

OVERSIGHT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE  
INSPECTORS GENERAL ON INTEGRITY  
AND EFFICIENCY

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HEARING

BEFORE THE  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS  
AND THE FEDERAL WORKFORCE  
OF THE  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT  
AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED EIGHTEENTH CONGRESS

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  - \* Letter, June 8, 2020, from Mr. Dodaro to Congress; submitted by Rep. Lee.
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  - \* Letter, July 26, 2022, from Rep. Maloney to Inspectors General; submitted by Rep. Mfume.
  - \* Letter, January 25, 2024; from Rep. Raskin to Mr. Cuffari; submitted by Rep. Mfume.
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# **OVERSIGHT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE INSPECTORS GENERAL ON INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY**

**Tuesday, July 23, 2024**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS AND THE FEDERAL  
WORKFORCE  
*Washington, D.C.*

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:51 p.m., in room 2154, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Pete Sessions [Chairman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Sessions, Comer, Palmer, Biggs, Burchett, Mfume, Norton, Frost, Connolly, Lee, and Tlaib.

Also present: Representatives Grothman, Loudermilk, and Hageman.

Mr. SESSIONS. Good afternoon. This was supposed to have started before now, and, Mark, we appreciate you sticking around.

I would like to welcome today's witness, Mr. Mark Greenblatt, to the Subcommittee. Today, we are beginning an opportunity to hold an oversight of the Council of the Inspector Generals on Integrity and Efficiency, and today's hearing is a bipartisan hearing that will take place where we are looking forward to not only working with our witness today, but also examining the role that Congress has provided for CIGIE to exist.

So, without objection, as I move forward, we want to waive on Congresswoman Harriet Hageman, Glenn Grothman, Barry Loudermilk, and Chip Roy, and all of these will be waived on the Committee for the purpose of questioning witnesses today. Does the gentleman have anybody that you would like to add to that list?

Mr. MFUME. I do not have anybody, and I do not have any objection.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you very much. In addition to his duties as Inspector General for the Department of Interior, Mr. Glenn Greenblatt serves as the current chairman of the Council of the Inspector Generals on Integrity and Efficiency. This is known as CIGIE. CIGIE's mission is to address integrity, economic, and effectiveness issues that transcend individual government agencies, help increase professionalism and efficiency and effectiveness by personnel by developing policies, standards, and approaches as they appear to aid in the establishment of a well-trained and high-

ly skilled workforce in the Offices of Inspector General across the government. Today's hearing will provide members with an opportunity to examine CIGIE's legislative priorities, receive an update on the day-to-day operations and better understand its internal processes.

However, I need to also admit, as Mr. Greenblatt and I met yesterday, the elephant in the room seems to be the expectation of an upcoming Integrity Committee report on the investigation of the current Inspector General of the Department of Homeland Security. So, Mr. Greenblatt and I did speak yesterday, and we discussed how he is not able to address this issue or really questions regarding the substance of this report until it has been released to the public. We believe that that is a minimum of 1 month from now. That process that is being worked through is an open process, so to speak, in that it is allowing feedback to be given to members of that Committee, who will then make recommendations.

Nonetheless, it is a good opportunity, Mr. Greenblatt, to have you before us to explain why Members should have confidence in the Integrity Committee's work, but that comes from knowing more about how we see it and you see it, and coming to what I think is a closer recognition of the intent of Congress, not only at the time Congress gave this authority and responsibility, but its ongoing responsibility of our oversight.

Aside from the pending investigation that is before this CIGIE group, there have been instances in which IC reports preceded the removal of Inspector Generals. These include things that have done before, and so we are going to make sure that we have a clearer understanding about that process. As I said to Mr. Greenblatt yesterday, I think it is important that we understand that for people to want to have this job, to serve as Inspector Generals, and to get the kind of people that you believe, and I believe and any administration would believe that they would want highly qualified and people who would work within a structure that is well understood.

That there are three Inspector Generals gone in a 6-month period of time does not lend itself to the stability that I believe is effectiveness for not just Congress, but also for people who serve in that position. Add to it the most recent semiannual report from the IC, which states that it has received 1,755 incoming communications resulting in 75 cases for IC's formal disposition. And that is that six investigations are pending completion, which means that it is a lot of work. It is a big bucket, and it is upon each of you to deal with that. So, we want to know what is going on in the IG community. We want to hear from you. We had a very cordial conversation yesterday. However, we understand that whistleblower complaints are part of the frustrations that not only take place within the agencies at the IG, but the IGs have to deal with that in their own work performance.

Perhaps more importantly is how can we have the confidence that the work of the Inspector Generals will not be negatively impacted if they assume that their own staff is using this same process to hinder the people that are expected to perform. So, we want to know a little bit more about the recourse that an inspector general might have if they believe that this process is happening to them. Either way, we believe it is something that is being dealt

with that we think is problematic. We think it is problematic for the Inspector Generals, we think it is problematic for CIGIE, and that means that people come to Members of Congress and want to receive some bit of information back to make sure we are aware of the reality that exists in the community.

As a member of this Oversight Committee, I assure you that Mr. Greenblatt—and I told him this—that we would be open to hearing. We would be open to hearing on a bipartisan basis. We would be interested in delving further and really begin what I think is a discussion about each other, hearing from each other about the substance of your performance, the substance of our expectation, but the substance of fixing the problems. We believe we ought to go from fight to fix, and if we are a part of that problem, we need to face up to that, and we are going to agree to do that. So, the things which we have talked about at the table can all be said here, every single bit of it. There was no conversation yesterday that would not be pertinent today, except the belief that you have agreed to come back and us begin that discussion mid-September as necessary.

So, now I want to recognize the distinguished gentleman from Maryland, the Ranking Member, Mr. Mfume.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Chairman, thank you again for your important leadership on this as in a bipartisan way we continue to do hearing after hearing in search of facts. Mr. Greenblatt, my welcome to you.

An important role of this Subcommittee is to see the effective, efficient, and fair functioning of the executive branch. The 74 inspector generals across the Federal Government are central, obviously, to that effort, which is why we have called this hearing today, both the Chairman and myself. And Inspector Generals operated, as you know, for 2 centuries in our military before Congress extended the concept to civilian agencies with the Inspector General Act of 1978. This act initially established 12 inspector generals across various departments and offices. And in their creation, the Congress at the time was careful to emphasize the apolitical and nonpartisan nature of Inspectors General. On a bipartisan basis, Congress designed these positions to focus on eliminating waste, fraud, and abuse, to encourage efficient agency operations, and to tackle wrongdoing without regard to partisanship or politics for that matter. In 2008, in an effort to ensure robust oversight of Inspectors General, Congress passed the Inspector General Reform Act with near unanimous bipartisan support. That bill established the Council of the Inspector Generals on Integrity and Efficiency, commonly known as CIGIE.

The Council of the Inspector Generals on Integrity and Efficiency, as the name implies, is made up of 74 Inspector Generals, including those appointed by the President with the advice and consent of the U.S. Senate. Those appointed are the agency heads and one other IG, the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, appointed by the President alone. CIGIE was formed, I think it is fair to say, with a laudable goal of professionalizing the IG community so they could better address governmentwide integrity, economy, and effectiveness issues. They do so, as we know, by training staff, by proposing legislation, and by rec-

ommending new Inspector Generals for vacant positions as they occur. Perhaps, most importantly, CIGIE holds Inspector Generals themselves accountable through the Integrity Committee.

As a part of CIGIE's various duties as a watchdog organization, one of which is to ensure regular reports to the Congress as well as to issue reports on the result of their investigations into allegations of IG misconduct. Unfortunately, Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, and myself included, have oftentimes found ourselves vexed by CIGIE's lack of expediency in completing and disclosing the results of their Integrity Committee investigations.

For example, since early 2022, Members of Congress have raised to CIGIE several concerns regarding the ethics, credibility, and the political independence of the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General, Joseph V. Cuffari, originally nominated by former President Trump in 2019. Alarming, these concerns included a failure to report rampant sexual misconduct and harassment charges at DHS and a failure to investigate and disclose missing Secret Service texts relating to the events of January 26, 2021. Three years into his tenure, a majority of the lawyers in the DHS Office of the Inspector General had left. Many of whom cited dysfunction and abuses of power stemming from Mr. Cuffari's leadership as a catalyst, they said, for their departure.

Most concerning, though, is Mr. Cuffari's failure to comply with the House Oversight Committee's longstanding investigation into his misconduct, citing a myriad of spurious claims in response to numerous oversight letters. Over the course of his tenure, at least eight investigative letters had been sent to IG Cuffari over his inadequate performance and his unwillingness to cooperate with congressional investigations.

Mr. Chair, I ask unanimous consent to submit several of those letters sent between 2020 and 2024, as well as two of Mr. Cuffari's responses sent on February 1 and August 31 of 2023 into the record.

Mr. SESSIONS. Without objection, those will be included.

Mr. MFUME. Despite these mounting issues, we still lack a clear understanding of the status of the results of CIGIE's investigation into IG Cuffari even after a years-long process and, I might add, a highly suspect \$1 million-plus settlement between Mr. Cuffari and one of his employees. And so, I guess my point here is that if CIGIE is to be an effective watchdog, it must be transparent to Congress and to its members on both sides of the political aisle. I do want to applaud the steps CIGIE has taken recently to implement a new transparency policy, but I would hasten to say that much more is needed and would be openly embraced by this Committee and, indeed, the larger Committee of Oversight.

And while the Council must be improved, that does not mean it is replaceable, and it certainly does not mean it is expendable. Along with its oversight function, CIGIE plays a valuable role in training staff, proposing congressional measures to improve government efficiency, and offering itself as a forum for learning best practices. The Council, as we know it, cannot and must not be recreated under the auspices of another agency, and I think, sir, you would agree with that. The Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency has achieved important results. For example,



after the CARES Act vested CIGIE with oversight responsibilities of pandemic spending, it stood up the Pandemic Response Accountability Committee, also known as PRAC. That Committee coordinates the efforts of 20 inspector generals to promote transparency and conduct data-driven oversight of the \$5 trillion that the Congress invested in the Nation to address the COVID-19 pandemic response.

