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United States Senate

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WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6250

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June 9, 2010

Mr. Gene Dodaro
Acting Comptroller General
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G St. NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro:

I am writing to request that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) assess the Department of State's performance measures for its counternarcotics programs. A similar report regarding Department of Defense's counternarcotics performance evaluation system is being finalized by your office pursuant to the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-84, § 1016.

On May 20, 2010, the Subcommittee held a hearing on counternarcotics contracts in Latin America. At the hearing, I asked State Department Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs David Johnson whether counternarcotics contracts had been successful in Colombia. In response, Mr. Johnson stated that the State Department's counternarcotics activities "played a major role in providing the space for the other [rule of law] programs to work" in the country and that the effort has "substantially worked." Mr. Johnson did not provide information explaining how the State Department tracked whether and how the counternarcotics activities were achieving their intended results.

I am concerned that the State Department is lacking effective performance measures and effective system to track whether counternarcotics activities are, in fact, working. As a result, I request that GAO assess the State Department's performance evaluation system for counternarcotics activities. Such a report would complement GAO's current work at the Defense Department and provide Congress with an important tool to evaluate the successes and failures of counternarcotics strategy.

Please have your staff contact Margaret Daum at (202) 224-8316 with any questions.

Sincerely,



Claire McCaskill
Chairman
Subcommittee on Contracting Oversight

cc: Scott Brown
Ranking Member