



One Hundred Eighteenth Congress
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2023

The Honorable Dan Bishop
Chairman
Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Accountability
Committee on Homeland Security
H2-176 Ford House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Oversight of Department of Homeland Security Inspector General

Dear Chairman Bishop:

As I stated during the Committee's February 28 markup, I am requesting a hearing concerning the leadership and performance of the DHS Inspector General (IG).

During the 117th Congress, the Committee began its extensive oversight of DHS IG Cuffari due to concerns about his lack of accountability, transparency, and independence. These concerns include his failure to notify Congress in a timely manner about the Secret Service's erasure of text messages related to the January 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol. In an August 1, 2022, letter to the IG, then-Chairman of the Homeland Security Committee Bennie Thompson and then-Chairwoman of the Oversight and Reform Committee Carolyn Maloney cite "new evidence that your office may have secretly abandoned efforts to collect text messages from the Secret Service" and "documents indicat[ing] that your office may have taken steps to cover up the extent of missing records."¹ The letter requested that the IG produce all documents and communications related to the deletion, erasure, or unavailability of those text messages; the decision by any Office of Inspector General personnel not to collect or recover those text messages; and the delay in notifying Congress about the loss of those text messages.

Unfortunately, the IG has refused to produce all requested documents and blocked OIG employees from appearing for transcribed interviews in what a follow-up August 16, 2022, letter from then-Chairman Thompson and then-Chairwoman Maloney called an "unacceptable"

¹ Letter from Chairman Bennie G. Thompson, House Committee on Homeland Security, and Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney, House Committee on Oversight and Reform, to Inspector General Joseph V. Cuffari (Aug. 1, 2022) (attached).

“refu[sal] to comply with” Committee requests and outright “obstruct[ion].”² In addition, IG Cuffari has faced accusations of censoring employees’ sexual harassment claims and issuing reports with significant delays and quality issues.

Furthermore, the Government Accountability Office released a report in 2021 detailing the DHS OIG’s long-standing management and operational weaknesses and made 21 recommendations to develop better management and reporting systems and to follow established best practices.³ As of early 2023, 17 of these 21 recommendations remain open or partially open.

It is imperative we restore credibility to the OIG in order to have independent oversight and accountability within DHS regardless of which political party controls the Administration. I would be happy to discuss this request with you further and thank you in advance for your consideration. I look forward to working with you to address the challenges affecting DHS so that it can better confront existing and emerging threats facing our country.

Respectfully,



Glenn F. Ivey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Oversight, Investigations, and Accountability

Enclosures

cc: Chairman Mark E. Green, M.D.
Ranking Member Bennie G. Thompson

² Letter from Chairman Bennie G. Thompson, House Committee on Homeland Security, and Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney, House Committee on Oversight and Reform, to Inspector General Joseph V. Cuffari (Aug. 16, 2022) (attached).

³ Government Accountability Office, *DHS Office of Inspector General: Actions Needed to Address Long-Standing Management Weaknesses (GAO-21-316)*, June 3, 2021, <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-21-316>.