement of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) have been changed. In addition, there were several changes to the main page of the OSTP over the course of the transition between the Obama and Trump Administrations. First, between January 18 and January 21, 2017, the OSTP web pages were taken offline as the entire whitehouse.gov domain shifted to the new Administration. Then, between February 17 and February 18, 2017, a main page was created for OSTP without content, and some links were added between February 18 and February 23, 2017.

The most notable changes are summarized here:

1. In comparison 1.1 and 2.1, the removal of the phrase “sound science”.
2. In comparison 1.1, the addition of the phrase “review and analysis of Federal research and development in budgets”.
3. In comparison 2.1, the phrase change from “accurate, relevant, and timely scientific and technical advice” to “advice”.

Comparison 1: Office of Science and Technology Policy “About”

- URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/about> (Obama Administration)
Note that this link is no longer live.
- URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/about> (Trump Administration)
- Side-by-side: 1/20/17 - 3/2/2017

Screenshot 1.1

Previous “About” Statement:

Congress established the Office of Science and Technology Policy in 1976 with a broad mandate to advise the President and others within the Executive Office of the President on the effects of science and technology on domestic and international affairs. The 1976 Act also authorizes OSTP to lead interagency efforts to develop and implement sound science and technology policies and budgets, and to work with the private sector, state and local governments, the science and higher education communities, and other nations toward this end.

Current “About” Statement:

In 1976, Congress established the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to provide the President and others within the Executive Office of the President with advice on the scientific, engineering, and technology aspects of the economy, national security, homeland security, health, foreign relations, the environment, and the technological recovery and use of resources, among other topics. OSTP also leads interagency science and technology efforts, assists the Office of Management and Budget with an annual review and analysis of Federal research and development in budgets, and serves as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgement for the President with respect to major policies, plans, and programs of the Federal Government.

(1.1a) Phrase change from “domestic and international affairs” to “aspects of the economy, national security, homeland security, health, foreign relations, the environment, and the technological recovery and use of resources, among other topics”

(1.1b) Removal of phrase “sound science”

(1.1c) Removal of phrase “private sector, state and local governments, the science and higher education communities, and other nations”

(1.1d) Addition of mention of “review and analysis of Federal research and development in budgets”

Side-by-side cropped screenshots

1/20/17

3/2/17

1/20/2017

3/2/2017

About OSTP

Congress established the Office of Science and Technology Policy in 1976 with a broad mandate to advise the President and others within the Executive Office of the President on the effects of science and technology on domestic and international affairs. The 1976 Act also authorizes OSTP to lead interagency efforts to develop and implement sound science and technology policies and budgets, and to work with the private sector, state and local governments, the science and higher education communities, and other nations toward this end.

OSTP's Mission

The mission of the Office of Science and Technology Policy is threefold; first, to provide the President and his senior staff with accurate, relevant, and timely scientific and technical advice on all matters of consequence; second, to ensure that the policies of the Executive Branch are informed by sound science; and third, to ensure that the scientific and technical work of the Executive Branch is properly coordinated so as to provide the greatest benefit to society.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

- Ensure that Federal investments in science and technology are making the greatest possible contribution to economic prosperity, public health, environmental quality, and national security
- Energize and nurture the processes by which government programs in science and technology are resourced, evaluated, and coordinated
- Sustain the core professional and scientific relationships with government officials, academics, and industry representatives that are required to understand the depth and breadth of the Nation's scientific and technical enterprise, evaluate scientific advances, and identify potential policy proposals
- Generate a core workforce of world-class expertise capable of providing policy-relevant advice, analysis, and judgment for the President and his senior staff regarding the scientific and technical aspects of the major policies, plans, and programs of the Federal government

OSTP Organic Statute

About OSTP

In 1976, Congress established the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) to provide the President and others within the Executive Office of the President with advice on the scientific, engineering, and technological aspects of the economy, national security, homeland security, health, foreign relations, the environment, and the technological recovery and use of resources, among other topics. OSTP also leads interagency science and technology efforts, assists the Office of Management and Budget with an annual review and analysis of Federal research and development in budgets, and serves as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgment for the President with respect to major policies, plans, and programs of the Federal Government.

OSTP Organic Statute

Internet Archive Page Status:

Previous version of the Obama administration page captured on December 18, 2016:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20161218061337/https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/about>

Current version of the Trump administration page captured on March 6, 2017:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20170307015354/https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/about>

Comparison 2: Office of Science and Technology Policy “Mission Statement”

- URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/about> (Obama Administration)
Note that this link is no longer live.
- URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/compliance-guidelines> (Trump Administration)
- Side-by-side: 1/20/17 - 3/7/2017

Note that during the Obama Administration, the Mission Statement of the Office of Science and Technology Policy was located on the “About” page. The Trump Administration lists the Office’s Mission Statement on the “Compliance” page.

