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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

MICHAEL L. ALEXANDER, STAFF DIRECTOR
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December 6, 2012

Patrick F. Kennedy
Under Secretary for Management
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Kennedy:

I am writing regarding a recent State Department Office of Inspector General report which found major problems with the management and operation of the Office of Information Programs and Services (IPS).¹ IPS is responsible for the Department's records management, including responding to both public requests for information through the Freedom of Information Act and requests for information by Congress.

I have raised concerns previously about the State Department's procedures for responding to congressional requests. On December 13, 2011, I asked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to review how the State Department classifies, responds to, and prioritizes congressional requests.² The Subcommittee's request was prompted by the unreasonable delays the Subcommittee experienced when it requested contracting information that should have been readily available. GAO's review is ongoing and I look forward to its observations and findings.

In September 2012, the State Department Office of Inspector General released a report which raises serious concerns about the management of IPS. The Inspector General found chronic vacancies in supervisory positions and supervisors with little substantive knowledge trying to manage critical functions. In addition, the Inspector General highlighted issues with oversight of contracts, as well as the potentially improper use of former employees as contractors. These issues appear to be impeding IPS's ability to carry out its responsibilities in

¹ United States Department of State Office of Inspector General, *Inspection of the Bureau of Administration, Global Information Services, Office of Information Programs and Services*, Report No. ISP-I-12-54 (Sept. 2012).

² Letter from Chairman Claire McCaskill to Comptroller General Gene Dodaro (Dec. 13, 2011). See also Letter from Chairman Claire McCaskill to State Department Under Secretary for Management Patrick F. Kennedy (Dec. 16, 2011).

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an efficient and effective manner. In total, the Inspector General made 55 formal and 10 informal recommendations to improve IPS operations.³

I request that the Department provide an update on its progress in addressing the problems raised in the report and implementing the OIG recommendations. I also request that the Department address how problems associated with records management have impacted its ability to respond to public and congressional requests for information. I request that you respond on or before **December 20, 2012**.

The jurisdiction of the Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight is set forth in Senate Rule XXV clause 1(k); Senate Resolution 445 section 101 (108th Congress); and Senate Resolution 73 (111th Congress). An attachment to this letter provides additional information about how to respond to the Subcommittee's request.

Please contact Sarah Garcia with the Subcommittee staff at (202) 224-1014 with any questions. Please send any official correspondence relating to this request to Kelsey_Stroud@hsgac.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight

cc: Rob Portman
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight

³ United States Department of State Office of Inspector General, *Inspection of the Bureau of Administration, Global Information Services, Office of Information Programs and Services*, Report No. ISP-I-12-54 (Sept. 2012).