

VICTOR FORTUNO

From: Laurie Tarantowicz [LTARANTOWICZ@oig.lsc.gov]
Sent: Monday, March 26, 2007 12:17 PM
To: VICTOR FORTUNO
Subject: RE: Comment on LSC Regulatory Agenda

Vic:

This comment addresses CLASP's comment on LSC's 2007 regulatory agenda. I ask that you maintain this wherever you maintain CLASP's comment and provide this to accompany CLASP's comment if that comment is (or has been) provided to someone.

1. CLASP's comment indicates it is not aware of any serious compliance problems that need to be addressed. It seems the LSC Board, management, and the OIG all believe that CRLA presents serious compliance problems that need to be addressed. Further, the issues raised in the CRLA investigation cannot be limited to one grantee when they illuminate potential problems with the implementation of legal requirements.
2. CLASP's comment indicates that to the extent the OIG's recommended action was precipitated by the OIG's investigation of CRLA the recommendations are overly broad, would greatly expand LSC's authority, and would impose new and burdensome requirements on LSC grantees. CLASP further indicates that some OIG recommendations are contrary to LSC's longstanding interpretations.

CLASP misreads the OIG's recommendations if it concludes that the OIG made its recommendations in order to fix a problem identified at one grantee. The OIG memorandum clearly states that the recommendations are not intended to resolve perceived deficiencies at one LSC grantee; rather, as stated, they are intended to improve LSC guidance to grantees generally and to improve accountability for the use of federal funds. Further, none of the recommendations expand LSC's authority in any way, nor do they seek to impose unnecessary burdens on LSC grantees. CLASP has not indicated which recommendations are contrary to LSC's longstanding interpretations but I posit that because an interpretation is longstanding makes it neither correct nor even the most beneficial.

In any event, these are precisely the types of issues that are properly and fully explored when an agency proposes changes in its regulations and opens the matters for full consideration and review, as recommended in the OIG's memorandum.

3. Finally, we must strenuously object to CLASP's allegation that the OIG has some "agenda" it is trying to push and is using the CRLA investigation as a "convenient

excuse" to do so. The OIG has raised some of the concerns discussed in the OIG memorandum previously, and has noted this in its memorandum to the Committee. This is hardly pushing an agenda; this is the OIG's responsibility under the IG Act to review and make recommendations regarding existing and proposed legislation and regulations. The notion that the OIG would use an ongoing investigation for inappropriate purposes is not only baseless but offensive.

Thank you,

Laurie

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