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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

The Honorable Michael Young  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Agriculture during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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<sup>1</sup> *Trump's 'Beachhead' Teams Primed to Grab Agencies' Reins at Noon Friday*, Politico (Jan. 18, 2017) ([www.politico.com/blogs/donald-trump-administration/2017/01/beachhead-teams-agenda-inauguration-day-233774](http://www.politico.com/blogs/donald-trump-administration/2017/01/beachhead-teams-agenda-inauguration-day-233774)).

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including who comprises the agency “beachhead teams” and other political appointments and what function these appointees serve relative to the individuals currently in acting positions at federal agencies, pending confirmation of the President’s nominees for cabinet positions.

Already, without Senate-confirmed secretaries, federal agencies in the Trump Administration are making decisions that could adversely impact significant numbers of Americans. For example, on January 20, 2017, the Department of Housing and Urban Development reversed a decision to help expand access to affordable housing to thousands of American families by announcing that it had “suspended indefinitely” a reduction of Mortgage Insurance Premiums for Federal Housing Administration insured loans.<sup>4</sup> That same day, the Department of Justice stated that it would request a delay in a federal case examining the constitutionality of a Texas voter identification law.<sup>5</sup> On January 21, 2017, the Department of Interior suspended its official Twitter account after the Department tweeted images depicting the National Mall during the inauguration of President Donald Trump and President Barack Obama.<sup>6</sup> The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture also put in place formal policies restricting certain communications with the American public.<sup>7</sup> Media reports were unclear regarding which agency officials were involved in directing any of these decisions.

Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of a Senate-confirmed secretary. In order to better understand the Department’s current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

1. A list of and contact information (phone and email address) for the Department’s senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity

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<sup>4</sup> Federal Housing Administration, Mortgage Letter 2017-07 (Jan. 20, 2017).

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- pending confirmation of a presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed (PAS) official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary;
2. List when the members of the Department's "beachhead" team and senior advisors began working at the Department, and explain whether any or all members of the Department's "beachhead team" or senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary have received required ethics training and submitted applicable ethics disclosures;
  3. Provide all documents referring or relating to the roles and responsibilities of each member of the Department's senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity pending confirmation of a PAS official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary; and
  4. Explain whether the Department has in place appropriate Delegation of Authority documents or any other documents outlining authorities for acting officials, members of the "beachhead" team, and senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary.

Please confirm that you have also provided the above requested information to the Department's Office of Inspector General not later than close of business on February 6, 2017.

Should you have any questions regarding this inquiry, please contact Donald Sherman on my staff at [Donald\\_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Donald_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov) or by phone at (202) 224-2627. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Phyllis K. Fong  
Inspector General

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# United States Senate

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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

January 30, 2017

The Honorable Ellen Herbst  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20230

Dear Madam Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Commerce during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of a Senate-confirmed secretary. In order to better understand the Department’s current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

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Please confirm that you have also provided the above requested information to the Department's Office of Inspector General not later than close of business on February 6, 2017.

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Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Peggy E. Gustafson  
Inspector General

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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Philip H. Rosenfelt  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Education during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Kathleen S. Tighe  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Education

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CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Adam J. Szubin  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Treasury  
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of the Treasury during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

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including who comprises the agency “beachhead teams” and other political appointments and what function these appointees serve relative to the individuals currently in acting positions at federal agencies, pending confirmation of the President’s nominees for cabinet positions.

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Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of a Senate-confirmed secretary. In order to better understand the Department’s current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

1. A list of and contact information (phone and email address) for the Department’s senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity

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Please confirm that you have also provided the above requested information to the Department's Office of Inspector General not later than close of business on February 6, 2017.

Should you have any questions regarding this inquiry, please contact Donald Sherman on my staff at [Donald\\_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Donald_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov) or by phone at (202) 224-2627. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Eric M. Thorson  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of the Treasury

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## United States Senate

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

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

January 30, 2017

Dr. Grace M. Bochenek  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Madam Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Energy during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of a Senate-confirmed secretary. In order to better understand the Department’s current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

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Dr. Grace M. Bochenek

January 30, 2017

Page 3

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January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

K. Jack Haugrud  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of the Interior during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

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Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
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cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

Ms. Mary L. Kendall  
Deputy Inspector General  
U.S. Department of the Interior

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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

January 30, 2017

The Honorable Sally Q. Yates  
Acting Attorney General  
U.S. Department of Justice  
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Madam Acting Attorney General:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Justice during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

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<sup>5</sup> *Trump DOJ Asks for Delay in Texas Voter ID Case Due to ‘Change in Administration’*, CNN (website) (Jan. 20, 2017) (<http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/20/politics/trump-doj-voter-id-delay/index.html>).

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pending confirmation of a presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed (PAS) official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary;

2. List when the members of the Department's "beachhead" team and senior advisors began working at the Department, and explain whether any or all members of the Department's "beachhead team" or senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary have received required ethics training and submitted applicable ethics disclosures;
3. Provide all documents referring or relating to the roles and responsibilities of each member of the Department's senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity pending confirmation of a PAS official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary; and
4. Explain whether the Department has in place appropriate Delegation of Authority documents or any other documents outlining authorities for acting officials, members of the "beachhead" team, and senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary.

Please confirm that you have also provided the above requested information to the Department's Office of Inspector General not later than close of business on February 6, 2017.

Should you have any questions regarding this inquiry, please contact Donald Sherman on my staff at [Donald\\_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Donald_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov) or by phone at (202) 224-2627. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
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The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz  
Inspector General

The Honorable Sally Q. Yates

January 30, 2017

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U.S. Department of Justice

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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Edward C. Hugler  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Labor during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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including who comprises the agency “beachhead teams” and other political appointments and what function these appointees serve relative to the individuals currently in acting positions at federal agencies, pending confirmation of the President’s nominees for cabinet positions.

Already, without Senate-confirmed secretaries, federal agencies in the Trump Administration are making decisions that could adversely impact significant numbers of Americans. For example, on January 20, 2017, the Department of Housing and Urban Development reversed a decision to help expand access to affordable housing to thousands of American families by announcing that it had “suspended indefinitely” a reduction of Mortgage Insurance Premiums for Federal Housing Administration insured loans.<sup>4</sup> That same day, the Department of Justice stated that it would request a delay in a federal case examining the constitutionality of a Texas voter identification law.<sup>5</sup> On January 21, 2017, the Department of Interior suspended its official Twitter account after the Department tweeted images depicting the National Mall during the inauguration of President Donald Trump and President Barack Obama.<sup>6</sup> The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture also put in place formal policies restricting certain communications with the American public.<sup>7</sup> Media reports were unclear regarding which agency officials were involved in directing any of these decisions.

Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of a Senate-confirmed secretary. In order to better understand the Department’s current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

1. A list of and contact information (phone and email address) for the Department’s senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity

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Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
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cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Scott S. Dahl  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Labor

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# United States Senate

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

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

January 30, 2017

The Honorable Thomas A. Shannon, Jr.  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Acting Secretary Shannon:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of State during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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The Honorable Thomas A. Shannon, Jr.

January 30, 2017

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# United States Senate

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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Michael P. Huerta  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Transportation during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

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Michael P. Huerta

January 30, 2017

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Senate Homeland Security and  
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Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Calvin L. Scovel III  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Transportation

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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 30, 2017

Catherine R. McCabe  
Acting Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Madam Acting Administrator:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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<sup>1</sup> *Trump's 'Beachhead' Teams Primed to Grab Agencies' Reins at Noon Friday*, Politico (Jan. 18, 2017) ([www.politico.com/blogs/donald-trump-administration/2017/01/beachhead-teams-agenda-inauguration-day-233774](http://www.politico.com/blogs/donald-trump-administration/2017/01/beachhead-teams-agenda-inauguration-day-233774)).

