

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 1, 2012

Kevin L. Perkins
Chairman, Integrity Committee
Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency
935 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Room 3973
Washington, DC 20535-0001

Dear Chairman Perkins:

We write to express our appreciation for the Integrity Committee's diligent efforts in response to our letter of May 25, 2012, furthering the investigation into this important matter. Although this letter is not intended to in any way slow or impede the investigation, we did want to bring to your attention new information that should help inform your review.

On September 19, 2012, Deputy Inspector General Mary Kendall—the subject of the Integrity Committee's investigation—sent a memorandum to all Interior Department Office of Inspector General (OIG) employees concerning the results of the 2012 annual survey of Interior Department OIG employees. Over 80% of OIG employees completed the survey, and the results suggest that a significant number of employees (approximately 15%) believe OIG does not conduct its work in a manner that is “independent” from the Interior Department. As troubling, the survey results suggest that a significant number of employees (approximately 23%) do not believe communication within the OIG is “open and honest.” The survey contains several concerning comments including one employee who stated: “I think there is widespread distrust and low morale in the organization right now. There are at least perceptions the acting IG and COS [Chief of Staff] did not do the right thing, ie [sic], improperly quashed investigations, and have not been forthright with Congress.” Another commenter expressed concern with “how much reports get softened to avoid ‘slamming’ the Department in the interest of maintaining a good relationship” and advised that if the Interior Department “did something horribly wrong, it isn't our [OIG's] job to soften the blow.”

Regrettably, in the September 19th memorandum, Ms. Kendall seems to downplay and attribute at least some of these concerns to frustration over “extended pay freezes, reduced benefits, downsizing government, drastic budget cuts, and scrutiny from the House Natural Resources Committee.” Moreover, her memo seems to ignore the possible impact of her own actions on employee morale relative to the OIG's report on the federal moratorium on deepwater drilling. We remain concerned that these survey results and this September 19th memo demonstrate continued problems within the OIG under the current leadership.

The integrity of the work of the OIG is imperative to the proper functioning of all federal agencies. Indeed, it is the one office within an agency that must operate without political influence. If the OIG at any federal agency fails to act as required, the public's confidence in the proper governance of these agencies cannot be met. These survey results seem to support the view that, at least within the OIG itself, there is a lack of full confidence in the integrity of their

work under the current leadership. We believe this is important context for your ongoing investigation and reinforces why we believe it is important for your investigation to be thorough and concluded in a timely manner, as these matters need to be addressed and resolved without undue delay.

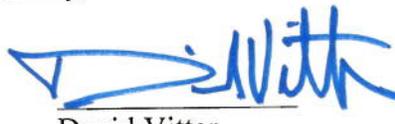
To that end, we would encourage the Integrity Committee, or the reviewing authorities you have charged with investigating this matter, to review these survey results and interview DOI employees concerning these matters to the extent consistent with the Committee's authority and purview. We would also encourage the Integrity Committee to assess other appropriate actions or recommendations that should be made in order to rehabilitate OIG employee confidence. We do not believe these steps should delay the timely completion of the investigation.

Thank you again for your kind attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jeff Sessions
United States Senate



David Vitter
United States Senate



John Cornyn
United States Senate