

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 23, 2024

The Honorable Kevin Winters
Chairperson
Integrity Committee
Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency
1750 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Chairperson Winters,

We recently became aware that the Integrity Committee failed to investigate serious allegations against covered employees, even after many of the allegations were substantiated. This failure is a dereliction of the Committee's statutory duty to ensure accountability among the community of Inspectors General and has led to serious questions about the politicization of the Integrity Committee itself.

In October and November 2019, U.S. Department of Homeland Security Office of Inspector General (DHS OIG) referred allegations against three senior DHS OIG employees to the Integrity Committee. The allegations included incidents of fraud, misconduct, retaliation, and abuse of authority on the part of the three employees. Yet, in November 2019, the Integrity Committee informed DHS OIG that it would take no further action on the allegations, leaving the matter in the hands of DHS OIG.

In May 2020, following a formal procurement process, DHS OIG contracted with Wilmer Cutler Pickering Hale and Door LLP (WilmerHale) to conduct an independent investigation, removing any bias from the investigation or its conclusions. WilmerHale's investigation substantiated many of the initial allegations, and the report details the evidence and findings. Additionally, WilmerHale's investigation uncovered that the then-Vice Chairperson of the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency—the parent body of the Integrity Committee—encouraged the actions of the three employees mentioned above.

Upon completion, a copy of WilmerHale's report was provided by DHS OIG to the Integrity Committee, of which you had become Chairperson. To date, it appears the implicated employees have not been questioned by the Integrity Committee for their actions.

This chain of events and the Integrity Committee's failure to act on these serious allegations is highly concerning, especially given that three of the implicated individuals remained in federal service. One even went on to serve as an Acting Inspector General and one continues to serve as an Inspector General.

As we conduct oversight of the functions of the Integrity Committee and determine whether statutory changes are needed, we request you answer the following questions no later than June 3, 2024:

1. Given the severity of the allegations made, why did the Integrity Committee decline to investigate in 2019?

2. Before declining to investigate, did the Integrity Committee seek additional information from the three covered employees?
 - a. If so, how did they justify their actions so the Integrity Committee felt comfortable declining further investigation?
3. After a copy of the WilmerHale report was provided to the Integrity Committee by DHS OIG, did the Integrity Committee review the report's conclusions?
 - a. If so, why did the Integrity Committee choose not to open an investigation?
 - b. If not, why not?
4. Has the Integrity Committee reconsidered any of its allegation review procedures or thresholds for determining whether to open an investigation?
5. What other actions has the Integrity Committee taken to ensure similar serious allegations are fully investigated?

Sincerely,



Andy Biggs
Member of Congress



Matt Gaetz
Member of Congress



Pete Sessions
Member of Congress



Clay Higgins
Member of Congress



Greg Steube
Member of Congress



Thomas Massie
Member of Congress



Dan Bishop
Member of Congress



Harriet M. Hageman
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress