

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

December 12, 2017

The Honorable Megan J. Brennan
Post Master General and Chief Executive Officer
United States Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Ms. Brennan:

I recently learned that the U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPIS) is sponsoring, and possibly funding the production of, the CBS television series *The Inspectors*. One of the USPIS's primary responsibilities is to detect and deter mail fraud and mail scams. These scams often target the most vulnerable Americans using phony job opportunities, charity and credit card fraud and other methods to obtain personally identifiable, credit card, and bank account information. According to USPIS's 2016 Annual Report and the CBS Television website, *The Inspectors* television series is part of USPIS's campaign to educate customers and improve their ability to detect and stay away from mail fraud and scams. The show uses actual USPIS cases as plot elements for fictional dramatizations of USPIS criminal investigations.¹

To better understand the purpose of this sponsorship and the details of the Postal Service's involvement with production of the television show, please provide the following information and documents:

1. What metrics are used to determine whether sponsoring or supporting the show achieves those goals?
2. Did USPS or USPIS conduct any cost-benefit analysis or review other measures of the effectiveness of the program? If so, what were the results?
3. In the five years prior to the production of *The Inspectors*, what public service efforts were made to raise awareness of the consumer scams?
4. How much was spent annually on consumer scam awareness efforts in the five years prior to the production of *The Inspectors* and how much was spent annually in the years since production of the show began?

¹ U.S. Postal Inspection Service, *Annual Report FY2016*; *U.S. Government Spending Millions To Fund 'The Inspectors' Kids Show Airs on CBS*, Deadline Hollywood (Aug. 15, 2016) (deadline.com/2016/08/the-inspectors-government-spends-millions-to-fund-cbs-kids-show-1201803819/).

5. Has any market research or audience analysis been conducted? If so, please provide a report of the results.
6. Were Postal Service Board Members and its Executive Committee made aware of, briefed, or asked for approval of USPIS's sponsorship of *The Inspectors* CBS television show? If so, please provide dated summaries of such request and briefings. If not, at what level of management authority was approval given?
7. How much have USPS and USPIS spent per year and in total, on cash or in in-kind contributions, on *The Inspectors*, including concept design, production, production advisors, and distribution?
8. What sources of funding are USPS and USPIS using for costs associated with the show? Please describe all other eligible uses for that funding.
9. How much has USPIS seized in asset forfeitures annually for each of the last 5 years, measured in dollars realized, not unsold market estimated value of unsold items?
10. Does the USPS or USPIS receive any revenue associated with the production and distribution of *The Inspectors*, and if so, how much, overall and on a per-episode basis, do USPS and USPIS receive?
11. Are there any external approval processes in order for the USPS or USPIS, as a quasi-federal agency, to sponsor a television program, including with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC)? If so, please describe these processes.
12. Have any agreements been made, or are any under negotiation or consideration for production of additional episodes of the show or for any other entertainment productions for television or other media, including internet broadcasts, internet games, radio, or feature films?
13. Please provide a copy of all USPS and USPIS contracts with Litton Entertainment, as well as any other entities involved.

I request that the USPS and USPIS provide my staff a briefing and written response to these questions as soon as possible, but no later than January 8, 2018. Please contact Kirk Kaneer with the Committee at Kirk_Kaneer@hsgac.senate.gov or (202) 224-1957 with any questions. Please send any official correspondence related to this request to Lucy Balcezak at Lucy_Balcezak@hsgac.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
Ranking Member

The Honorable Megan J. Brennan
December 12, 2017
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cc: Ron Johnson
Chairman