But ultimately, CIGIE cannot carry out its work and its mission if it does not remain absolutely independent, especially independent from political pressure. If oversight of the Inspectors General moved under the purview of any other department, in my opinion, or to any of the agencies headed by political appointees, the independence of IGs could be permanently undermined. We have already seen Presidential administrations in years gone by fire inspectors general that release reports or engage in audits or carry out investigations that they themselves might find politically inconvenient. Thereby, undermining the independence of IGs would empower future Presidents to aim to thwart oversight and abuse of their powers to do so as well.

And so, the Chairman used the term “conversation.” I would borrow that and say today’s conversation really gives us an opportunity to learn more about how we can improve the Council, to look at where it may have erred in the past, to hear ideas about how to reform it into an even stronger organization, but it is also an opportunity to appreciate the ability of independent oversight to make our Nation better.

Respect for rule of law and a culture of accountability are the bread and butter of the Subcommittee and I would dare say of the entire Congress. So, like the Chairman, I look forward to doing our part in this hearing. I thank you again for being here, and we are all working to preserve the values and the expectations that I spoke about earlier. Mr. Chairman, again, thank you for agreeing to do this and for allowing me the opportunity as the Ranking Member to participate, and I would yield back my time, sir.

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentleman yields back his time. Thank you very much. I want to make sure Mr. Greenblatt understands what I think I have expressed, but that our Ranking Member has so adequately done so in his own representation, and that is, we come to the table today with the Chairman, Mr. Comer, the Ranking Member, Mr. Raskin, Mr. Mfume, and I, and we see a responsibility that we have also, and, first of all, that we try and see things with an understanding that I do not try and decide what their answer will be and they do not decide my answer, but some commonsense that is involved is apparent that it can make us better. We think you will do the same as IGs, and that is really the flavor that we want to talk about as decision-making roles and how we can work together.

So, today we are joined by another orange tie that appeared today, the gentleman from Virginia. Gerry, you look good. I like that tie.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you very much, but it is always a risk, Mr. Chairman, for an Irish Catholic to wear orange.

Mr. SESSIONS. Well, then you are on your own. My wife would probably warn me that, too.

Today, we are joined by Inspector General Mark Greenblatt, who currently serves as Chair of the Council of the Inspector Generals on Integrity and Efficiency, known as CIGIE. Mr. Greenblatt also serves as the Inspector General of the Department of Interior. Mr. Greenblatt has been in Federal Oversight Committee since 2003 as part of the legislative and executive branches. Before coming to DOI, Department of Interior Inspector General, he served as the Executive Director of CIGIE, an organization that has been formed by Congress. He previously held leadership roles at the U.S. Department of Commerce Office of Inspector General, the U.S. Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Mr. Greenblatt also served as Investigative Counsel at the U.S. Department of Justice OIG. And over the course of his Federal career, he served and received numerous awards, including the CIGIE Award for Excellence, the U.S. Department of Commerce Gold Medal and Bronze Medals, and the U.S. Department of Justice, OIG Distinguished Service Award. We are delighted that you are here today, sir, and I think that this will probably match exactly with why you thought you were here to help us work together.

Pursuant to Committee Rule 9(g), the witness will please stand and raise your right hand for the oath to the witness. I would ask do you solemnly swear or affirm that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do.

Mr. SESSIONS. Let the record reflect that the gentleman, Mr. Greenblatt, has answered in the affirmative. The gentleman may take his seat. We are delighted that you are here. We apologize once again for our delay.

And let me remind the witness that we have read your written statement, and it appears in the record. I told you yesterday that I do not necessarily want to hold you to the 5-minute rule, nor our Members. I think we are here for a bigger purpose, and that purpose is to get the things out, the questions answered, and the responses that would be necessary for us to move forward. So, you have been doing this before. You know our red light, green light, yellow light process.

And I would now recognize the distinguished gentleman, Mr. Greenblatt, for his opening statement. The gentleman is recognized.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MARK LEE GREENBLATT  
INSPECTOR GENERAL  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**

Mr. GREENBLATT. Chairman Sessions, Ranking Member Mfume, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to testify here today on behalf of the Council of Inspectors General, which, as you said, we lovingly call CIGIE. CIGIE has a great story to tell, and I am honored to share that story on behalf of the 14,000 hardworking public servants at the 73 Federal Offices of Inspector General who make up the IG community.

It is worth emphasizing that the IG community and this Committee share a common mission. We are all responsible for overseeing the Federal Government to make sure it delivers for the

American people. IGs are like taxpayers' representatives inside Federal agencies, tasked with protecting taxpayer dollars and ensuring that agency officials are living up to their responsibilities. Like Congress, OIGs promote economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in government operations. We do this by detecting and preventing fraud, waste, abuse, and mismanagement through thousands of audits, inspections, evaluations, and investigations every year.

You can see the IG community's effectiveness in our results. Over the last 10 years, OIG audits and inspections have recommended more effective uses for or questioned the spending of more than \$550 billion in Federal funds. OIG investigators have recovered \$143 billion from fraudsters who are stealing our tax dollars. OIG investigations have led to more than 53,000 successful criminal prosecutions and more than 15,000 civil actions. OIG oversight has led to the suspension and debarment of just shy of 50,000 parties, which prevents them from doing business with the Federal Government and therefore prevents future losses of government dollars. OIG reports have led agencies to take more than 43,000 personnel actions against Federal employees, including terminations and suspensions. And over the last decade, the OIG community has identified potential savings across the Federal Government totaling \$693 billion. In short, I think Congress should be proud that its investments in Inspectors General has paid off.

Now, while these numbers are certainly impressive, they do not tell the entire story. Our oversight has impact far beyond these big dollar figures. Behind these statistics are real stories, real lives, real improvements for the American people. Now, let me give you just a few examples.

The Veterans Affairs OIG, their work has led to significant improvements in the prevention of veteran suicides. HHS OIG has conducted sweeping oversight of nursing homes across America that uncovered terrible conditions for some of our elderly Americans and is protecting many others from similar abuses. The transportation OIG has played a critical role in investigating criminal conduct that contributed to the crashes of two 737 MAX jets and in auditing FAA's oversight of the safety of passenger aircraft and Boeing's processes for its aircraft certification. HUD OIG has uncovered awful sexual exploitation in our public housing system, which led to holding accountable a number of landlords who are sexual predators. In my own office at the Department of the Interior, we have initiated a series of inspections and evaluations specifically targeting waste, fraud, and abuse in Native-American schools, all designed to help the most vulnerable people in our portfolio, Native American children.

Now, these are just a handful of examples of the hard-hitting oversight occurring throughout the IG community. Indeed, from cybersecurity to cyber stalking, from depleted uranium to disaster preparedness, from Ukraine to Afghanistan, IG oversight continues to make an important difference in every aspect of American life.

Now, in closing, I would like to thank the Committee for your longstanding bipartisan support for IGs and the oversight work that we do. All 14,000 of us in the OIG community have chosen to serve the public and make our government work better, but we also look for ways to make our own operations work better, so we wel-

come today's conversation with all of you. All of you are primary stakeholders for us. We want to know your vision for the future of oversight. We want to know your oversight priorities. We want to know your concerns and how we can work together going forward. And this is the main purpose of my testimony today. We want you to be confident that CIGIE and the OIG community are diligently pursuing the mission that we share with all of you, to protect taxpayer dollars and ensure that the Federal Government is delivering for the American people. We want you to see the enormous value that we provide in our fair, objective, and independent oversight.

As I said at the outset, CIGIE has a great story to tell, and I hope we can work together with all of you to continue that great story for years to come. Thank you.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Greenblatt, thank you very much for your opening statement. I would first go to the distinguished gentleman from Alabama, the Chairman of the Republican Policy Committee. The distinguished gentleman, Mr. Palmer, is recognized.

Mr. PALMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. PACE is designed to look backward to chase money that has already been paid. What I would like to know, General Greenblatt, is during the pandemic there was a massive amount of fraudulent spending, widely referred to as the greatest theft of taxpayer money in history. So, has the PACE data center been effective in recovering any of that?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir. I think many of those investigations related to the pandemic are certainly ongoing right now and are already delivering returns. The key, though, is what you said at the outset, the initial part of your question there, which is the prevention piece, and that is where we really are pushing for a data hub inside CIGIE that will allow us to be affirmatively preventing some of those bad dollars from going out the door.

Mr. PALMER. Actually, my follow-up was, is this forward looking? I have spent a ton of time working with the GAO on improper payments and things like that, and I think we are far better off if we are in a preventive mode than we are in trying to recover what has gone out. We have done all these audits on Federal agencies. We have identified a number of problems. I get the GAO reports, and it tells me what percent of the recommendation has been implemented, and sometimes it is none of them. Have you experienced the same issues with audits done by the Inspector Generals that never really get acted on, the recommendations never get implemented?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I think some agencies are better than others. I think some of the relationships between the IGs are better than others, and so I think it is a bit of a hodgepodge. Some of them are pretty good about implementing, but some of them are absolutely terrible about it. And so, I think the key is two things. One is transparency. And so, what we are doing at CIGIE is trying to make our open recommendations even more prominent on oversight.gov, which is our primary outward facing website, so that you all can see them. And then the other part of that, part two of that, is, frankly, pressure from Congress. If you all see open recommendations that we have identified as significant, come talk to us and we can share with you what are the hot button items that

we think the agency should be implementing. And then I think you are going to see product move, if you will.

Mr. PALMER. That is part of the challenge for us is that previous Congress has passed legislation to deal with improper payments, the Improper Payments Reduction Act, and then there was a second version of that, but there was never any enforcement in it. A number of us including the Comptroller General and I have talked about this, is, how do you incentivize agencies to actually implement the changes that need to be made. And I would really be interested, and I think the Committee would be very interested in hearing from CIGIE about this on how we can actually get some enforcement, for lack of a better word, but incentives, whatever it takes to reduce these improper payments and prevent them in the future. Would you be able to provide some recommendations?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Absolutely, sir, and the impact of congressional attention cannot be overstated. So, if I can just share a quick story for you, in my office at the Department of the Interior, we had an audit that revealed that one of the components within Interior was not checking some of their contractors against the suspension and debarment list, right, which is where folks have identified problematic contractors and basically saying do not give contracts or grants to these folks. They were not comparing those contractors against those lists.

