

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 12, 2025

Chairman Rand Paul
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Paul:

We write to request that you urgently convene a bipartisan hearing on President Trump's dismissal of 18 Inspectors General without prior notification to Congress, as required by law, and that the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs conduct oversight to ensure that the abrupt removal of these Inspectors General does not result in improper termination of ongoing Inspector General investigations and to inform future legislation to protect Inspectors General.

President Trump's sudden removal of 18 Inspectors General on January 25, 2025 and removal of the Inspector General for the U.S. Agency for International Development on February 11, 2025, was a clear violation of federal law and poses an existential threat to the federal government's ability to conduct independent oversight.¹ These unprecedented terminations put at grave risk the independence of traditionally nonpartisan Inspectors General and contravened statutory requirements that Presidents must notify Congress prior to an Inspector General's removal and provide a substantive rationale. A bipartisan amendment signed into law as part of the 2023 National Defense Authorization Act requires the President to provide written notification informing Congress of the President's decision to dismiss or transfer an Inspector General at least 30 days before taking action to do so.² Under the law, such notification must include the "substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons for any such removal or transfer to both Houses of Congress."³

Just days after his inauguration, President Trump acted unilaterally without regard for these requirements enshrined in law, which are intended to prevent Presidents from removing Inspectors General for political or other corrupt or self-interested reasons and so that Congress can exercise necessary oversight as part of any effort to replace a sitting Inspector General.

Congress has a vested interest in ensuring that Inspectors General are protected from political interference and remain trusted, nonpartisan, and accountable watchdogs of the federal government. In this spirit, just days before these terminations, several Members of this body established a bipartisan caucus to ensure Inspectors General are empowered to properly identify and mitigate waste, fraud, and abuse.⁴

¹ Charlie Savage, *Fired Inspectors General Raise Alarms as Trump Administration Moves to Finalize Purge*, The New York Times (January 27, 2025) <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/01/27/us/politics/trump-inspectors-general-fired.html>

² Pub. L. 117-263.

³ *Id.*

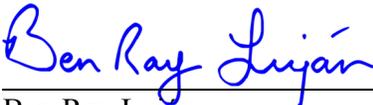
⁴ Sean Michael Newhouse, *Inspectors general have a new bipartisan caucus in the Senate*, Government Executive (January 16, 2025) <https://www.govexec.com/oversight/2025/01/inspectors-general-have-new-bipartisan-caucus->

As the Senate's primary oversight committee with broad jurisdiction over government operations, including Inspectors General, the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs has on many occasions worked on a bipartisan basis to address waste, fraud, and abuse identified by Inspectors General.

The protection and independence of Inspectors General remains a bipartisan priority, and your Committee is uniquely positioned to move swiftly to convene a hearing and undertake necessary and meaningful oversight.

Sincerely,


Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator


Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator

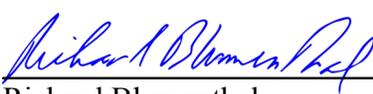

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator


Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator


Tim Kaine
United States Senator


Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator


Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator


Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator


Ron Wyden
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Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

cc: Ranking Member Gary Peters
Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs