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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

November 14, 2011

President Barack Obama
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

I am writing to urge you to immediately appoint a Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction (SIGAR).

The position of SIGAR, the Inspector General with the responsibility to detect and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse in Afghanistan, has been vacant since January 10, 2011, when Major General Arnold Fields resigned from this post. Since then, the position has been held on an acting basis by Herbert Richardson, who resigned on September 2, 2011, and by Steven Trent, who remains the acting SIGAR.

On May 17, 2011, I, along with Senators Joseph Lieberman, Susan Collins, and Rob Portman and Representatives Elijah Cummings, Darrell Issa, John Tierney, and Jason Chaffetz wrote to you requesting that you address the nine vacant presidentially-appointed Inspector General positions across the government, including SIGAR. Today, nearly six months after that letter and more than eleven months after Major General Fields' resignation, the position of SIGAR remains vacant.

The lack of a permanent Inspector General severely hampers SIGAR's ability to effectively accomplish its mission. The tenure and departure of Inspector General Fields left the organization with significant organizational and management challenges, which Mr. Richardson and Mr. Trent have begun to address. However, if SIGAR is to become the efficient, professional organization that Congress intended, it needs permanent leadership.

I am deeply frustrated by the Administration's delay in filling this critical position. As President, you have urged the nation and the Congress to address some of our nation's most pressing problems, saying "we can't wait." I ask that you find that same urgency in appointing a qualified, experienced individual as SIGAR.

I request that you give this position the attention it deserves, and appoint a Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction without further delay.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight

cc: Rob Portman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight