

November 18, 2024

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington DC, 20510

Re: Bolstering the government ethics infrastructure by advancing Inspector General nominees

Dear Majority Leader Schumer,

We, the undersigned organizations dedicated to transparent and accountable governance, write to urge you to hold votes imminently on pending nominations for Inspector General positions within the executive branch.

Inspectors General (IGs) play a key role in ferreting out waste, fraud and abuse, regardless of which party is in power. In 2022, the Architect of the Capitol IG released a report detailing former Architect of the Capitol J. Brett Blanton's abuse of authority and misuse of taxpayer funds, leading President Biden to rightfully remove Blanton from his position.¹ In fiscal year 2023, IG offices were estimated to have generated \$93.1 billion in potential savings for the American public, with a \$26 return on every taxpayer dollar invested.² In the nearly 50 years since the first IG positions were established, IG offices have continued to provide critical independent oversight that enabled Congress to conduct proper oversight and improved the integrity of our government. At a time when public trust in government is low³ and we face rising threats of authoritarianism at home and abroad,⁴ the role of Inspectors General is more important than ever.

Unfortunately, several Inspector General vacancies currently exist throughout the executive branch. To date, 10 Inspector General positions are empty throughout the executive branch and in agencies that touch every aspect of American life. Of these 10, 5 IG positions have a presidential nominee awaiting Senate confirmation, including the Department of Treasury and National Security Agency IGs.⁵ We urge the Senate to prioritize these five confirmations during the lame-duck session. Confirming these diverse and highly qualified individuals is of paramount importance at a time when the incoming

¹ Alex Goldstein, *The Architect of the Capitol abused his authority. Congress should call for his resignation.*, CREW (Nov. 17, 2022),

<https://www.citizensforethics.org/news/analysis/the-architect-of-the-capitol-abused-his-authority-congress-should-call-for-his-resignation/>; Justin Papp, *Congress appoints Army veteran Thomas Austin as new architect of the Capitol*, Roll Call (May 22, 2024),

<https://rollcall.com/2024/05/22/congress-appoints-army-veteran-thomas-austin-as-new-architect-of-the-capitol/>.

² Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE), Annual Report to the President and Congress, Mar. 19, 2024,

https://www.ignet.gov/sites/default/files/files/CIGIEAnnualReporttothePresidentFY2023_FINAL.pdf.

³ *Public Trust in Government 1958-2024*, PEW Research Center (June 24, 2024),

<https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2024/06/24/public-trust-in-government-1958-2024/>.

⁴ *The Mounting Damage of Flawed Elections and Armed Conflict*, Freedom House (February 2024),

<https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2024/mounting-damage-flawed-elections-and-armed-conflict>

⁵ Oversight.gov, Inspector General Vacancies, <https://www.oversight.gov/ig-vacancies>.

administration has made clear through its words and deeds a desire to skirt the ethical guardrails designed to prevent unlawful behavior.

We understand that there are competing priorities and limited floor time. We urge you to place confirmation of these Inspector General nominees on that priority list. Without their confirmation, the executive branch will lack the internal expertise it needs to detect and eliminate corruption, waste and malfeasance.

Sincerely,

American Governance Institute
Antilles Consolidated Education Association
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)
Conscious Resources
Freedom of the Press Foundation
Government Information Watch
International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)
International Plate Printers, Die Stampers, Plate Makers and Engravers of North America
National Association of Agriculture Employees
National Association of Government Employees (NAGE)
National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE-IAM)
National Security Counselors
Patent Office Professional Association
People Power United
PPPWU
Project On Government Oversight
Protect Democracy
Public Citizen
The Workers Circle