Screenshot 2.1

Previous Mission Statement:

The mission of the Office of Science and Technology Policy is threefold; first, to provide the President and his senior staff with **accurate, relevant, and timely scientific and technical advice** on all matters of consequence; second, to ensure that the policies of the Executive Branch are informed by sound science; and third, to ensure that the scientific and technical work of the Executive Branch is properly coordinated so as to provide the greatest benefit to society.

Current Mission Statement:

The Office of Science and Technology Policy’s mission is set out in the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-282, OSTP Organic Statute). It calls for OSTP to:

Serve as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgement for the President with respect to major policies, plans, and programs of the Federal Government.

In addition, the Act authorizes OSTP to provide the President and others within the Executive Office of the President with **advice** on the **scientific, engineering, and technological aspects of the economy, national security, homeland security, health, foreign relations, the environment, and the technological recovery and use of resources, among other topics**. OSTP also leads interagency science and technology efforts, assists the Office of Management and Budget with an annual review and analysis of Federal research and development in budgets, and serves as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgment for the President with respect to major policies, plans, and programs of the Federal Government.

(2.1a) **Phrase change** from “accurate, relevant, and timely scientific and technical advice” to “advice” (see red highlights above)

(2.1b) **Phrase change** from “all matters of consequence” to “scientific, engineering, and technological aspects of the economy, national security, homeland security, health, foreign relations, the environment, and the technological recovery and use of resources, among other topics” (see blue highlights above)

(2.1c) Removal of phrase “sound science”

(2.1d) Addition of original statement of purpose for the Office (quoted from [OSTP Organic Statute](#), Section 205a, 42 USC 6614)

Side-by-side cropped screenshots

1/20/17

“About” page (URL above)

1/20/2017

About OSTP

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[OSTP Organic Statute](#)

3/7/17

“Compliance” page (URL above)

3/2/2017

Mission of the Office of Science and Technology Policy

The Office of Science and Technology Policy's mission is set out in the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-282, [OSTP Organic Statute](#)). It calls for OSTP to:

Serve as a source of scientific and technological analysis and judgment for the President with respect to major policies, plans, and programs of the Federal Government.

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Screenshot 2.2

- URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/compliance-guidelines> (Trump Administration)

The screenshot shows the top of the White House website with a search bar and navigation links. The main content area is titled "OSTP Compliance Guidelines" and includes a brief introduction, the mission of the Office of Science and Technology Policy, and information quality guidelines. A sidebar on the left lists various executive offices, with "Compliance Guidelines" highlighted. A "Follow Us" section on the right provides social media links.

2 captures
27 Feb 17 ~ 7 Mar 17

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/compliance-guidelines> Go

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the WHITE HOUSE PRESIDENT DONALD J. TRUMP

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- Office of National AIDS Policy
- Office of National Drug Control Policy
- Office of Science and Technology Policy**
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- Contact Us
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- Compliance Guidelines**
- Internship Program
- NSTC
- The President's Intelligence Advisory Board
- White House Military Office

OSTP Compliance Guidelines

This site details several of OSTP's compliance guidelines, including for the Data Quality Act, the No FEAR Act, and the Recovery Act.

Mission of the Office of Science and Technology Policy

The Office of Science and Technology Policy's mission is set out in the National Science and Technology Policy, Organization, and Priorities Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-282, **OSTP Organic Statute**). It calls for OSTP to:

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Information Quality Guidelines

[Final Guidelines for Ensuring the Quality of Disseminated Information \[PDF\]](#)

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Screenshot 2.3

- URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/compliance-guidelines> (Trump Administration)

This screenshot is added solely to show the rest of the content on the Compliance page. The Obama administration did not have a Compliance page in its main menu for OSTP.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/compliance-guidelines> 67% Search

PURPOSE: The Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) today implements these final information quality guidelines pursuant to the Data Quality Act, Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

Pursuant to prior Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance, on May 1, 2002, OSTP posted an earlier draft of these guidelines on its website, and published a Notice of their availability in the Federal Register. OSTP submitted initial draft guidelines to OMB on August 1, 2002, and revised draft guidelines again on September 24, 2002. These final guidelines reflect the results of the OMB review process.

