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**Comptroller General
of the United States**

**United States Government Accountability Office
Washington, DC 20548**

PRESS RELEASE

**DAVID M. WALKER, U.S. COMPTROLLER GENERAL, ANNOUNCES EARLY
DEPARTURE TO HEAD NEW PUBLIC INTEREST FOUNDATION**

*Walker to Become President and CEO of the Newly Formed
Peter G. Peterson Foundation*

WASHINGTON, D.C, February 15, 2008 - David M. Walker, Comptroller General of the United States and head of the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) today announced his intention to resign his position effective March 12, 2008 in order to accept the position of President and Chief Executive Officer of the newly established Peter G. Peterson Foundation.

Walker has been Comptroller General of the United States since November 1998. During his tenure, the GAO has undergone a major transformation during which the agency's role has expanded while its visibility, viability and performance have improved significantly. In addition to leading this effort, Walker has worked to modernize the accountability profession both domestically and internationally. He has also been an outspoken advocate of the need for federal policymakers to address the fiscal and other key sustainability challenges and government transformation needs facing the United States.

The Peterson Foundation will be dedicated to engaging in various actions designed to educate and activate Americans, especially younger Americans, the business community and the media, while also seeking and supporting sensible policy solutions to a range of sustainability and transformation challenges. Peterson has committed to contribute at least \$1 billion to the Foundation and related efforts over the next several years.

"Pete Peterson is a great American and a living example of the opportunities that America provides to all individuals," Walker continued. "Pete has decided to dedicate a very large amount of money to doing what's right for his country and fellow Americans. It will be an honor and a pleasure to work in partnership with Pete and the various professionals who will be associated with The Peterson Foundation. I feel confident that by working together internally and in partnership with others externally we can champion the type of changes that will help keep America great."

Walker noted that his decision was motivated by his desire to maximize his ability to make a real and lasting difference to address the fiscal, entitlement, health care, energy, education and other major sustainability challenges facing the United States.

"As Comptroller General of the United States and head of the GAO, there are real limitations on what I can do and say in connection with key public policy issues, especially issues that directly relate to GAO's client -- the Congress," Walker continued. "My new position will provide me with the ability and resources to more aggressively address a range of current and emerging challenges facing our country, including advocating specific policy solutions and courses of action. This move will enable me to sharpen my messages and bring focus and attention to the fiscal and other key sustainability challenges that I and others have been discussing during the past several years. Importantly, I will remain involved in The Fiscal Wake-up Tour and will work through the Peterson Foundation and with others to expand related public education and outreach efforts, including through expanded use of technology and new media. I will also honor my commitment to serve on the Independent Audit Advisory Committee of the United Nations."

"This was a very difficult decision for me," said Walker. "It is an honor and a privilege to serve as Comptroller General of the United States and head of the GAO. GAO is comprised of several thousand highly educated and dedicated professionals who make a difference for the Congress and the country every day. I take comfort in knowing that we have already accomplished all but one of the key goals that I set out at the beginning of my term, and that GAO is better positioned for the future. My new position will help increase the probability that we can achieve the remaining key goal: getting Congress to address the nation's large and growing fiscal and other key sustainability challenges before a crisis hits.

Furthermore, I am pleased that Gene Dodaro, GAO's Chief Operating Officer (COO) and one of the most capable career civil servants in the federal government, will serve as Acting Comptroller General upon my departure."

"In the final analysis, while I love both my job as Comptroller General and the GAO, I love my country more, and I believe that leading this Foundation represents a unique opportunity and will be good for my country," Walker concluded.

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