We made recommendations, and they said that some of those recommendations would take 2 years to implement. We engaged with Congress. Congress notified that they were going to have a hearing on that topic, and within 2 weeks, they implemented those very recommendations. So, it went from 2 years to 2 weeks just on the letter from Congress. There is a synergy here between our recommendations and congressional oversight that go well together and would address the very issues that you are talking about, sir.

Mr. PALMER. Have you looked at the Treasury's Do Not Pay system and determined how effective that is in preventing payments?

Mr. GREENBLATT. That would be the Treasury OIG that would do that, so I have not done that, and, frankly, I would have to defer to them. I would have to ask them, frankly.

Mr. PALMER. But this pay system, would you be able to integrate that with other data bases like the Do Not Pay system?

Mr. GREENBLATT. That would be the goal, I think, is that we would be able to match up these datasets and identify problematic recipients. For example, the PACE, which you identified, the Pandemic Analytics Center of Excellence, if they had been in existence in 2020 and they had matched up the data that we have now, they could have identified more than 70,000 bad Social Security numbers. So, this is PPP loans going out the door with bad Social Security numbers or questionable Social Security numbers that amounted to more than \$5 billion that we could have flagged for the SBA and said, wait, pump the brakes on those payments. Let us do another review of those.

Mr. PALMER. That raises one of the concerns that I think we have on the Committee is the amount of access that the Inspector Generals have to these other data bases, the interoperability of our systems to catch things like that. And I am hoping that is where you are heading with this, is that we have that interoperability,

that we have the ability for the inspector generals to have access to other existing data bases like the Do Not Pay system, some of these other things so that we avoid making these payments.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir, that is exactly the vision. You know, just like we showed you in that demonstration, you know, a few days ago, we would love to bring all that together and make that very easily accessible to the IGs so that they could harvest that data and use it not just in the pay and chase, which you referenced a moment ago, but in the affirmative prevention of bad dollars going out the door. So, we are in the prevention business, and so that is very much what we are interested in.

Mr. PALMER. Well, I am running over. The last thing that I would ask you is that I think all of us on the Committee would be interested in any statutory authority changes that you think are necessary for that, and if you have got some ideas on that, we would like to hear them. And on that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentleman yields back his time. Thank you very much. We now go to the Ranking Member, Mr. Mfume. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Greenblatt, I think of you as the sheriff in many respects. It is an unenviable position, but the bottom line, as most sheriffs will tell you, is to do the right thing day in and day out, which is why I talked about why the importance of this Council means so much to the accountability that the American people expect for this Congress and, indeed, this Subcommittee to oversee.

Some of that accountability wore on me in the wrong way with a previous Inspector General who was let go not too long ago. I am talking about Ms. Ennis at the Social Security Administration. The Social Security Administration sits right in the middle of my district, and I oftentimes hear quite a bit from employees there about current and lingering problems, and I cannot begin to tell you how many complaints I got during her tenure about how people alleged she was treating them. And, you know, there was a Washington Post story that ran on May 31 detailing, in many respects, her tenure there, and they titled it, "Embattled Social Security Watchdog to Resign After Tumultuous Tenure."

I want to commend CIGIE for doing the background work on that. I know that in Ms. Ennis' case, there was a previous, I guess I could use the term, reprimand from CIGIE. But as the Council went more and more into the investigation, there were Members of this body on both sides of the aisle who felt strongly that this was a case that warranted some sort of greater scrutiny. She had faced increasing performance problems in recent years, as you know. The number of completed audits dwindled. Dozens of senior auditors, investigators, and other staff quit or retired, many in frustration, in which they described to the Washington Post and other news sources as her mercurial leadership and lack of focus on the office's mission. So, I raise that not to be critical of CIGIE, but just the opposite, to say it is important for those kinds of interventions.

I began my remarks by saying that I thought that there could be more deliberate speed in some of this, and I guess some of that gets back to your ability to do what you have to do and whether or not you have got enough funding to do that. So, I want to talk, if you would tell me a bit about your ideas of funding mechanisms

that would increase your capacity and the ability of CIGIE to take on issues like this and investigations like this and to conclude them much more rapidly.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Well, one of the things, one of the problems, that we run into with respect to the Integrity Committee is that it has no investigative staff. It has just a handful of lawyers and staff that help process complaints and sort of run the program, but they are not investigators. The Integrity Committee has to go out and find OIGs who are not conflicted out to then go lead the investigations. So, I think having an appropriation specifically for investigators for the Integrity Committee, you know, a cadre of investigators that would sit inside CIGIE that could do those investigations, it would streamline everything markedly. So, I would say, you know, in terms of funding the budget, a dedicated appropriation for investigators in the Integrity Committee would undoubtedly help and move things along faster. So, that is one thing.

The other thing that I think is sort of an emerging idea for us is to tap into expiring unobligated funds. So, what happens is IGs, like my office, we always have to save a little bit just in case there are contracts that go over even after they are expired. This is all standard stuff in the Federal Government, and those are basically rounding errors, right? Those are very small amounts of money relative to our global budgets. When they are expired, if those could be routed to CIGIE, we could solve all of these problems quite quickly.

And so that is one thing I would strongly encourage Congress to consider, is the ability of shifting those expired, unobligated balances for OIGs to CIGIE would give us the ability to remedy a lot of those problems, sir.

Mr. MFUME. Yes. I was hoping you would mention that. I mean, getting an appropriation is a direct way, and as you might imagine, it is not the easiest thing in the world sometimes. However, in the case where they have already been appropriated funds, and every Member of this Committee and this Congress knows what it is like, you have got to round out at the end of each year how much money is allocated to you. In our case, if we ended a year with, let us just for a number say \$50,000, that money directly goes back to the Treasury.

So, I hear you loud and clear on this. It is a way of funding the expansion and the ability to investigate without appropriating new and additional funds. And I want to commit myself to being supportive of that, and I will seek to have a conversation with the Chair as well. I mean, I just think it is a way that we are not appropriating new dollars, but we are taking what we have already appropriated and still spending them, even if we are not spending them in the same fiscal year.

I have got a few other questions, but for the sake of some of my colleagues who are here and have not been heard with an opening statement or with questions, I am going to yield back my time, Mr. Chairman. I would like to explore that, though, at some point with you in a bipartisan way to see if it is something we might be able to put forward.

Mr. SESSIONS. I am very open to that. The distinguished gentleman yields back his time, and I would yield to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona, the gentleman, Mr. Biggs.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Inspector General Greenblatt, for being here. The Inspector General Act authorizes CIGIE's Integrity Committee to investigate allegations of wrongdoing on the part of an IG or senior official within the office. How does the Integrity Committee define "wrongdoing?"

Mr. GREENBLATT. There are three main buckets that the Integrity Committee uses, and it is significant misconduct, like gross mismanagement. There is conduct unbecoming of an official in that position. I am sorry, I am butchering the language, but that is generally the nature of the allegations. It has got to be significant, if you will.

Mr. BIGGS. So, that is interesting to me because the IG Act does not define "wrongdoing" in the relevant statute. Mr. Greenblatt, I know you are an attorney. I am an attorney. The definitions you used have what I would call massive holes and subjective interpretation to them. So, when you say, "significant misconduct," what does "significant" mean? What does "misconduct" mean? It becomes tautological. And when you say, "conduct unbecoming," what does that mean? All of those things are incredibly subjective, and that is part of the problem with the IG Act in and of itself, and maybe that is something Congress should look at a little more thoroughly.

The IG Act provides that the Integrity Committee must adopt policies and procedures necessary to ensure fairness and consistency in determining whether to initiate an investigation, conducting an investigation, and reporting on the results of an investigation. What standard does the IC use to evaluate complaints it receives?

Mr. GREENBLATT. It looks at, you know, whether it fits in one of those three buckets. You know, they get thousands and thousands of complaints. Many of them—

Mr. BIGGS. I know you get a lot of complaints. I am looking, what is the standard that you use? You know, you said we are going to look at those three buckets. Is the standard written down anywhere? You guys have that written down?

Mr. GREENBLATT. They have extensive policies and procedures and—

Mr. BIGGS. Is it written down somewhere?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. BIGGS. OK. And is it statutory?

Mr. GREENBLATT. No, sir. It is implementing the statute.

Mr. BIGGS. And if you are going back to the three buckets, again, when you come back to subjectiveness, you are coming back to some kind of, you know, boy, that sure looks significant to me. What do you think? No, I do not think that looks significant. It is almost like the distinction that the former Secret Service director was trying to make yesterday between "threat" and "suspicious."

I mean, that is really part of the problem here. Without a clear written standard to evaluate complaints, how then is the IC living up to the statutory mandate that its procedures ensure fairness and consistency? Keeping in mind that you and I as attorneys and particularly in investigations, and I look to criminal law on this.



Everybody wants to know where the bright lines are, and I am just having trouble seeing where the bright lines are here.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Frequently, sir, there are not bright lines, but I would say that there are not bright lines in what we do every day as IGs. We have to make hard calls. We have to implement laws that are not expressly defining each and every specific element of every potential violation. We have to implement—

Mr. BIGGS. Right. So, what you are suggesting in that is that Congress has failed to actually—and I do not disagree with this, by the way—Congress has failed to give very specific language. We put too many vague notions. We leave things to the agencies' and departments' policies to determine how they are going to implement, et cetera, and the reality is a lot of that ends up being subjective. According to a longstanding Supreme Court precedent, a prosecutor must disclose to a criminal defendant any evidence in the prosecutor's possession that would tend to exculpate the defendant. Is the IG or other covered person who is under investigation by the Integrity Committee entitled to exculpatory evidence in the Integrity Committee's possession?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know the answer to that. I would say this is not a criminal proceeding. This is, you know, just like an IG investigation where we try to get all the—

Mr. BIGGS. I know it is not a criminal proceeding, but you are required to ensure fairness and consistency.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Absolutely, and I—

Mr. BIGGS. And if you had exculpatory evidence and you chose to withhold it, would that be ensuring fairness?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I would not support that in any way, shape, or form, and I can guarantee you the community does not do it and the IC does not do it either.

