

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

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<https://oversight.house.gov>

June 5, 2023

President Joseph Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

The Inspector General (IG) community conducts essential oversight of federal agencies and programs, safeguarding taxpayer funds and shining the light on waste, fraud, and abuse. That essential oversight function is undermined by prolonged vacancies of IGs responsible for carrying out that mandate. To date, the U.S. Department of State (State) IG position has been vacant for over 1,100 days with no nominee; the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) IG position has been vacant for over 850 days; and the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) IG position has been vacant for almost 1,500 days.<sup>1</sup> We write to express our concern that these vacancies with no nominee are limiting transparency and holding back efforts to ensure the federal government is working as efficiently as possible on behalf of the American people. We urge you to expeditiously nominate highly qualified candidates to fill these vacancies.

Independent oversight of all federal agencies is critical to ensuring the integrity of our government. IGs are “America’s Watchdogs”—the eyes, ears, and voice of the American taxpayer. They work to root out government waste, fraud, and abuse and ensure federal agencies serve the American public efficiently and effectively. IGs also report the results of their audits, investigations, and evaluations to Congress, providing critical information beneficial to our oversight.

We are concerned that you have left prolonged vacancies for the position of IG for State and USAID at a time when State and USAID are engaged in sensitive matters impacting U.S. national security interests around the world. These challenges include the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, civil unrest in Sudan, the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, and increased aggression by China, Iran, and North Korea. The prolonged vacancy for IG at Treasury could also hamper robust oversight of COVID-19 related spending and mitigation of financial risk and instability. Ongoing vacancies weaken IG offices, because temporary leadership is not well-suited for long-term planning and decision making.

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<sup>1</sup> *Inspector General Vacancies*, OVERSIGHT.GOV, COUNCIL OF THE INSPECTORS GENERAL ON INTEGRITY AND EFFICIENCY (May 23, 2023), available at <https://www.oversight.gov/ig-vacancies>.

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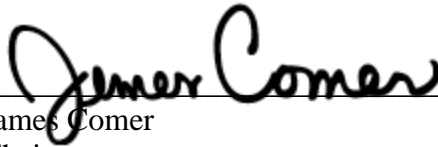
At a minimum, leaving in place acting IGs for prolonged periods of time sends a message to the American people that oversight and accountability is not a priority for the Biden Administration. With respect to State and USAID, it also raises questions as to whether the Biden Administration has intentionally left these positions vacant to avoid increased scrutiny into the impact of its policy decisions.

To restore robust oversight over State, USAID, and Treasury, we respectfully request that you immediately nominate, and work to expeditiously confirm, qualified, independent individuals to serve as IGs for those agencies.

The Committee on Oversight and Accountability is the principal oversight committee of the U.S. House of Representatives and has broad authority to investigate “any matter” at “any time” under House Rule X. The Committee also has legislative jurisdiction over “[g]overnment management and accounting measures generally” as well as “[o]verall economy, efficiency, and management of government operations and activities...” under House Rule X.

Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James Comer". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

James Comer  
Chairman

Committee on Oversight and Accountability

cc: The Honorable Jamie Raskin, Ranking Member  
Committee on Oversight and Accountability