For Information Quality Act Correspondence from prior Administrations, please visit: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/eop/ostp/library/compliance/infoquality>

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- YOUTUBE
- EMAIL

No FEAR

Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002 (No FEAR Act)

- [OSTP No FEAR Act Advisory Guidelines \[PDF\]](#)
- [OPM's No FEAR Act Disciplinary Best Practices and Advisory Guidelines \[PDF\]](#)
- [No FEAR Act Notice \[PDF\]](#)
- For No Fear Act Reports from prior Administrations, please visit: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/eop/ostp/library/compliance/nofear>.

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[The Executive Branch](#)

Screenshot 2.4

- URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/about> (Obama Administration)



Internet Archive Page Status:

Previous version of the Obama administration page captured on December 18, 2016:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20161218061337/https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/about>

Current version of the Trump administration page captured on March 7, 2017:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20170307021258/https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp/compliance-guidelines>

Timeline of Office of Science and Technology Policy Main Page Creation

- URL: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp/>

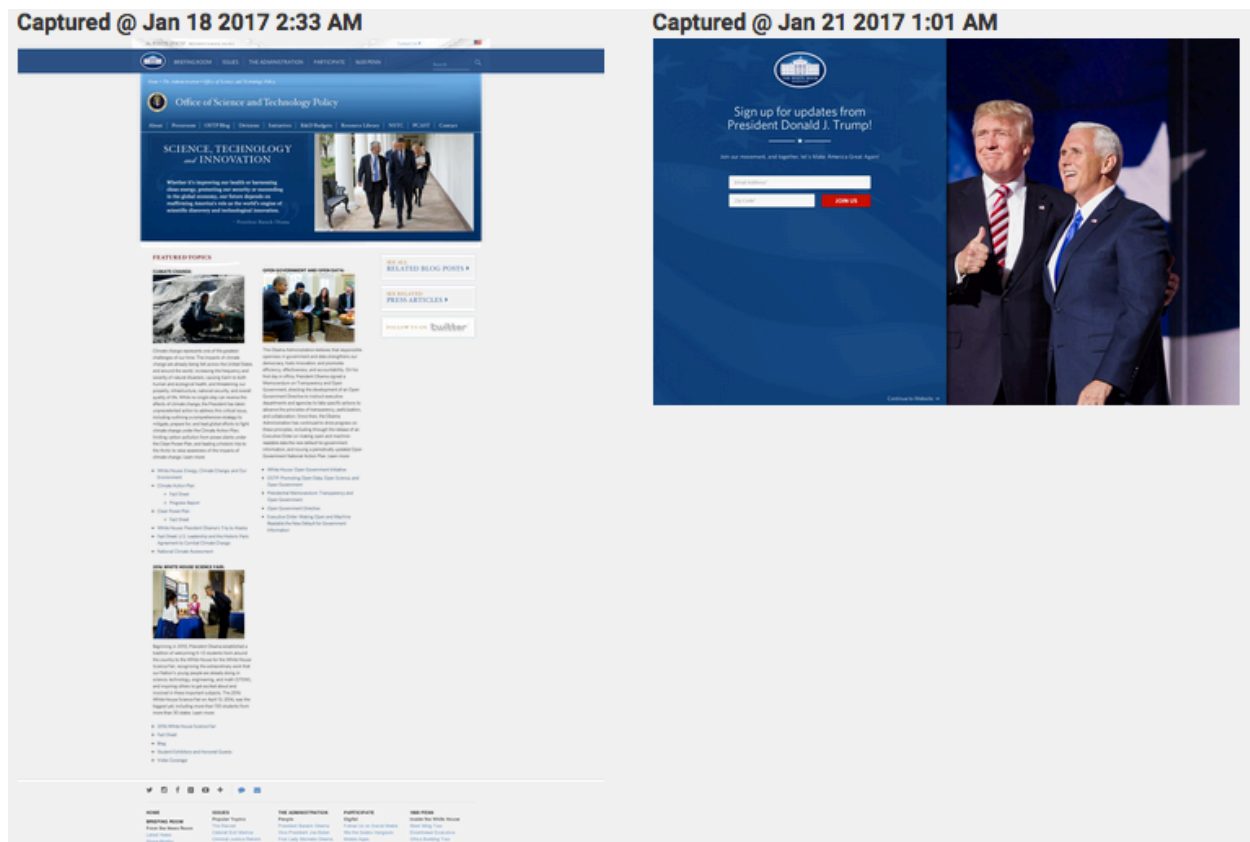
All administrations create new web presences during their transitions, meaning that the entire whitehouse.gov domain is removed and recreated. The timeline of the creation of the Trump Administration's main OSTP page is shown below.