<sup>2</sup> See e.g., *Trump Assembles a Shadow Cabinet*, Politico (Jan. 24, 2017) ([www.politico.com/story/2017/01/trumps-shadow-cabinet-234088](http://www.politico.com/story/2017/01/trumps-shadow-cabinet-234088)); see also *Trump Reportedly Installing 'Shadow Cabinet' in Federal Agencies*, AOL News (Jan. 24, 2017) ([www.aol.com/article/news/2017/01/24/trump-reportedly-installing-shadow-cabinet-in-federal-agencies/21661843/](http://www.aol.com/article/news/2017/01/24/trump-reportedly-installing-shadow-cabinet-in-federal-agencies/21661843/)).

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including who comprises the agency “beachhead teams” and other political appointments and what function these appointees serve relative to the individuals currently in acting positions at federal agencies, pending confirmation of the President’s nominees for cabinet positions.

Already, without Senate-confirmed leadership, federal agencies in the Trump Administration are making decisions that could adversely impact significant numbers of Americans. For example, on January 20, 2017, the Department of Housing and Urban Development reversed a decision to help expand access to affordable housing to thousands of American families by announcing that it had “suspended indefinitely” a reduction of Mortgage Insurance Premiums for Federal Housing Administration insured loans.<sup>4</sup> That same day, the Department of Justice stated that it would request a delay in a federal case examining the constitutionality of a Texas voter identification law.<sup>5</sup> On January 21, 2017, the Department of Interior suspended its official Twitter account after the Department tweeted images depicting the National Mall during the inauguration of President Donald Trump and President Barack Obama.<sup>6</sup> The EPA and the Department of Agriculture also put in place formal policies restricting certain communications with the American public.<sup>7</sup> Media reports were unclear regarding which agency officials were involved in directing any of these decisions.

Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of Senate-confirmed leadership. In order to better understand EPA’s current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

1. A list of and contact information (phone and email address) for the Department’s senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity

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<sup>4</sup> Federal Housing Administration, Mortgage Letter 2017-07 (Jan. 20, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> *Trump DOJ Asks for Delay in Texas Voter ID Case Due to ‘Change in Administration’*, CNN (website) (Jan. 20, 2017) (<http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/20/politics/trump-doj-voter-id-delay/index.html>).

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- pending confirmation of a presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed (PAS) official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary;
2. List when the members of the Department's "beachhead" team and senior advisors began working at the Department, and explain whether any or all members of the Department's "beachhead team" or senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary have received required ethics training and submitted applicable ethics disclosures;
  3. Provide all documents referring or relating to the roles and responsibilities of each member of the Department's senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity pending confirmation of a PAS official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary; and
  4. Explain whether the Department has in place appropriate Delegation of Authority documents or any other documents outlining authorities for acting officials, members of the "beachhead" team, and senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary.

Please confirm that you have also provided the above requested information to the Department's Office of Inspector General not later than close of business on February 6, 2017.

Should you have any questions regarding this inquiry, please contact Donald Sherman on my staff at [Donald\\_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Donald_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov) or by phone at (202) 224-2627. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Arthur A. Elkins, Jr.  
Inspector General  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

RON JOHNSON, WISCONSIN, CHAIRMAN

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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Norris W. Cochran  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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including who comprises the agency “beachhead teams” and other political appointments and what function these appointees serve relative to the individuals currently in acting positions at federal agencies, pending confirmation of the President’s nominees for cabinet positions.

Already, without Senate-confirmed secretaries, federal agencies in the Trump Administration are making decisions that could adversely impact significant numbers of Americans. For example, on January 20, 2017, the Department of Housing and Urban Development reversed a decision to help expand access to affordable housing to thousands of American families by announcing that it had “suspended indefinitely” a reduction of Mortgage Insurance Premiums for Federal Housing Administration insured loans.<sup>4</sup> That same day, the Department of Justice stated that it would request a delay in a federal case examining the constitutionality of a Texas voter identification law.<sup>5</sup> On January 21, 2017, the Department of Interior suspended its official Twitter account after the Department tweeted images depicting the National Mall during the inauguration of President Donald Trump and President Barack Obama.<sup>6</sup> The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture also put in place formal policies restricting certain communications with the American public.<sup>7</sup> Media reports were unclear regarding which agency officials were involved in directing any of these decisions.

Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of a Senate-confirmed secretary. In order to better understand the Department’s current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

1. A list of and contact information (phone and email address) for the Department’s senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity

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- pending confirmation of a presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed (PAS) official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary;
2. List when the members of the Department's "beachhead" team and senior advisors began working at the Department, and explain whether any or all members of the Department's "beachhead team" or senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary have received required ethics training and submitted applicable ethics disclosures;
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Please confirm that you have also provided the above requested information to the Department's Office of Inspector General not later than close of business on February 6, 2017.

Should you have any questions regarding this inquiry, please contact Donald Sherman on my staff at [Donald\\_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Donald_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov) or by phone at (202) 224-2627. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
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The Honorable Daniel R. Levinson  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Craig T. Clemmensen  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development  
451 7th Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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including who comprises the agency “beachhead teams” and other political appointments and what function these appointees serve relative to the individuals currently in acting positions at federal agencies, pending confirmation of the President’s nominees for cabinet positions.

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Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable David A. Montoya  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development



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January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Joseph P. Loddo  
Acting Administrator  
U.S. Small Business Administration  
409 3rd Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20416

Dear Mr. Acting Administrator:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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<sup>2</sup> *See e.g., Trump Assembles a Shadow Cabinet*, Politico (Jan. 24, 2017) ([www.politico.com/story/2017/01/trumps-shadow-cabinet-234088](http://www.politico.com/story/2017/01/trumps-shadow-cabinet-234088)); *see also Trump Reportedly Installing 'Shadow Cabinet' in Federal Agencies*, AOL News (Jan. 24, 2017) ([www.aol.com/article/news/2017/01/24/trump-reportedly-installing-shadow-cabinet-in-federal-agencies/21661843/](http://www.aol.com/article/news/2017/01/24/trump-reportedly-installing-shadow-cabinet-in-federal-agencies/21661843/)).

<sup>3</sup> *Trump Assembles a Shadow Cabinet*, Politico (Jan. 24, 2017) (<http://www.politico.com/story/2017/01/trumps-shadow-cabinet-234088>).

including who comprises the agency “beachhead teams” and other political appointments and what function these appointees serve relative to the individuals currently in acting positions at federal agencies, pending confirmation of the President’s nominees for cabinet positions.

Already, without Senate-confirmed leadership, federal agencies in the Trump Administration are making decisions that could adversely impact significant numbers of Americans. For example, on January 20, 2017, the Department of Housing and Urban Development reversed a decision to help expand access to affordable housing to thousands of American families by announcing that it had “suspended indefinitely” a reduction of Mortgage Insurance Premiums for Federal Housing Administration insured loans.<sup>4</sup> That same day, the Department of Justice stated that it would request a delay in a federal case examining the constitutionality of a Texas voter identification law.<sup>5</sup> On January 21, 2017, the Department of Interior suspended its official Twitter account after the Department tweeted images depicting the National Mall during the inauguration of President Donald Trump and President Barack Obama.<sup>6</sup> The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture also put in place formal policies restricting certain communications with the American public.<sup>7</sup> Media reports were unclear regarding which agency officials were involved in directing any of these decisions.

Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of Senate-confirmed leadership. In order to better understand SBA’s current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

1. A list of and contact information (phone and email address) for the Department’s senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity

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<sup>4</sup> Federal Housing Administration, Mortgage Letter 2017-07 (Jan. 20, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> *Trump DOJ Asks for Delay in Texas Voter ID Case Due to ‘Change in Administration’*, CNN (website) (Jan. 20, 2017) (<http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/20/politics/trump-doj-voter-id-delay/index.html>).

<sup>6</sup> *The Interior Department Was Ordered to Suspend Twitter Accounts After Trump Inauguration Tweets*, Fortune (website) (Jan. 21, 2017) ([fortune.com/2017/01/21/interior-department-twitter-donald-trump-inauguration/](http://fortune.com/2017/01/21/interior-department-twitter-donald-trump-inauguration/)).

