

Highlights from the 30th OIRA Anniversary Conference: “Executive Oversight of Administrative Discretion”

This spring marks the 30th anniversary of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, and everyone who served as Administrator or Deputy Administrator of the Office offered their perspective on its past, present and future at a conference at the George Washington University on Friday.

Panelists discussed the origins of regulatory analysis and review in the Johnson, Nixon and Carter administrations and how early questions as to the legitimacy of presidential oversight of agency regulations were resolved in the president’s favor. They shared fascinating and amusing stories of conflicts and issues over the years, contrasted OIRA’s culture and role with that of regulatory agencies and the budget offices in the Office and Management and Budget, and reflected on the evolution of the Office over the last three decades. Panelists highlighted the most important policies and practices in regulatory development and review, and recommended reforms going forward. The day concluded with remarks by current OIRA Administrator, Cass Sunstein, who discussed the most important aspects of President Obama’s new regulatory policies.

The conference was co-hosted by the George Washington University Regulatory Studies Center, the Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration, The George Washington University School of Law, and the Administrative Law Review, American University Washington College of Law.

Former Administrators

James C. Miller III (1981 – 1981)
Christopher C. DeMuth (1981 – 1984)
Douglas Ginsburg (1984 – 1985) (video)
Wendy Lee Gramm (1985 – 1988)
S. Jay Plager (1988 – 1989)
Sally Katzen (1993 – 1998)
John T. Spotila (1999 – 2000)
John Graham (2001 – 2006) (video)
Susan E. Dudley (2007 – 2009)
Cass Sunstein (2009 – present)

Former Deputy Administrators and Branch Chiefs

Jim Tozzi (1981 – 1983)
Thomas Hopkins (1981 – 1984)
Robert P. Bedell (1984 – 1986)
James MacRae (1984 – 1996)
Jefferson Hill (1981 – 2002)
Donald R. Arbuckle (1982 – 2006) (video)
John F. Morrall III (1981 – 2008)
Arthur Fraas (1981 – 2008)

Moderators

David McIntosh
Marcus Peacock
Paul Verkuil
C. Boyden Gray
Kathryn Newcomer
Richard Pierce