Mr. BIGGS. But there is nothing there that requires them to provide exculpatory evidence, and when you are determining whether there was significant misconduct, you are making decisions on that. I would suggest perhaps we have some work we need to do to clean up statutes so that would be clear that exculpatory evidence would be provided. How many employees are typically dedicated to an investigation related to an Inspector General or a covered employee?

Mr. GREENBLATT. By the Integrity Committee, I actually have no idea. I would imagine they are sizable teams depending on the size of the investigation. So, a larger investigation would need an investigating team from the assisting IG to be—

Mr. BIGGS. And here we go again. I do not mean to nitpick at you. I am just trying to understand how this has gone because I have been looking at this now for a couple years and I find it intriguing. So, you just said, well, you know, if you got a larger investigation. Again, that is going to be subjective, right? I mean, it is. It just is. You guys are, golly, you know, oh, this is, and every time we lift up a stone, we see something else. Maybe that is something else. Are these senior employees that you use here? I mean, you say you do not have enough investigators. That is what you said earlier.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes. So, I would imagine there are line-level investigators all the way up through attorneys, through senior

folks who are overseeing them, ultimately to the IG who is assisting the investigation of the Integrity Committee.

Mr. BIGGS. Well, according to OpenPayrolls, in 2023, the average salary for all CIGIE employees—and that, of course, is going to include front office staff—was just under \$110,000, which is \$52.70 an hour for a 40-hour work week, and that seems to be in line with GS-13, 14, 15, maybe, something like that, maybe a little behind 15.

Mr. GREENBLATT. But those are folks that are not doing the investigation. If that is CIGIE employees. Those are affirmatively not doing the investigation. So, it is going to be folks who are——

Mr. BIGGS. So, their salaries are going to be higher, right?

Mr. GREENBLATT. It could be. It depends.

Mr. BIGGS. You do not know? I mean——

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know. But the agents that carry badges and guns who do many of these investigations get extra pay because of LEAP, law enforcement pay, availability pay, which is extra, but I do not know if they are——

Mr. BIGGS. So, I am going to leave it because the Ranking Member has made some allegations about a specific IG which I found were untoward, and I have deliberately tried not to weigh in on that, although I am sure getting ready to weigh in on it if he wants to continue there, but I will say this. CIGIE's current funding is a percentage of each IG's appropriation. Is that not true?

Mr. GREENBLATT. For the most part, yes.

Mr. BIGGS. Can you take a vote then to increase that percentage at any time?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, but I would face a mutiny by the CIGIE members.

Mr. BIGGS. So——

Mr. GREENBLATT. I committed when I first ran for chair to not increase that number absent some special circumstance.

Mr. BIGGS. You have indicated that you do not have enough investigators. That seems like a special circumstance. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MFUME. Would the gentleman just yield for a second, please, before yielding back so that the record is straight? I was not spewing my allegations against an IG. I was reading from a documented Washington Post story and reflecting on comments that have come into my congressional office from people who felt like they were not treated correctly by that person.

Mr. BIGGS. I am talking about someone different. I will reclaim so I can respond.

Mr. MFUME. Sure. It is your time.

Mr. BIGGS. I was not referring to your 5-minute comments when you were talking about the Social Security Administration. I was talking about the DHS IG, which——

Mr. MFUME. Mr. Cuffari.

Mr. BIGGS. Yes, yes, and if we are going to go there, then we can have that debate, but I am not sure that this is the forum that the Chairman wants to——

Mr. MFUME. Yes. I am not trying to get a debate. I just thought I would raise an issue that has been clearly in the press and elsewhere, and it ended when I finished my comments. Mr. Greenblatt

did not respond to it because I do not think there was a response that he can offer.

Mr. SESSIONS. Let us see if I can help out in this circumstance. The factors that surround this——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I think your mic needs to be on.

Mr. SESSIONS. My mic is on. I probably need to get a little bit closer, and I appreciate my orange tie friend helping me. The issue that is being discussed now, in fact, as I referred to it earlier, is an issue that is ongoing, and the request for Mr. Greenblatt to be here is about the larger issue about its authority, its responsibility, how it operates, and how it does things. In fact, as I stated earlier, subject to further information that would be available, Mr. Greenblatt agreed to come to my office in the middle of September and affirmed to me that there would be no action taken by this organization until that time that he and I spoke.

Mr. BIGGS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I may respond briefly.

Mr. SESSIONS. I would like to clear up anything that we have got here because——

Mr. BIGGS. So——

Mr. SESSIONS [continuing]. I do not tend to pit anybody against anybody else in this. We are not trying to dance around it. We are trying to say that is not the purpose of today's hearing, but we I will ask the gentleman in just a moment, please.

Mr. BIGGS. When the Ranking Member said there is a concern of failure to report rampant sex harassment, well, there is a mountain of information which indicates that those allegations occurred prior to his coming on board, and——

Mr. SESSIONS. Fair enough.

Mr. BIGGS. Right, and so we can respond. I am trying to respect the Chairman's prerogative here, but——

Mr. MFUME. Would the gentleman allow for the words prior to his coming on board to be inserted there?

Mr. BIGGS. Yes. I mean, that is fine.

Mr. MFUME. Yes.

Mr. BIGGS. I am just trying to say, look, if we are really trying not to get into that issue today—I did not bring it up and I purposely did not bring it up, and I asked questions what I thought were process questions, and yet the opening statement of the Ranking Member actually brought this forward.

Mr. SESSIONS. And I respect your viewpoint. Does the gentleman wish to make that statement that there was this statement made and should be clarified a bit, and did you just do that?

Mr. MFUME. Well, I thought I just did.

Mr. SESSIONS. OK. That is fine.

Mr. MFUME. This has become an issue that has taken on its own life. That is why I said Mr. Greenblatt did not respond, I did not pursue, and if those comments or accusations came before the gentleman in question became an IG, I am fine with that. The record should reflect that——

Mr. SESSIONS. Then we will——

Mr. MFUME [continuing]. The timeline.

Mr. SESSIONS [continuing]. Try and leave it there.

Mr. MFUME. Yes.

Mr. SESSIONS. And then we will get into it as we decide in another hearing.

Mr. MFUME. Absolutely.

Mr. SESSIONS. I respect that. The gentleman from Virginia, did you wish to offer—

Mr. CONNOLLY. I just wanted a question to you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SESSIONS. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Did I understand you to say you have an understanding with Mr. Greenblatt wearing his hat as Chairman of CIGIE to withhold action on—

Mr. SESSIONS. None whatsoever.

Mr. CONNOLLY. OK. I just—

Mr. SESSIONS. I will offer a clarification.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes. Thank you.

Mr. SESSION. And I said this to Mr. Mfume that I told him that is not what this hearing is about today, but I did say it is on our minds. And by being on our minds, Mr. Greenblatt said, look, there is a process that is going on, including allowing feedback that will take place on or about August 2, and that is when people would be responding back, and that would need to be filtered and discussed by any number of members that might be in a decision-making mode. And he did not believe that would take place for some period of time, and I said might that period of time be after the middle of September. He said quite likely.

Mr. CONNOLLY. OK.

Mr. SESSIONS. And I will agree to come and sit down with you as I know more. And I told Mr. Mfume, as we were sitting here today, part of the discussion we had, I would include him in. Is that correct?

Mr. MFUME. That is correct.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And Mr. Chairman, just to make—

Mr. SESSIONS. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you for your clarification. I saw Mr. Greenblatt wag his head. If it is all right, I want to just make sure, Mr. Greenblatt, that is your understanding as well?

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentleman—

Mr. CONNOLLY. Of course.

Mr. SESSIONS [continuing]. Will be recognized in a minute.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, I—

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentleman will be recognized in a minute. Mr. Greenblatt, I told you, as you willingly engaged properly in this debate, did I overemphasize or correctly state what you and I agreed to?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir. That latter formulation was correct. That is all my expectation. I should just be very clear I am not on the Integrity Committee. I do not vote. I am not in the briefings. I am not in the meetings.

Mr. SESSIONS. But you are aware of the process.

Mr. GREENBLATT. But I can be aware of the process. And my sense is that it would take some time to review the responses, if any. You know, to review them, it takes time. I am just talking about my own experience as IG. It takes time to incorporate, to ingest what the subjects are saying, review it, give it a fair read, es-

pecially in something that is a large endeavor. It can take some time. So, my expectation to you, which you correctly identified——

Mr. SESSIONS. That is correct.

Mr. GREENBLATT [continuing]. Is that I just do not think it would be for a little while.

Mr. SESSIONS. And with that understanding, he agreed to come back——

Mr. GREENBLATT. Correct.

Mr. SESSIONS [continuing]. In the middle of September, whether or not they had gotten close or not.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Correct. And this is——

Mr. SESSIONS. So, we are not tying each other down, but I did include Mr. Mfume in that discussion. You are entitled to do that.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Thank you, sir.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you very much. The gentleman has yielded his time. The gentlewoman, Ms. Norton, is recognized.

Ms. NORTON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A major component of the Council of Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's mission is to "increase the professionalism and effectiveness of personnel by developing policy standards and approaches to aid in the establishment of a well-trained and highly skilled workforce in the offices of the Inspector General." CIGIE's success is essential because agencies and their stakeholders rely on the inspector general community to improve agency operations and root out waste and fraud. Mr. Greenblatt, I know you have mentioned this in your testimony, but can you tell me once again how many students CIGIE's Training Institute enrolled in Fiscal Year 2023?

Mr. GREENBLATT. It was more than 12,000 students in the OIG community, and that includes auditors, investigators, inspectors, evaluators, attorneys, and including also senior leadership, so it is a wide variety of different training offerings that we provide.