<sup>7</sup> *Federal Agencies Ordered to Restrict their Communications*, Washington Post (Jan. 24, 2017) ([www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federal-agencies-ordered-to-restrict-their-communications/2017/01/24/9daa6aa4-e26f-11e6-ba11-63c4b4fb5a63\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.0e56356fa6e0&wpisrc=nl\\_draw&wpmm=1](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federal-agencies-ordered-to-restrict-their-communications/2017/01/24/9daa6aa4-e26f-11e6-ba11-63c4b4fb5a63_story.html?utm_term=.0e56356fa6e0&wpisrc=nl_draw&wpmm=1)).

- pending confirmation of a presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed (PAS) official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary;
2. List when the members of the Department's "beachhead" team and senior advisors began working at the Department, and explain whether any or all members of the Department's "beachhead team" or senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary have received required ethics training and submitted applicable ethics disclosures;
  3. Provide all documents referring or relating to the roles and responsibilities of each member of the Department's senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity pending confirmation of a PAS official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary; and
  4. Explain whether the Department has in place appropriate Delegation of Authority documents or any other documents outlining authorities for acting officials, members of the "beachhead" team, and senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary.

Please confirm that you have also provided the above requested information to the Department's Office of Inspector General not later than close of business on February 6, 2017.

Should you have any questions regarding this inquiry, please contact Donald Sherman on my staff at [Donald\\_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Donald_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov) or by phone at (202) 224-2627. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

Mr. Hannibal "Mike" Ware  
Acting Inspector General  
U.S. Small Business Administration

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# United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON  
HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

January 30, 2017

CHRISTOPHER R. HIXON, STAFF DIRECTOR  
MARGARET E. DAUM, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

Robert D. Snyder  
Acting Secretary  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Mr. Acting Secretary:

I am writing to request information regarding leadership positions and other critical staffing at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs during this period of Presidential transition. As the Senate considers President Trump's nominees for cabinet posts, we must also ensure that the federal government remains open and provides necessary services to the American people. In order to meet these oversight obligations, the United States Congress, the IG community and the public must first know who is leading decision-making and operations at federal agencies.

While the confirmation process remains ongoing, it is unclear when Senate leadership will schedule floor votes to confirm several of President Trump's cabinet nominees or who is directing critical decisions at our federal agencies in their absence. Despite this uncertainty, the Trump administration has already deployed hundreds of political appointees to federal agencies to begin work. A spokesperson for the Trump administration reported that: "We have approximately 520 individuals on the beachhead teams and they have worked with the agencies to go in any time after 12:01 [p.m.] on Friday — each team has worked out their own timing."<sup>1</sup> Media reports also indicate that the White House has hired senior aides within federal agencies to monitor the administration's Cabinet secretaries once confirmed.<sup>2</sup> According to a report by *Politico*, these aides "have already been responsible for hiring at some departments and crafting the blueprint of Trump policy before the Cabinet members win Senate confirmation to take office."<sup>3</sup> After this spate of hiring, critical details remain unclear to the American public

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<sup>1</sup> *Trump's 'Beachhead' Teams Primed to Grab Agencies' Reins at Noon Friday*, Politico (Jan. 18, 2017) ([www.politico.com/blogs/donald-trump-administration/2017/01/beachhead-teams-agenda-inauguration-day-233774](http://www.politico.com/blogs/donald-trump-administration/2017/01/beachhead-teams-agenda-inauguration-day-233774)).

<sup>2</sup> See e.g., *Trump Assembles a Shadow Cabinet*, Politico (Jan. 24, 2017) ([www.politico.com/story/2017/01/trumps-shadow-cabinet-234088](http://www.politico.com/story/2017/01/trumps-shadow-cabinet-234088)); see also *Trump Reportedly Installing 'Shadow Cabinet' in Federal Agencies*, AOL News (Jan. 24, 2017) ([www.aol.com/article/news/2017/01/24/trump-reportedly-installing-shadow-cabinet-in-federal-agencies/21661843/](http://www.aol.com/article/news/2017/01/24/trump-reportedly-installing-shadow-cabinet-in-federal-agencies/21661843/)).

