

Statement of

The Institute of Internal Auditors

Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs Committee

**“Watchdogs Needed: Top Government Investigator Positions
Left Unfilled for Years”**

June 3, 2015

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Carper, and members of the Committee:

Inspectors General play a central role in ensuring taxpayer funds are used responsibly by the various agencies and offices of the federal government. The position is so critical to public confidence in our government that The Institute of Internal Auditors (IIA), by submitting this letter for the record of this important hearing, expresses its strong support of the position that vacancies in the ranks of federal Inspectors General be filled promptly and with highly-qualified candidates who are non-partisan, independent, and aggressive in the discharge of their statutory responsibilities.

The IIA is the recognized world leader in certification, education, research, standards, and guidance for the internal audit profession. With more than 180,000 global members, The IIA is dedicated to supporting quality, professional, and ethical practices across all industries and public enterprises. Among The IIA's over 70,000 members in the United States are many who steadfastly serve the public sector through federal, state, and local government entities.

Inspectors General are a bulwark against mismanagement in government agencies, tasked with combating wrongdoing, deterring and detecting fraud and abuse, and identifying waste and inefficiencies in the operations of government and administration of government programs. As a former Inspector General, I can personally attest that a fully qualified IG makes a material difference in the effective operation of a federal agency or program.

Since 1978, Inspectors General have been a crucial component of government oversight. Their audits and investigations have led to tremendous savings for taxpayers and set in motion processes for holding wrongdoers accountable for their actions. In its Fiscal Year 2013 Progress Report to the President, the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency reported a potential savings of \$37 billion from audit recommendations agreed to by management and another \$14.8 billion in potential savings from investigative receivables and recoveries. Vigorous oversight, transparency, and accountability are essential elements to helping Americans maintain trust in their government.

While a given Office of Inspector General can operate for a time with an Acting Inspector General, we believe they are no substitute for a permanent Inspector General. All too often, Acting Inspectors General may be reluctant to be as aggressive as the statute allows and contemplates, especially if they aspire to hold the position themselves and do not want to jeopardize their chances by doing something that might be viewed negatively by the Administration. Permanent IGs undergo significant vetting, especially those requiring Senate confirmation. That process helps instill confidence among stakeholders (Congress, agency officials, and the public) that the Office of the Inspector General is truly independent and its reports are accurate and credible.

For these reasons, The IIA stands in strong support of the institution of Inspectors General and the public's expectation that any vacancy be filled promptly and responsibly with a permanent Inspector General.

*Submitted by: Richard F. Chambers, CIA, QIAL, CGAP, CCSA, CRMA
President and Chief Executive Officer*