Note that the URL for the main page of OSTP has changed to <https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp> during the transition to the Trump Administration.

Screenshot 3.1

- Side-by-side: 1/18/2017 - 1/21/2017

(3.1a) OSTP page removed as part of standard web presence switch between administrations.



Internet Archive Page Status:

Previous version of the Obama administration page captured on December 18, 2017:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20161218212927/https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ostp>

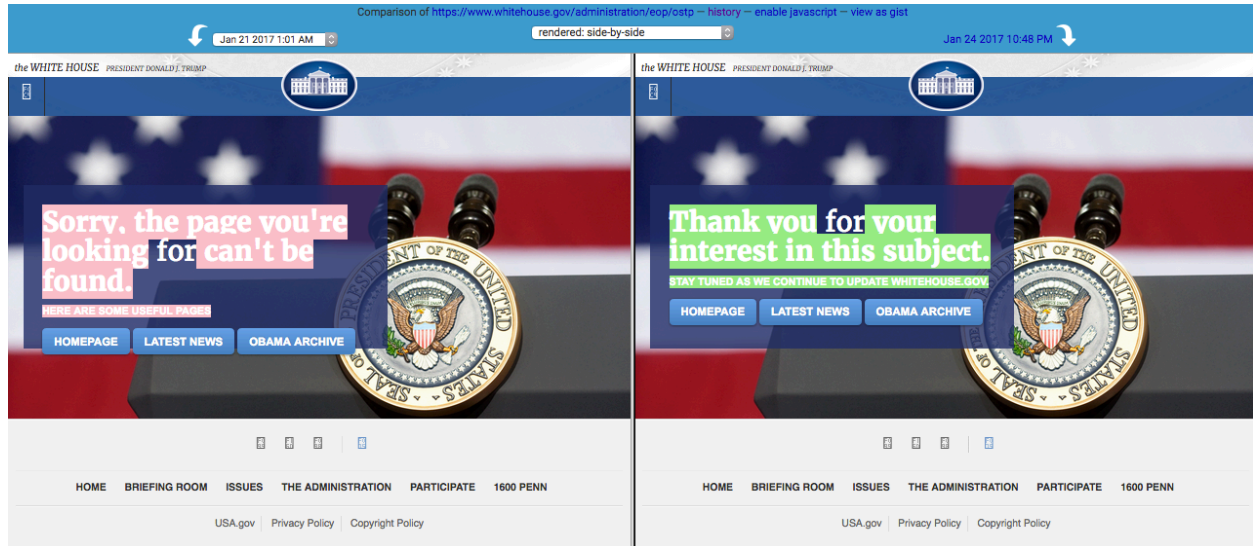
Note that the Internet Archive does not capture versions of a page when the page does not exist, meaning that the “splash pages” (meaning pages shown when a page doesn’t have

content yet) for OSTP are not part of the IA. Page snapshots were added to the Internet Archive once the new Administration had created OSTP web pages.

Screenshot 3.2

- Side-by-side: 1/21/2017 - 1/24/2017

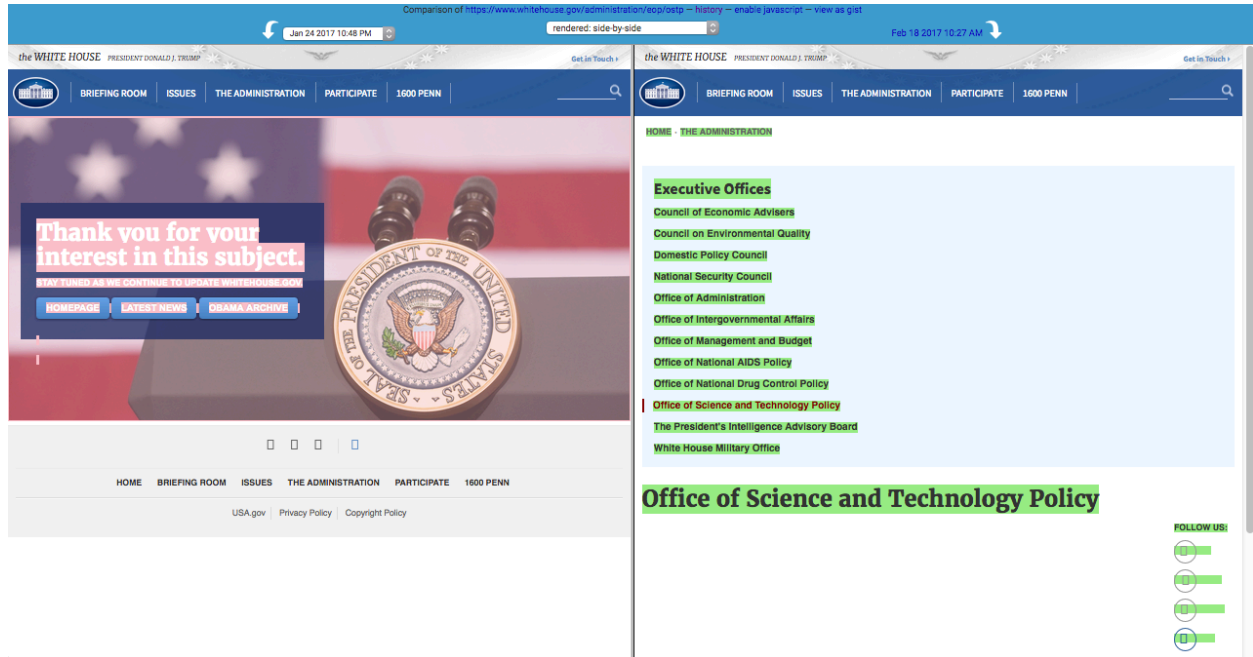
(3.2a) Trump Administration 404 splash page updated, but no additions of content