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including who comprises the agency “beachhead teams” and other political appointments and what function these appointees serve relative to the individuals currently in acting positions at federal agencies, pending confirmation of the President’s nominees for cabinet positions.

Already, without Senate-confirmed secretaries, federal agencies in the Trump Administration are making decisions that could adversely impact significant numbers of Americans. For example, on January 20, 2017, the Department of Housing and Urban Development reversed a decision to help expand access to affordable housing to thousands of American families by announcing that it had “suspended indefinitely” a reduction of Mortgage Insurance Premiums for Federal Housing Administration insured loans.<sup>4</sup> That same day, the Department of Justice stated that it would request a delay in a federal case examining the constitutionality of a Texas voter identification law.<sup>5</sup> On January 21, 2017, the Department of Interior suspended its official Twitter account after the Department tweeted images depicting the National Mall during the inauguration of President Donald Trump and President Barack Obama.<sup>6</sup> The Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Agriculture also put in place formal policies restricting certain communications with the American public.<sup>7</sup> Media reports were unclear regarding which agency officials were involved in directing any of these decisions.

Although with any Presidential transition federal agencies maintain continuity of leadership with acting agency and program heads, as of this writing, some agencies, such as the Department of Agriculture, have not updated their leadership webpages to reflect current agency leadership appointed in an acting capacity. It is critically important that Congress and the Inspector General are aware of, and able to communicate with all Departmental leadership, even in these early days of the new administration. More importantly, the American people need to know who is accountable for the decisions made by federal agencies, especially in the absence of a Senate-confirmed secretary. In order to better understand the Department of Veterans Affairs’ current leadership structure please provide the following information to my office not later than close of business on February 6, 2017:

1. A list of and contact information (phone and email address) for the Department’s senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity

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<sup>4</sup> Federal Housing Administration, Mortgagee Letter 2017-07 (Jan. 20, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> *Trump DOJ Asks for Delay in Texas Voter ID Case Due to 'Change in Administration'*, CNN (website) (Jan. 20, 2017) (<http://www.cnn.com/2017/01/20/politics/trump-doj-voter-id-delay/index.html>).

<sup>6</sup> *The Interior Department Was Ordered to Suspend Twitter Accounts After Trump Inauguration Tweets*, Fortune (website) (Jan. 21, 2017) ([fortune.com/2017/01/21/interior-department-twitter-donald-trump-inauguration/](http://fortune.com/2017/01/21/interior-department-twitter-donald-trump-inauguration/)).

<sup>7</sup> *Federal Agencies Ordered to Restrict their Communications*, Washington Post (Jan. 24, 2017) ([www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federal-agencies-ordered-to-restrict-their-communications/2017/01/24/9daa6aa4-e26f-11e6-ba11-63c4b4fb5a63\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.0e56356fa6e0&wpisrc=nl\\_draw&wppmm=1](http://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/federal-agencies-ordered-to-restrict-their-communications/2017/01/24/9daa6aa4-e26f-11e6-ba11-63c4b4fb5a63_story.html?utm_term=.0e56356fa6e0&wpisrc=nl_draw&wppmm=1)).

- pending confirmation of a presidentially appointed, Senate confirmed (PAS) official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary;
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  3. Provide all documents referring or relating to the roles and responsibilities of each member of the Department's senior leadership team including, but not limited to: (a) officials appointed in an acting capacity pending confirmation of a PAS official; (b) officials appointed as members of the Trump Administration's "beachhead" team; and (c) any political appointees hired as senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary; and
  4. Explain whether the Department has in place appropriate Delegation of Authority documents or any other documents outlining authorities for acting officials, members of the "beachhead" team, and senior advisors within the Office of the Secretary.

Please confirm that you have also provided the above requested information to the Department's Office of Inspector General not later than close of business on February 6, 2017.

Should you have any questions regarding this inquiry, please contact Donald Sherman on my staff at [Donald\\_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Donald_Sherman@hsgac.senate.gov) or by phone at (202) 224-2627. Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this request. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill  
Ranking Member  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

cc: The Honorable Ron Johnson  
Chairman  
Senate Homeland Security and  
Governmental Affairs Committee

The Honorable Michael J. Missal  
Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs