

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 24, 2013

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge you to act swiftly to fill vacant Inspector General positions at some of the nation's key agencies.

As you know, Congress established the Inspector General positions in 1978 as powerful and independent offices to promote the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of federal departments and agencies. The investigations and reports of these Inspectors General help the government save money, promote transparency and combat wrongdoing.

Every year, Inspectors General identify billions of dollars in potential savings, including savings from improved management practices and fines and repayments resulting from investigations. The value of the Inspectors General goes beyond dollars; these offices also help reveal and prosecute wrongdoing, and promote the integrity of government. They provide invaluable support to Congressional budgeting and oversight work. Inspectors General are an essential component of government oversight.

According to the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE), there are currently six vacant presidentially appointed Inspector General positions across the government. Five of these are at large Cabinet-level agencies – the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, Interior, Labor, and State. The sixth vacancy is at the Agency for International Development.


The vacancy at the DHS Office of Inspector General is extremely troubling, given that the agency faces many management and budget challenges, and the IG's office itself faces allegations of misconduct. We are also particularly concerned about the office of Inspector General at the State Department, which has lacked a permanent leader since January 2008.

We recognize that acting Inspectors General and career staff carry on the work of their offices during a vacancy, often ably so. Nevertheless, a sustained absence of permanent leadership is not healthy for any office – particularly one entrusted with as important and challenging a mission as an Office of Inspector General. Inspectors General occupy a unique role – tasked with “speaking truth to power” and with dual reporting obligations to their agency head

and to Congress. Those unique pressures may be especially challenging for an acting Inspector General, serving without the endorsement of Presidential selection and Senate confirmation.

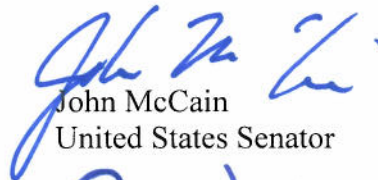
Accordingly, we urge you to quickly appoint qualified, experienced individuals to fill these vacancies. In turn, we commit to working with our colleagues to act promptly on the nominations.


Sincerely,


Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator


Tom Coburn
United States Senator


Carl Levin
United States Senator



John McCain
United States Senator


Mark L. Pryor
United States Senator



Ron Johnson
United States Senator


Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator


Rob Portman
United States Senator


Claire McCaskill
United States Senator


Rand Paul
United States Senator


Jon Tester
United States Senator


Michael B. Enzi
United States Senator


Mark Begich
United States Senator


Kelly Ayotte
United States Senator

Tammy Baldwin

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Heidi Heitkamp

Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator