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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON

HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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January 22, 2010

Mr. Gene Dodaro
Acting Comptroller General of the United States
United States Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

I am writing to request that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) assess contract management, oversight, and internal controls at civilian agencies, beginning with the Department of Veterans Affairs.

For many years, GAO has reported weaknesses in government acquisition. In 2007, GAO identified government-wide acquisition as a key oversight issue for the 110th Congress. To date, GAO has focused its work on three agencies with significant acquisition budgets – the Defense Department, the Energy Department, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration – where weaknesses in contract management are so severe that GAO has listed these agencies of the High Risk List. GAO has also found pervasive deficiencies at other agencies, including the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

As part of the Subcommittee's ongoing oversight of government contracting, I request that GAO conduct a series of reviews on contract management, oversight, and internal controls at civilian agencies to determine if similar acquisition issues exist at agencies other than those already on the High Risk list. GAO should assess the extent to which agencies have designed an appropriate control environment and implemented control activities that help reduce the risk of waste in the procurement process.

I also request that GAO begin the series with a review of contract management at the Department of Veterans Affairs. In 2008, the Department of Veterans Affairs spent more than \$14.5 billion on contracts. In recent audits, the Inspector General for the Department of Veterans Affairs has found contract management weaknesses which raise concerns that the Department may be at increased risk of waste, fraud, and abuse.

Please contact Margaret Daum with the Subcommittee staff at (202) 224-8316 with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Claire McCaskill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Claire" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "McCaskill".

Senator Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight

cc: Robert Bennett
Ranking Member