Screenshot 3.3

- Side-by-side: 1/24/2017 - 2/18/2017

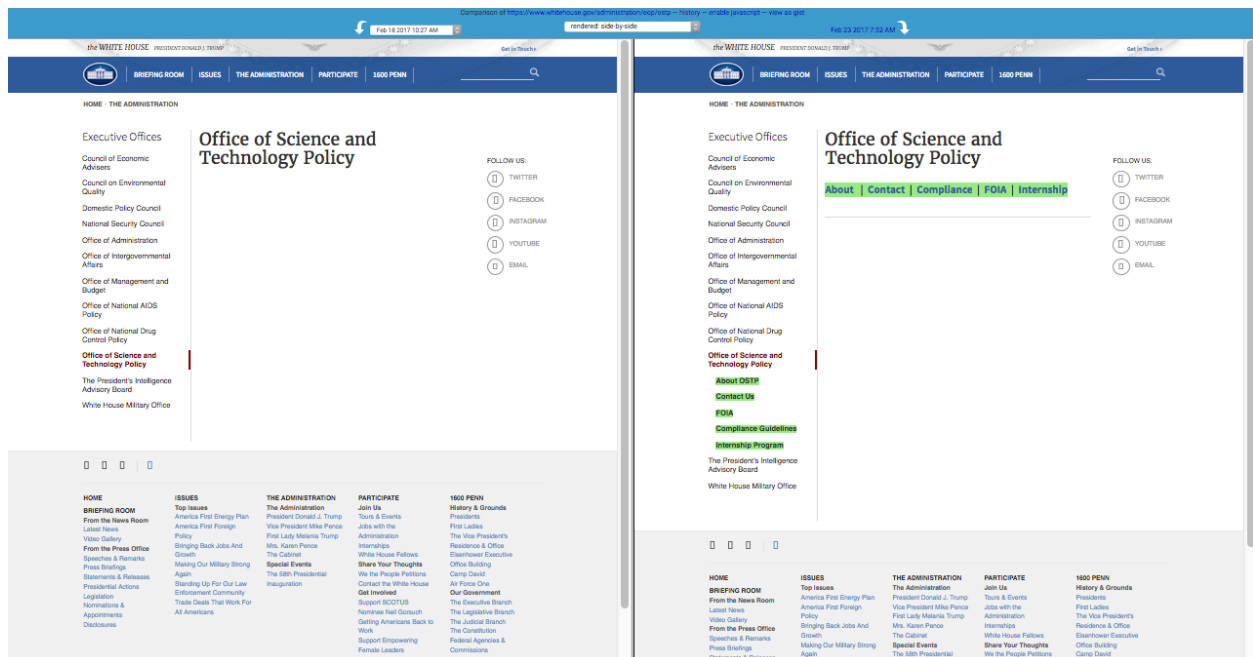
(3.3a) Between 2/17 and 2/18, an OSTP main page was created without content or additional links.



Screenshot 3.4

- Side-by-side: 2/18/2017 - 2/23/2017

(3.4a) Links to further OSTP description pages (including About and Compliance pages) added to OSTP main page.



Internet Archive Page Status:

The version of the Trump administration page captured on January 23, 2017 is the same as the March 4, 2017 version:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20170304140406/https://www.whitehouse.gov/ostp>