Ms. NORTON. Well, Mr. Greenblatt, how many students has CIGIE enrolled in Fiscal Year 2024 programming so far?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know the number off the top of my head, but it is easily on track to match the 12,000 from last year. You know, we are packing the house in terms of our offerings. They are very, very popular, and our biggest problem is actually trying to accommodate more.

Ms. NORTON. I appreciate that answer. When the number becomes clear, I wish you would report that to the Chairman.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Certainly.

Ms. NORTON. Our Republican Senate colleague, Chuck Grassley, very recently reminded us, "OIGs are the independent watchdogs protecting Americans' taxpayer dollars and fighting waste, fraud, and abuse in the executive branch. Their efficiency depends on their objectivity." Amongst CIGIE's essential roles is development of quality standards for the fundamental skills of the Inspector General community. For example, quality standards for investigations, for digital forensics, and for inspectors' inspections and evaluations. So, Mr. Greenblatt, why are these quality standards critical to maintaining a professionalized and competent inspector general community?

Mr. GREENBLATT. That gets to the core of what we do and how we add value as an organization. So, these are the standards that

all of our member IGs have to live up to, so we have audit standards. As you mentioned, we have inspections and evaluation standards. We have investigation standards, and we have peer reviews where we look at each other's work. And it is like a root canal. It is going to the dentist. It is not a fun or pleasant experience.

And we look to make sure that the other folks, that the other organization is actually living up to the standards that we have laid out. We look at their cases. We look at their audits. We look at their investigations, their inspections and evaluations in detail and say are you living up to every single principle in the quality standards for each of those disciplines? And that is a great service that we provide, these peer reviews, because they can give you all assurance that the work is high quality, that it is nonpartisan, that it is independent, that it is fair, that it is objective. All of those things are critical parts of what we do. That they are thorough, exhaustive, and factual in nature. So, that is a critical component of our portfolio.

Ms. NORTON. Well, Mr. Greenblatt, how does CIGIE develop these quality standards to ensure the community will adopt and follow them?

Mr. GREENBLATT. So, periodically, the respective Committees, so, for example, the Investigations Committee or the Audit Committee, will look at their existing quality standards and update them to see whatever current practices are at play. For Audits, it is a little bit different because it follows what is called the Yellow Book, which is promulgated by GAO. So, GAO issues the Yellow Book, and then we update our standards to match or exceed that. The Blue Book, which is what we do for inspections and evaluations, is determined by the Inspections and Evaluations Committee, and it is a huge, long process involving dozens of people throughout the IG community. And then we vote on it as a community, and then we also use that as the standard to review each other's work. So, this is a big, heavy process, if you will, that includes a lot of voices and it is quite robust actually.

I am happy to share those quality standards on all of those disciplines for you because, yes, I think you will be quite comfortable that they are exhaustive and give you confidence in what we are doing.

Ms. NORTON. Well, I appreciate you sharing those standards, and I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentlewoman yields back her time. The distinguished gentleman from Kentucky, the young Chairman of the Committee, is recognized.

Chairman COMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for convening this very important hearing. If Congress were to move the PACE into CIGIE, what other agencies would CIGIE work with to utilize these capabilities to prevent improper payments, not just pay and chase? For instance, how would you coordinate with the financial integrity systems at the U.S. Treasury such as Do Not Pay?

Mr. GREENBLATT. We have already met with the Assistant Secretary there specifically to discuss that very potential. I think it should be inside CIGIE. Currently, the PRAC is inside CIGIE, so it is sort of technically inside CIGIE now. The expansion, we be-

lieve, should be inside CIGIE as well, but we would work with anyone and everyone on that.

Chairman COMER. OK. One of the most significant concerns with any governmentwide data analytics platform is security data, which any expansion of the PACE would create. CIGIE has never overseen the protection of data on that scale. Why should Congress trust CIGIE is the best positioned to protect the data?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Well, we are doing it now with the PACE, frankly, and I think we have the capability to do it on a grander scale. These are systems that many IGs already have access to individually. So, what this would do is, I think, make it more efficient by making it in one central spot that the other IGs can go to.

Chairman COMER. Let us shift gears now. What do process protections exist for a subject of an IC investigation?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Many. In fact, I think it has got far more than the vast majority of investigations—

Chairman COMER. So, is there any recourse in the courts for an individual who believes their due process rights have been violated by the IC?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know the answer to that question. I would leave that to the courts.

Chairman COMER. Well, we need the answer to that question, if you can.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir.

Chairman COMER. Each month the Committee receives a notification of every investigation that has gone beyond the 30-day and 150-day period. Most recently, this includes six investigations which have surpassed the 150-day period, four of which are from 2022 or earlier. Is it acceptable to have investigations open for 2, 3, or even 4 years?

Mr. GREENBLATT. No, sir. That is a massive problem for us, but I would say that it takes two to tango on an investigation. It could be slow investigators, but it also could be subjects that refuse to turn over materials—

Chairman COMER. I completely understand and agree with that, right.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes. Right. I mean, Congress knows both parties and both directions for years has dealt with these very similar types of issues, so it takes two to tango. And so, I would say the Integrity Committee over the years has had some large investigations that take a long time. And a consistent theme through many of them is OIGs that are not cooperating with the investigation. And frankly, if agency heads did the same thing as some of these IGs, and we have reported that to Congress, you all, I hope, on a bipartisan basis would be howling mad.

Chairman COMER. Well, do not get me started on that. We have requested a lot of your information. I am sure it has already been discussed. Especially when you talk about CIGAR and that, there are lots of IGs that are not getting information from this Administration. This Administration is doing everything it can to prevent certain IGs from doing their job. But what I am asking about, if an IG is engaged in wrongdoing, then CIGIE and the IC need to provide it to Congress in an expedited way. We should not have

IGs who have engaged in wrongdoing still in office. But if an IG has not engaged in wrongdoing, CIGIE and the IC need to close those investigations now. We should not have an opaque investigation tainting an IG office's work product for 4 years. Would you not agree?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I would absolutely agree with you, sir. And I would note that, Mr. Connolly, I think under your leadership recently in the last Congress, we pushed through what is called a 7-day letter. Congress pushed through what is called a 7-day letter, which gives the Integrity Committee the ability to act faster in those very situations, sir.

Chairman COMER. So, what are you doing to ensure the IC gets these investigations done in a timely manner?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Again, I think we need mechanisms to ensure that IGs are cooperating with IC investigations. They would move much, much faster. That is a consistent theme with the slower investigations. And it is——

Chairman COMER. And I will conclude with this. My time has expired, but we need more cooperation from you all. We need more communication because, you know, we depend on the IGs. To have successful oversight, we have to have a great working relationship and trust and confidence in the IGs. And when there is a breakdown of communication with the IGs or when there is a suspicion of wrongdoing or mistrust with the IGs or with the CIGIE, I mean, that is a problem for oversight. So, Mr. Chairman, again, thank you for this hearing, and I yield back.

Mr. SESSIONS. I am going to come to you, sir.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. SESSIONS. The distinguished gentleman yields back his time. The distinguished gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Connolly, is recognized.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am so glad you are having this hearing. CIGIE has been a very great focus of mine when I chaired this Subcommittee, and I am so glad you are having this hearing. Mr. Comer, I agree with everything he just said at the end, everything. For us to do our job and for the public to have confidence, two things. IGs have to be purer than driven snow, and that ought to be bipartisan. When we find wrongdoing, it ought to be investigated by CIGIE, and it ought to be acted upon expeditiously so that we can restore credibility and integrity. But the second is, you have got to have independence. There cannot be retribution because you are doing your job. I am not aware of a single IG being removed out of retribution by the Biden Administration. Are you, Mr. Greenblatt?

Mr. GREENBLATT. No, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. So, with respect to that, did you know an IG with the Intelligence Committee named Michael Atkinson?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do know Mr.——

Mr. CONNOLLY. And what happened to Mr. Atkinson?

Mr. GREENBLATT. He was removed from——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Why was he removed?

Mr. GREENBLATT. You will have to refer to the President's——

Mr. CONNOLLY. He was removed because he actually alerted Congress to the whistleblower report about the infamous phone call be-



tween President Trump and President Zelensky. Are you familiar with an IG at Health and Human Services named Christi Grimm?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And what happened to her?

Mr. GREENBLATT. She is the IG at HHS right now.

Mr. CONNOLLY. But she was also replaced, was she not, as the Acting IG because she released a report that there were severe shortages at hospitals combating coronavirus?

Mr. GREENBLATT. No, she was Acting and then later confirmed under President Biden.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes. But she was not confirmed under President Trump.

Mr. GREENBLATT. President Trump had not nominated her at that point. She was an Acting—

Mr. CONNOLLY. She was replaced as Acting. He found a different IG.

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not believe that was the case. I do think he was asked a question about that report in a press conference and made some comments perhaps about her.

Mr. CONNOLLY. What about Steve Linick? Did you know Steve Linick?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And who was he?

Mr. GREENBLATT. He was the IG at the State Department.

Mr. CONNOLLY. At the State Department. And what happened to him?

Mr. GREENBLATT. He was removed from office, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. He was removed. Why was he removed?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Again, you will have to refer to the President for that.

Mr. CONNOLLY. He was removed because he was investigating Secretary of State Pompeo and investigating accusations, not proved, about the misuse of government resources. So, when we talk about removing IGs, maybe there is a reason to do it, but there ought to be a really good one, and it cannot be because you are doing your job. If we do that in any administration, we compromise the integrity of the IG.

Now, part two, integrity of IGs, and you were talking with the Chairman a little while ago about a two-way street and we do not always get cooperation, and I think I want to expand on that. Did you know Laura Wertheimer?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And she was the IG at FHFA. Is that correct?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And she was being investigated. Is that correct?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Correct.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And there were charges that she had fostered “a culture of witness intimidation through a pattern of staff abuse and the fear of retaliation.” Is that correct?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know the exact quote, but, yes, that is the essence of it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Trust me here. I do not make up quotes. All right. And what did she do in terms of cooperation with an investigation into her management practices?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I believe that is laid out in the report, but my understanding is that was as bad a cooperation as you could possibly imagine.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Did she not, in fact, actively say she would not cooperate because she did not recognize the authority of the Integrity Committee?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know about the exact quote again, but that does sound——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Right.

