

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 31, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20550

Dear Mr. President,

Your decision Friday evening to remove Inspectors General (IGs) from at least 18 offices across government—including those overseeing the Departments of Defense, State, Education, Transportation, Veterans Affairs, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Energy, Commerce, Agriculture, Labor, Health and Human Services, and Treasury, and the Environmental Protection Agency, the Office of Personnel Management, the Small Business Administration, and the Social Security Administration, as well as the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction<sup>1</sup>—does not comply with current law and could do lasting harm to IG independence. “These officials, which include those appointed by Presidents of both parties, including many during your first Administration, collectively conduct oversight of trillions of dollars of federal spending and the conduct of millions of federal employees. Removing these non-partisan watchdogs without providing a substantive and non-political reason is not lawful,<sup>2</sup> and undermines their independence, jeopardizing their critical mission to identify and root out waste, fraud, and abuse within federal programs.

IGs are responsible for providing independent oversight of federal programs by working to root out waste, fraud, and abuse and protect taxpayer dollars – oversight our federal agencies desperately need. They play a key role in improving government efficiency and effectiveness and have helped identify and recover billions of taxpayer dollars. IG independence is the foundation of this work, and IGs must be free of political influence so that they can carry out their important mission with integrity and credibility. The federal government and the American people count on these officials to operate in a professional and non-partisan way to hold our government accountable—regardless of who is in power. Without strong, qualified and independent officials to lead these critical efforts, the Administration risks wasting taxpayer dollars, and allowing fraud and misconduct to go unchecked. For example, just this week the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued an unlawful memo directing agencies to pause nearly all federal grants and loans, which significantly disrupts the administration of over a trillion dollars of critical assistance to communities, businesses, and organizations across the

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<sup>1</sup> *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>)


<sup>2</sup> 5 U.S.C. 403(b) as amended by section 5202(a) of the *Securing Inspector General Independence Act of 2022* (Title LII, Subtitle A, of Pub. L. No. 117-263)

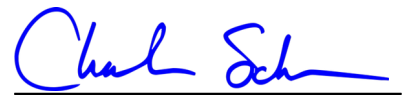
country.<sup>3</sup> It is especially vital to have independent watchdogs at each of these agencies to conduct oversight of the impacts of this unconstitutional and unprecedented directive.

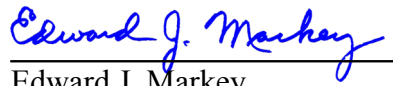
While the President has the authority to remove Inspectors General from office, Congress has established clear requirements to ensure such removals are transparent and are not politicized. The law requires that the President provide a written 30-day notice to both Houses of Congress and include “the substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons for any such removal or transfer.”<sup>4</sup> With respect to your firings Friday night, Congress has not received either the mandatory 30-day notice or a rationale for their removal. Because your actions violated the law, these Inspectors General should be reinstated immediately, until such time as you have provided in writing “the substantive rationale, including detailed and case-specific reasons” for each of the affected Inspectors General and the 30-day notice period has expired.


Lastly, if you believe it is necessary to place any of the affected IGs on administrative leave before the 30-day notice period has ended, the law requires that you submit a separate notification to Congress explaining how the IG presents a threat as defined in the Administrative Leave Act.<sup>5</sup>

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary C. Peters  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Edward J. Markey  
United States Senator

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Welch  
United States Senator

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<sup>3</sup> Office of Management and Budget, *Temporary Pause of Agency Grant, Loan, and Other Financial Assistance Programs M-25-13* (Jan 27, 2025).

<sup>4</sup> 5 U.S.C. 403(b) as amended by section 5202(a) of the *Securing Inspector General Independence Act of 2022* (Title LII, Subtitle A, of Pub. L. No. 117-263)

<sup>5</sup> 5 U.S.C. 403 as amended by section 5202(a) of the *Securing Inspector General Independence Act of 2022* (Title LII, Subtitle A, of Pub. L. No. 117-263).



Sheldon Whitehouse  
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff  
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren  
United States Senator



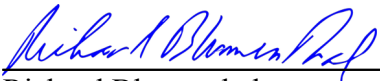
Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



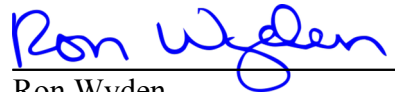
Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



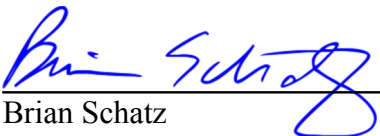
Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Ruben Gallego  
United States Senator




Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



Brian Schatz  
United States Senator



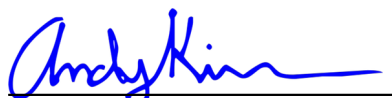
Margaret Wood Hassan  
United States Senator



Jack Reed  
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator



Andy Kim  
United States Senator



Alex Padilla  
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono  
United States Senator



Elissa Slotkin  
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar  
United States Senator



John Hickenlooper  
United States Senator



Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



Raphael Warnock  
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich  
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley  
United States Senator



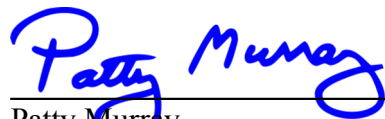
Kirsten Gillibrand  
United States Senator




Lisa Blunt Rochester  
United States Senator



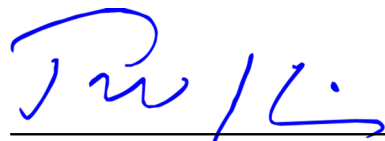
Maria Cantwell  
United States Senator



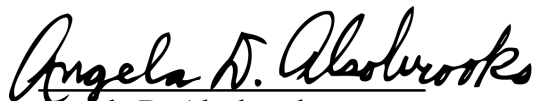
Patty Murray  
United States Senator



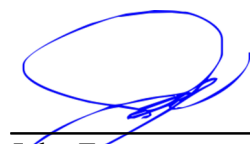
Mark Kelly  
United States Senator



Tim Kaine  
United States Senator



Angela D. Alsobrooks  
United State Senator



John Fetterman  
United States Senator