

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

June 29, 2017

Dear Mr. President:

It is imperative that you nominate a permanent Inspector General (IG) for the Department of the Interior as soon as possible. The Department's Office of the Inspector General has been without a permanent appointee for over eight years, compromising its ability to root out waste, fraud, and abuse with maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

After the previous IG vacated the position, acting IG Mary Kendall was nominated in 2015. However, attacks on her integrity by Congressional Republicans derailed her nomination, despite two investigations by the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency as well as the Department of Health and Human Services Inspector General, both of which found nothing.


It is critical to have an IG that is permanent. A permanent IG has the incentive and the tenure-based credibility to engage in long-term planning, self-examination, and improvements for the Office based on experience. Permanence also sends a clear signal that the Office and its mission are priorities for your Administration.


It is equally important to have an IG that is effective. The IG Act of 1976 requires that "Each Inspector General shall be appointed without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability in accounting, auditing, financial analysis, law, management analysis, public administration, or investigations."^[1] Transparency and aggressiveness must also be requirements. The baseless attacks on Ms. Kendall politicized the Office of the DoI IG and the impacts of that interference must be remedied.

The Department of the Interior regularly makes decisions that will affect our lives and those of future generations on issues ranging from endangered species, to access to clean drinking water, to public safety, to climate change. The Department will be most effective and efficient when there is adequate oversight of its operations.

We urge you to nominate a permanent Inspector General for the Interior Department as soon as possible. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


Raúl M. Grijalva
Ranking Member
Committee on Natural Resources


A. Donald McEachin
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on
Oversight and Investigations

^[1] IG Act, §§ 3(a); 8G(c)