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Andrew M. Cuomo - Governor

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Governor Cuomo Launches Open.NY.Gov Providing Public Unprecedented User-Friendly Access to Federal, State and Local Data

Albany, NY (March 11, 2013)

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today launched "open.ny.gov," a new and comprehensive state data transparency website that provides - for the first time - user-friendly, one-stop access to data from New York State agencies, localities, and the federal government. The website, featuring economic development, health, recreation, and public services information, was unveiled today during Sunshine Week, a nationwide initiative designed to raise awareness about the importance of open government.

"Open.ny.gov creates unprecedented transparency across all levels of government and gives the people user-friendly access to vast quantities of information on our State," Governor Cuomo said. "This new website will dramatically increase public access to one of our most valuable assets - data. As it expands and evolves over time, Open.ny.gov will spark innovation, improve efficiency, promote accountability, and bring the people back into government."

The Governor today also issued an Executive Order directing state agencies to, for the first time, review and catalogue data that they collect and take steps to make public data available on the website. Data will be posted online in accordance with guidelines to be developed by the state Office of Information Technology Services (ITS), and the Executive Order directs ITS to consult with agencies and receive public input as those guidelines are finalized. As of today, over 30 state agencies and authorities, the State University of New York (SUNY) and the City University of New York (CUNY) are already making data available, and the State Education Department has agreed to participate going forward.

Open.ny.gov is also offered as a shared resource to localities across the state, which will give citizens unified access to government data and help local governments cut down costs and improve efficiency in addition to increasing transparency. The Counties of Essex, Oneida, Onondaga, and Suffolk as well as the City of Albany have already begun sharing their data on the website. The State will provide assistance to all localities that choose to use the service. Open.ny.gov can help state agencies and local governments by fostering research, promoting informed decision-making, and enhancing collaboration based on public data. It also provides agencies and localities with increased technical capacity to make their data public.

Through a partnership with the federal government, thousands of federal data sets are also available at open.ny.gov alone or in combination with New York's data. Similarly, New York's data is searchable along with data from other states on the federal website data.gov.

"New York State should be commended for its leadership in making government data more accessible, discoverable, and usable," said Todd Park, U.S. Chief Technology Officer, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, who has been leading federal open government efforts. "Opening up government data will promote greater government efficiency and effectiveness, and will fuel a rising tide of private-sector entrepreneurship, innovation and discovery."

"Open data" refers to data that is free from restrictions and can be released in a format that can be retrieved, downloaded, indexed, and searched by commonly used web search applications. Open.ny.gov provides unprecedented "open data" access and transparency to the wealth of information collected and maintained by our state and local governments. It allows researchers, citizens, business, and the tech community direct, centralized access to high-value government data to search, explore, download, and share.

Making government information available in this way promotes the development of useful "apps" based on the data, encourages researchers and watchdog groups to use the data to make suggestions for improving government and life in New York, and makes state agencies more efficient by allowing access to data outside the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) process.

Experience elsewhere has shown that making data publicly available reduces costs, makes government more efficient, and inspires productive collaborations with the private sector. Examples include:

- By putting government data online, Massachusetts has saved over \$3 million in document costs by putting procurement information online and South Carolina has seen FOIL requests decrease by one third.
- In San Francisco, access to real-time transit information resulted in decreased 311 call volume that saved over \$1 million a year.