Mr. GREENBLATT [continuing]. Very close to what was the essence of it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. So, I was involved with another colleague on this Committee a number of years ago actually filing a complaint against an IG. We had a whistleblower who talked about workplace abuse, not showing up for work, nepotism and favoritism, retaliation, drinking, and collusion with a particular group of people up here to actually define the scope of an investigation that had a profound impact in terms of news and lying about it where you are sitting.

Now, let us assume someone is innocent until proven guilty, but I was personally involved in that complaint, and we filed it with CIGIE. There were two of us, two Members of this Committee, and we never heard from CIGIE until, I do not know, months later. And all we got was like a two-word report, we have looked at it and there is nothing there. Thank you very much. Have a good holiday. And that had a profound impact on our confidence, frankly in CIGIE's ability to examine serious allegations about an IG.

And again, assuming everyone is innocent, but there has to be a transparent process, and I would say the same if my friends on the other side of the aisle. If somebody known as a Democrat, who nonetheless engaged in that kind of behavior, I would want to get at the bottom of it either to clear that person's name so that he or she could get on with their job or to take action so that we can restore credibility to that office.

You know, given our own, some of us, negative experience with CIGIE's transparency and process or lack thereof, and I take note of the lack of resources. I think you should have resources. But help us feel more confident that as we move forward CIGIE has the ability and will and determination to self-police because if you cannot self-police, sooner or later we are going to do it for you. We are going to pass legislation that will take it out of your hands. And there have been enough incidents of IGs with questionable behavior, and that has been charitable in some cases that it is troubling, and it can be troubling on both sides of the aisle, as I said. So, have at it.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Well, sir, I appreciate your interest. I appreciate your support. I find, you know, that your discomfort with the process to be heartbreaking. As I said in my opening statement, we want all of you to be very confident in what we are doing, both as IGs, but also in the Integrity Committee and everything else we are doing at CIGIE. Let me assure you. I appointed or was involved in the appointment of all four IGs on the Integrity Committee. These are some of the hardest-working, fairest, most sober-minded IGs in the business. These are serious people. They deliberate on

these allegations and on these matters for hours. This is all done as a collateral duty. They have a job as an IG, and they spend extraordinary amounts of time specifically designed to getting the answer right, and I have great confidence in them. If I were under investigation, those are the four IGs I would want running it. So, I hope I can give you some confidence that these are some of the very, very best we have got.

I would invite you. I actually want to. We are in the process of setting up like a meet-and-greet for all of you and your staff to interact with these folks. We cannot talk about cases, but they can talk to you and you can get a sense of who they are. They can be three-dimensional human beings. These are four of the best that we have got, and I would love for you to meet them. The best advertising we have for the Integrity Committee is the Integrity Committee. So, I would love for you to meet them, lay eyes on them, talk with them. If we can make that happen, I think that would dispel a lot of the concern because I think you will see they are good people who just want to get the right answer.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the Chair again for holding this hearing and look forward to working with him. I do think there is bipartisan ground to be had here, at least in focusing on process and structure that can help us ensure good outcomes. I thank the Chair.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you very much. The distinguished gentleman yields back his time. The gentlewoman from Wyoming, Ms. Hageman, is recognized.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Greenblatt, as allegations of politicization of CIGIE continue, I am concerned about whether appropriate standards of due process are in place to ensure that IGs and employees of IG offices are not unfairly targeted for just doing their jobs. CIGIE's Integrity Committee, or IC, investigates wrongdoing by IGs or their staff. Is that correct?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes.

Ms. HAGEMAN. And is it Kimberly A. Howell who is currently the Chair of the IC?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Correct.

Ms. HAGEMAN. And Kimberly Howell is not an employee of the Federal Government, is she?

Mr. GREENBLATT. She is an IG of what is called the Designated Federal Entity.

Ms. HAGEMAN. I get that. She is not an employee of the Federal Government, is she?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not believe so.

Ms. HAGEMAN. OK. Can the President or anyone in the executive branch fire Ms. Howell or any head of the IC?

Mr. GREENBLATT. The President could remove the head of the CPB, where she is the Inspector General.

Ms. HAGEMAN. OK. But the President does not interact with or fire the head of the IC, correct? And you have already testified that you do not have any oversight and you do not oversee Ms. Howell. Is that not also correct?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I can remove them from the Integrity Committee.

Ms. HAGEMAN. OK. Well, just over a month ago, the IC delivered a report to the President and Congress with findings of abusive authority regarding the Social Security Administration's inspector general, and Ms. Howell sent and signed this report to its recipients. Were you aware of that?

Ms. GREENBLATT. Yes, ma'am.

Ms. HAGEMAN. An IC report delivered to the President, or an agency head then can recommend or result in disciplinary action against an IG or a person working inside an IG office, leading all the way up to termination. Is that correct?

Ms. GREENBLATT. It can recommend that, yes.

Ms. HAGEMAN. OK. And does that not mean that the leadership of CIGIE could use the IC to undo the Presidential appointment and Senate confirmation of executive officials by individuals that were never nominated and which are actually not even Federal employees?

Ms. GREENBLATT. No, I do not agree with that statement at all.

Ms. HAGEMAN. OK. When the IC asks an IG or an employee of an IG office to respond to an allegation to avoid a full investigation, the respondent must fully refute the allegation such that no reasonable person would conclude that further development would demonstrate that the respondent committed the misconduct. In other words, when they come under investigation, they are the ones that carry the burden of proof with a very high standard for exoneration. Why is this different than American civil and criminal proceedings, where the burden of proof is on the accusing party rather than on the accused?

Mr. GREENBLATT. No, that is not a fair representation of what happens in an investigation.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Then explain it to me.

Mr. GREENBLATT. So, when a complaint comes in and the Integrity Committee determines that it is opening a case, it generally refers the complaint to the subject or subjects, plural, and says here are the allegations.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Refute them?

Mr. GREENBLATT. You have an opportunity to refute them.

Ms. HAGEMAN. And the burden of proof is that they have to prove that the allegation is such that no reasonable person would conclude that further development would demonstrate that the respondent committed the misconduct. Is that not the standard?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I believe that sounds accurate.

Ms. HAGEMAN. OK.

Mr. GREENBLATT. But the whole point is that the Integrity Committee would not have to do that step at all. That is a courtesy. That is an extra step with due process.

Ms. HAGEMAN. I would tend to disagree with that representation, but—

Mr. GREENBLATT. Well, you can disagree, but that is an extra step that they add to help the subjects. So, it is not—

Ms. HAGEMAN. Placing the burden of proof on them.

Mr. GREENBLATT. It is being perverted. This is like looking through a funhouse mirror. This is not an accurate portrayal of what is actually happening in the process. This is an opportunity

for the subject, and the Integrity Committee over and over again takes those responses and actually kills complaints——

Ms. HAGEMAN. So, in other words, what you are saying——

Mr. GREENBLATT. Let me finish my answer. Kills complaints and does not get to investigations.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Excuse me? Excuse me?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I am trying to finish my answer.

Ms. HAGEMAN. I am going to reclaim my time and ask the questions.

Mr. SESSIONS. Our witness needs to understand that the gentleman controls the time, and I do recognize that you would like the opportunity to respond accordingly. I am sure that the gentleman would give you that opportunity. She controls the time. And I would remind the witness, we appreciate him being here, but this is a hearing that the members that are waived on will control their own time, sir. Does the gentleman understand that?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you very much. The gentleman is recognized.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Let us move on to a different subject here then. When the IC pursues an investigation against an IG or an employee of the IG office, it does so against them in their personal capacity, is that correct, even though the allegations relate to official acts?

Mr. GREENBLATT. It is investigating the individual as opposed to the organization.

Ms. HAGEMAN. So, it is against them in their personal capacity, correct?

Mr. GREENBLATT. It is not investigating them in their personal capacity like if it were, say, a driving incident. It is related to their work.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Well, let me ask it this way. Are they able to access agency documentation that may support their claim of innocence?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I would imagine so.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Do you know one way or the other?

Mr. GREENBLATT. No, but I would imagine they can get materials in their work environment.

Ms. HAGEMAN. In its policies and procedures, the IC states that it may “consider wrongdoing alleged to have occurred while an individual served as a covered person, even if that individual is no longer a covered person or in government service when the IC receives the allegation.” Is the authority to investigate Federal employees who are no longer in IG service or retired persons derived from statute, or is that an internal rule?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know the answer to that.

Ms. HAGEMAN. OK. If current IGs and IG employees find it difficult to meet the IC standard, how could it be even remotely possible for a former employee to resolve allegations against them, especially if they are not able to access documents from the agency?

Mr. GREENBLATT. As part of the investigation, I would imagine that the Integrity Committee would go to the agency, the OIG in question, to get relevant materials.

Ms. HAGEMAN. But the individual would not have access to that information?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know the answer to that.

Ms. HAGEMAN. OK.

Mr. GREENBLATT. I would say that IGs regularly go after investigations involving former employees because otherwise you set up a situation where folks will just resign and escape accountability, which is an outcome that none of us would want.

Ms. HAGEMAN. I think what we have uncovered is that there are very serious due process problems and constitutional and statutory problems associated with the IC's and the way that CIGIE is set up and operated. That is the purpose of this hearing, is to get to the bottom of that. That is why I waived on to this Committee because I have very serious concerns about the due process rights and the process that is being followed. So, we will follow up with this potentially with additional questions, but we will also continue to work with this Committee to make sure that we can protect the due process rights and the rights of the people being investigated. Thank you, and with that, I yield back.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Chairman, I have a unanimous consent request.

Mr. SESSIONS. If the gentleman would wait just one moment, please.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes.

Mr. SESSIONS. As I told you, I will entertain that. I want to thank the gentlewoman for taking time. This is the correct hearing. You have done the right thing. And I would also say that Mr. Greenblatt has available to him other members of his staff that are listening to this, and we would expect to get each of your questions answered. I believe you have done the right thing, and I want to thank the gentlewoman for being here.

If I could move to the distinguished gentleman from Virginia for the purpose of making a—

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the Chair. I would like to insert in the record an article from the *Washington Post* dated May 2, 2020, confirming what I said to Mr. Greenblatt that Ms. Christi Grimm was indeed replaced by President Trump, and according to the article, because she found "severe shortages in hospitals combating coronavirus."

Mr. SESSIONS. Without objection, we will include—

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank the Chair.

Mr. SESSIONS. Yes, sir. We will now move to the distinguished gentlewoman from Pennsylvania. Ms. Lee is recognized.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chair. In 2020, President Trump's last year in office, he removed or replaced five Inspectors General in what appeared to be retaliation for investigating the misconduct of his own administration, and in June 2020, the Government Accountability Office issued a report addressing the impact of political retaliation on IGs. That report said, "Ensuring the independence of IGs is critical to OIG's credibility and effectiveness."

I ask the Chair for unanimous consent to enter the GAO report titled, "Inspectors General, Independence Principles and Considerations for Reform."

Mr. SESSIONS. Without objection.

Ms. LEE. Thank you. Mr. Greenblatt, if there is the appearance of political interference with an Inspector General's office, how might that affect the mission and effectiveness of that office?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Certainly, independence is core to what we do. It is a central principle for all of us. We need to be independent from the agencies, and we report directly to our agency head, but also Congress as well on a bipartisan basis, and that independence is absolutely critical for everything we do.

Ms. LEE. Thank you. President Trump also left gaping holes in the IG community for years at a time. While vacancies have been a problem in previous administrations, they were particularly damaging under Trump. During his tenure, five IG positions were made vacant for the entirety of his presidency. In contrast, President Biden and the Senate have confirmed 15 IG nominees. Inspector Generals speak truth to power and they rebuild trust in our government. Without qualified people to fill these essential oversight roles, we cannot hold government leaders accountable. With that great responsibility comes a requirement that the IGs themselves remain above reproach.

CIGIE's Integrity Committee serves as the watchdog of our Federal watchdogs. CIGIE conducts nonpartisan investigations into allegations of legal and ethical wrongdoing by Federal IGs and high-ranking OIG officials. They make recommendations for disciplinary action, up to recommending an IG's removal if their investigations confirm allegations of misconduct. The decision to remove an IG must be made outside of the political arena and not by a President who fears that an IG's findings will embarrass them or their political appointees. And we need these determinations in a timely manner.

The Department of Homeland Security's Office of Inspector General's Chief Counsel admitted in a June 24, 2024 court filing that the Integrity Committee recommended disciplinary action against him. Yet nearly a month later and a years-long investigation, the Integrity Committee has still not released a report to Congress. Mr. Greenblatt, can you give us an update on when that report will be released?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Well, as I said earlier, I am not on the Integrity Committee. I do not participate in their deliberations or vote. I do not go to their meetings, so I do not know when that will be. I know it is a priority for the Integrity Committee. This is something everyone wants to move forward with, but it takes time. It is very large and multifaceted, and these things just take a long time. Well, these are very weighty issues, and I know the Integrity Committee is doing its best to move things forward in a deliberate fashion.

Ms. LEE. And I apologize if I am asking you a question that is outside of your purview and fear of doing that, but what are you all doing to improve the speed of how quickly a report will be released, if you can answer that?

Mr. GREENBLATT. So, we have already convened a working group to look at timeliness issues with respect to the Integrity Committee. That is something that is underway. We have asked them to move forward in an expeditious manner to try to develop some ideas on how we can move the Integrity Committee investigations

forward faster. A major component of that is IG cooperation, and so that is perhaps the biggest problem with slower investigations, is IG cooperation. So, that is the hardest-to crack, is that issue.

Ms. LEE. Thank you. CIGIE's Integrity Committee serves an important purpose in holding our government accountable, but it must improve the timeliness of its investigations or bad actors will be able to act with impunity. I ask you, Mr. Greenblatt, to release or, of course, help to release the critical reports so leaders and policymakers know whether they can trust the people who hold these essential positions. I thank you for your time and the Committee's, and I yield back.

Mr. SESSIONS. Thank you very much. The gentlewoman yields back. At this time, the distinguished gentleman from Georgia is recognized.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Mfume, for agreeing to waive me on to today's hearing. Thank you, Mr. Greenblatt, for being here.

I serve as the Chairman of the Committee on House Administration Subcommittee on Oversight. And as you may be aware, I am leading an in-depth investigation to the security failures of the Capitol on January 6, and I am keenly interested in discussing opportunities for improved coordination between CIGIE and Congress. I think you mentioned that earlier. As you can imagine, this investigation has caused me to work or try to work with several Inspector Generals in different agencies, and as you know, that CIGIE was established as an independent entity to address integrity and effectiveness issues. Unfortunately, I have heard from numerous stakeholders who say that CIGIE is anything but that. I have also significant concerns with CIGIE's Integrity Committee's lack of transparency and accountability, but I will submit those questions for the record instead of trying to deal with all those right now, but I would appreciate prompt answers on those.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Let me get on to the issues that I think are most prevalent right now. Following the events on January 6, the Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General opened three different investigations; one regarding DHS intelligence failures, a second focusing on the Secret Service, and a third regarding DHS law enforcement response. Four years later—we are coming up on 4 years—only one of those reports have been published, and that is the one on DHS intelligence failures. On January 6, 2021, Vice President-elect Kamala Harris drove within feet of an explosive device that the Secret Service had missed in a security sweep twice, and this was over at the DCCC. So, we are very interested in the report, the IG report on Secret Service, that there was some level of failure in Secret Service that day, which was important to our investigation.

Now, thank goodness it did not go off. The bomb did not go off. But then we have this incident on July 13, this year, of the attempted assassination of President Trump that reminds us that if we have issues or incompetence within an organization, it is imperative that we look into it and correct it, or it may happen again. So, I am not suggesting that there is a connection, but this goes all the way back, January 6, that there were some issues with the Secret Service.



Now, my Subcommittee became aware that the reason we have not gotten the report on Secret Service, or the other report, is that Secretary Mayorkas is himself delaying these reports that directly relate to our ongoing investigation. In addition, my Subcommittee has discovered numerous significant issues in a DOD IG report that focused on the delayed deployment of the D.C. National Guard to the Capitol on January 6. One of the issues that we found out is that there were some inaccuracies in the report. And my Subcommittee staff reached out to CIGIE with concerns about the IG report and the DOD IG report, and my staff simply asked CIGIE for a briefing on the historical context of an IG report being retracted or revised.

We wanted a briefing from your organization on can an IG retract or revise a report. However, CIGIE forwarded that email over to the very entity, the DOD IG. I found that to be inappropriate, and, in fact, the DOD IG said that was inappropriate. We are asking CIGIE to help us with something, but CIGIE then forwards our request to the very entity that we are looking into. I have some issues with that. So, question. How can CIGIE be an independent entity entrusted with addressing integrity issues in the offices of inspector general if they are differential to the OIG that they are tasked with overseeing?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Sir, I find that unfortunate if there was miscommunication. I take responsibility for that. I do not remember the specific incident, but I take responsibility for it. CIGIE is under my leadership. We at CIGIE, the Council, we do not want to step on the toes of the individual IGs and their relationship with Congress. So, sometimes we get incoming from Congress about specific members, and it would be inappropriate for us to weigh in. So, sometimes we do defer to the individual IGs. In this case, we perhaps should have come to you first—

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Well, I think so, instead of letting the IG know that we are looking into them. So, since we are running late, let me move on to a couple of other questions. I think it will be easier for you to answer. If an IG releases a report and later is determined that there are significant factual errors, what should be done and should that report be retracted or corrected?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I have seen that in the past, sir, and we try to get it right. You know, we try to get the right answer, and if we get it wrong, I think it would be wholly appropriate to take down whatever is wrong and replace it with something that is factually accurate. We do not want incorrect information.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. And let me just lay out a hypothetical. If somebody testified and gave you wrong information that turned out later that they were not giving you the right information, so according to the Inspector General Act, are Inspector Generals entitled to any and all information from the agency they oversee?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, sir.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. OK. Thank you. Is there a law that prohibits an inspector general from sharing a completed report with Congress if that report has already been shared with the agency for technical input? Is there a law that prohibits an IG from sharing a report with Congress once it has already been shared for technical input with the agency?

Mr. GREENBLATT. So, the process, just in general terms, so we split up audits, inspections, and evaluations, on the one hand, and investigations, on the other hand, so let us put investigations to the side. But audits, inspections, and evaluation, typically speaking, the process is that it goes to the agency for their comment and draft.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Right.

Mr. GREENBLATT. They respond. Then we incorporate those comments and deal with those comments in some way, and then when it goes to final, we give it to the agency, but we also give it to Congress and put it online. So, I would say at the final stage, then certainly, that is a matter of standard practice, but in the draft stage, no, I do not think that is standard because we want to get the comments back from the department.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Right. So, if the comments have come back and, I mean, we are talking about reports that have been going on for 4 years.

Mr. GREENBLATT. No, I understand, so—

Mr. LOUDERMILK. I think you have answered that appropriately. Is it appropriate for an agency Secretary to threaten to withhold information from an IG if they provide a report to Congress without the Secretary's approval?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Oh, I do not think that is appropriate.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Would you say that it is illegal?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know the answer to that, and I hesitate to get into a situation that I do not know.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. OK. Well, thank you. This is something that we are dealing with, is a Secretary telling the IG if they release a report to Congress, they will not have access to any future information. I have a big problem with that.

Mr. GREENBLATT. I cannot speak to a specific situation, but in hypothetical situations I would not support that.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. OK. Because that is exactly what we are getting from the DHS IG, is that they cannot release this report because Secretary Mayorkas is refusing to give him access to future information. So, Mr. Chairman, I have got some other questions that I can submit for the record. I just heard the bell, so I think they are calling votes, and with that, I will yield back.

Mr. SESSIONS. In fact, the gentleman is correct, and I would respect and appreciate that and would welcome those to be given. And the distinguished gentleman would also take those on, and so we will at the end of the hearing notify members that within 5 days we would expect to hear back from that. Thank you very much.

Mr. LOUDERMILK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Bell, would you like to be recognized? Mr. Frost, would you like to be recognized? Oh, Ms. Tlaib, and I apologize.

Ms. TLAIB. That is OK, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentlewoman is recognized.

Ms. TLAIB. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Greenblatt, thank you so much for being here. I want to ask you about PACE. What does it stand for? Pandemic Analytics Center of Excellence?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes.

Ms. TLAIB. What is it?

Mr. GREENBLATT. It is a data analytics center that we have for on the pandemic side, so this deals with PPP loans and——

Ms. TLAIB. So, you see that fraud?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I am sorry?

Ms. TLAIB. To look at fraud?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Correct.

Ms. TLAIB. OK.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Correct.

Ms. TLAIB. In over 4 years with the \$40 million investment from Congress, the PACE provided investigative support for more than 40 Federal law enforcement and OIG partners, of course, on more than, what, 875 pandemic-related investigations?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, it is a huge number. Yes.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes, 19,000 subjects. Estimated fraud loss of, what, \$2.1 billion? Is that correct?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes. Yes.

Ms. TLAIB. So, Mr. Greenblatt, why is PACE only for pandemic related?

Mr. GREENBLATT. That is the \$64,000 question. We would love to expand that and implement that governmentwide at CIGIE. And then we cannot only look at money that has gone out the door, but we can look at it on a preventative basis and give information to the agencies in advance before——

Ms. TLAIB. So, applying PACE to all the various Federal programs across the board would result in the same kind of findings of fraud and be able to try to save money for the American people?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, and more than that, I think it would be preventative. The numbers you were sharing before were solely after the money has gone out the door.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT. We would like to establish such a data hub to prevent those bad dollars going out the door.

Ms. TLAIB. So, how does PACE, though—how does it share data and information with agencies and states and local government in ways that protect sensitive information like folks' Social Security Numbers and personal ID information?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, we are very conscious of PII——

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT [continuing]. You know, Social Security numbers and things along those lines. So, for example, if the PACE had been in existence in 2020——

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT [continuing]. It could have taken the Social Security Numbers that the Small Business Administration was going to give loans to, PPP loans back in 2020. And running those numbers, it found 70,000 Social Security Numbers that were questionable, and it could have sent those to the Small Business Administration in a secure fashion to identify more than \$5.4 billion——

Ms. TLAIB. Is that because of identity theft?

Mr. GREENBLATT. It could have been identity theft. It is possible, yes. It could be dead people. It could be identity theft. It could be a whole wide variety of different issues, but yes, identity theft would be——

Ms. TLAIB. I know our Ranking Member on this Committee has a bill to basically—is it not like expiring or something? Is that correct?

Mr. GREENBLATT. That is right. The PACE is——

Ms. TLAIB. The PACE program, yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT. The Pandemic Response Accountability Committee, the PRAC, which houses the PACE, is supposed to expire at the end of Fiscal Year 2025, which means the PACE would evaporate. And so, we are trying to extend it and keep the PACE——

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Greenblatt, give me an example of what PACE found if I was to go back to my district and say, hey, guess what? PACE is great, we should continue it, look what it found.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Oh, it is looking at everything from unemployment insurance to, like I said, the PPP loans. It is looking at Federal employees who are getting PPP loans, even though they were gainfully employed with the Federal Government.

Ms. TLAIB. How about Members of Congress?

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know the answer to that.

Ms. TLAIB. No, some of them did get it.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes, I do not know the answer to that, actually.

Ms. TLAIB. But PACE would look at that, right?

Mr. GREENBLATT. Theoretically it could.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT. I do not know if they have. That is a good question.

Ms. TLAIB. You probably should.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Yes.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Possibly. I am going to demur on that at this——

Ms. TLAIB. No, I mean fraud is rampant. It is not just, you know, obviously in the public sector, but even in the private sector. And just to do data analytics like this and to use the technology we have now to kind of have a better oversight, I mean, like I say, it already saves billions.

Mr. GREENBLATT. Absolutely. One of the things we found we did at the Department of the Interior, we looked at the Federal employees who are also getting—I am talking about at the department——

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT [continuing]. Who are also getting PPP loans, you know, presumably inappropriately.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT. And we found that the vast majority of them were identity theft.

Ms. TLAIB. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT. They were not actually the employees——

Ms. TLAIB. That is what we found in unemployment in Michigan——

Mr. GREENBLATT. Right.

Ms. TLAIB [continuing]. A lot of identity theft.

Mr. GREENBLATT. The potential for fraud in those programs is enormous.

Ms. TLAI. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT. And what we could do with a data center would be, I think, comparably enormous to prevent that fraud, and with a very small investment of cash, relatively speaking. We are talking about pennies. And if we talk about the expired funds, which I raised at the very beginning, unobligated expired funds, you know, we could fund this very quickly. I think this is a game changer, an absolute game changer for the oversight community.

Ms. TLAI. Well, thank you so much, Mr. Greenblatt. I yield, Mr. Chair.

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentlewoman yields back her time. I am giving myself unanimous consent, but would ask unanimous consent to enter into the record a letter to President Biden signed by Chairman Comer asking for President Biden to fill vacant IG positions. This letter describes how positions such as the Treasury have been vacant for over a thousand days under the Biden Administration.

So, without objection, we will enter that into the record.

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Frost, you are recognized.

Mr. FROST. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair. CIGIE and the Integrity Committee are essential to Federal Government operations and trust in our institutions. Without their work, Inspector General misconduct could go unaddressed. Inspectors General are experts and professionals at uncovering misconduct, fraud, waste, and abuse. Mr. Greenblatt, how does the Integrity Committee help ensure that Inspectors General are both transparent and accountable?

Mr. GREENBLATT. So, it is the investigatory body that Congress has created to, you know, like I said, investigate allegations of misconduct by IGs and senior folks and a handful of other folks in government like the special counsel. One of the things I would like to say, we had allegations about due process and transparency. The Integrity Committee has a number of mechanisms that ensure fairness, that ensure, you know, a fair process and far more transparency than any other investigatory body I can think of. And they have regular updates to Congress, and we have, you know, extensive reporting requirements that are far beyond anything we do in our actual day-to-day jobs as IGs. And so, I think Congress should be very confident that the Integrity Committee is acting in good faith.

There are a number of very long investigations that have bedeviled the Integrity Committee. I will not shy away from that. I see you shaking your head. We do not disagree on that. That is a significant issue. How we address that issue, we have some ideas, but it is robust and it is designed to get to a fair answer. It is not a hammer looking for nails. Quite the opposite. It is trying to operate in a fair environment. The processes and procedures, I think, are remarkably fair. And I am concerned that some of the perceptions about the process are simply not accurate and do not fairly reflect the process. And I am happy to sit with any member at any time and discuss those issues, as we did, Mr. Chairman, yesterday.

Mr. FROST. Yes. Thank you. I appreciate it. In recent years, we have seen the type of IG misconduct that clearly demonstrates the need for the Integrity Committee. In June 2021, for example, the Federal Housing and Finance Agency IG, Laura Wertheimer, re-

signed after the Integrity Committee found that she fostered “a culture of witness intimidation through a pattern of staff abuse and fear of retaliation.” In mid-2022, following an investigation by CIGIE, the Inspector General for the Securities and Exchange Commission, Carl Hoecker, resigned following reports that he refused to act on credible allegations of sexual harassment. Mr. Greenblatt, as an Inspector General yourself, can you briefly describe the kinds of recoveries and enforcement action supported by IG investigations and give us a general idea of the dollar amounts that you have had to deal with?

Mr. GREENBLATT. In the IG community writ large?

Mr. FROST. Yes.

Mr. GREENBLATT. We have had remarkable success. As I mentioned earlier, we had \$693 billion in either question costs or recoveries from OIG oversight efforts over the past 10 years. I think last year alone we had \$93 billion. That is just 1 year. If you add up all of the IG budgets and, you know, roll them up and compare that with the \$93 billion, you know, it is something like a \$26 to \$1. So, for every dollar appropriated to an OIG, we are turning back \$26 in potential savings. So, this is serious return on investment. And that does not include the variety of investigations and audits and inspections that do not include monetary returns, like I said, the work on preventing veteran suicides, the work on protecting the elderly in nursing homes, protecting tenants in public housing from sexual predators. You know, those do not have a dollar figure associated with them. So, just looking at the financial return on investment, it is \$26 to \$1, but that omits an enormous amount of what we do on a day-to-day basis.

Mr. FROST. Thank you so much. I appreciate you being here. I think the clock was frozen for a little bit, so I had some extra time. I will just put that in the bank for next time.

Mr. SESSIONS. I was thinking that same thing. I did not get a chance to ask questions either. Thank you very much.

Mr. FROST. Of course. I yield back.

Mr. SESSIONS. Look, we are on closing time. We all know that. I want to thank you for taking time. You have done well enough to be invited back. In closing, I want to thank you for your forthrightness. I also want you to know that Mr. Mfume would like to have the mic to express himself. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. MFUME. Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to echo your comments. Mr. Greenblatt, thank you for being forthright. As you heard, there is some interest here in pursuing this notion of expired funds to be able to properly fund the operation that you have, and I think that there were a number of members here that raised some fine points. So, just when we thought this was going to be a very nice and calm hearing, it goes to show you that people feel strongly about this, and I hope that, if the Chairman is willing, maybe we can have you back again. I do not want to think that this is the end of it.

Mr. SESSIONS. The gentleman would be correct. We try and work together and see the same thing, but I think a number of members, as I told you yesterday, have expressed ideas.

OK. With that, without objection, all members have 5 legislative days within to submit materials and additional written questions

for the witness, which will be forwarded to the witnesses from the Subcommittee.

Mr. SESSIONS. If there is any further business? I see none. Without objection, the Subcommittee stands adjourned. Thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 4:43 p.m., the Subcommittee was adjourned.]

