



UNITED STATES SENATOR (Ret.)

JOHN GLENN
OHIO

July 23, 2015

The Honorable Ron Johnson, Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz, Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

Dear Senator Johnson and Representative Chaffetz:

Since the enactment of the Inspector General Act in 1978, the Inspectors General have provided independent oversight of government programs and operations and pursued prosecution of criminal activity against the government's interests. Recommendations from IG audits have led to improvements in the economy and efficiency of government programs that have resulted in better delivery of needed services to countless citizens. Investigations of those who violate the public trust to enrich themselves at the expense of honest taxpayers, of contractors who skirt the rules to illegally inflate their profits, and of others who devise criminal schemes to defraud the government have led to billions of dollars being returned to the U.S. Treasury.

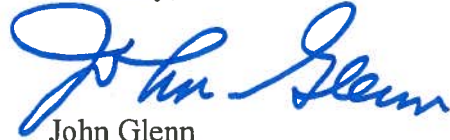
The success of the IG Act is rooted in the principles on which the Act is grounded—independence, direct reporting to Congress, dedicated staff and resources, unrestricted access to agency records, subpoena power, special protections for agency employees who cooperate with the IG, and the ability to refer criminal matters to the Department of Justice without clearing such referrals through the agency. We considered these safeguards to be vital when we developed the Act and they remain essential today. No other entity within government has the unique role and responsibility of Inspectors General, and their ability to accomplish their critical mission depends on the preservation of the principles underlying the Inspector General Act.

In recent years, IGs have experienced challenges to their ability to have independent access to records and information in their host agencies. Broad independent access to such records is a fundamental tenet in the IG Act and to compromise or in any way erode such access would strike at the heart of important law. In short, full and unfettered access is vital to an IG's ability to effectively prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse in agency programs and activities.

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The Inspector General Act has stood the test of time. The billions of dollars recovered for the government and the increased efficiency and effectiveness of government programs and operations are a testament to the Act's continued success. Any action that would impair the IG's ability to achieve their mission—particularly the denial of full and independent access to agency records and information – would have an immeasurable adverse impact and severely damage their critical oversight function. For this reason, I urge you to take action to protect the independent access rights of Inspectors General.

Sincerely,



John Glenn
United States Senator (Ret.)

CC: The Honorable Thomas R. Carper
Ranking Minority Member

The Honorable Elijah Cummings
Ranking Minority Member