

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

JOHN BRADEMÁS CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF
CONGRESS

Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

**3rd Annual
BERNARD & IRENE SCHWARTZ'
LECTURE ON CONGRESS**



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**ACHIEVEMENTS IN PERIL:
CREATING A GOVERNMENT WELL EXECUTED**

Government reform used to be an option for the president and Congress—easily promised, but often ignored in favor of big-ticket spending programs. Following the \$700 billion bailout and the market meltdown the next president and Congress have little choice but to act.

The question is not whether government must become more effective as the deficit soars, but how. Professor Paul C. Light will ask how the next president and Congress can work together to create a more responsive, effective government.

Instead of pushing for small-scale reforms such as improving the civil service hiring process, Light argues that the federal government is fifty years overdue for a top to bottom overhaul. Otherwise, it is on course to becoming the "government ill executed" that Alexander Hamilton wrote about in the Federalist Papers.

Light will present the basic ingredients of a large-scale agenda, then ask how the next president might convince Congress to act. Without comprehensive reform, Light will argue, the next president faces the potential for government failures that will make the federal government's response to Hurricane Katrina and the credit crisis seem like minor miscalculations. If comprehensive reform is to succeed, it must be at the top of the agenda during the transition.

FEATURING

Paul C. Light — is Paulette Goddard Professor of Public Service at New York University's Wagner School of Public Service. Before joining NYU, he was vice president and director of governmental studies at the Brookings Institution, and founding director of its Center for Public Service. He has taught at the University of Virginia, University of Minnesota, and Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. He was also senior adviser to the U.S. Senate Governmental Affairs Committee, and director of the public policy grant program at the Pew Charitable Trusts. He is the author of 21 books, most recently *A Government Ill Executed: The Decline of the Federal Service and How to Reverse It* (Harvard University Press, 2008).

Virginia L. Thomas — is Associate Vice President at Hillsdale College and former Director of Executive Branch Relations at The Heritage Foundation. In her current position, Thomas works to advance Heritage's policy recommendations on a range of foreign and domestic issues among decision-makers in the executive branch.

Rudy deLeon—is the Senior Vice President of National Security and International Policy at the Center for American Progress in Washington, DC. He serves on several non-profit boards, and is a part-time college instructor. DeLeon is also a former senior US Department of Defense official, staff director on Capitol Hill, and retired corporate executive. For five years, beginning in 2001, he served as a senior vice president for the Boeing Company.