

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM

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September 1, 2015

The Honorable Arthur A. Elkins, Jr.
Inspector General
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Inspector General Elkins:

On July 29, 2015, the Committee held a hearing and received testimony from Environmental Protection Agency employees who conducted investigations into allegations of sexual harassment in the EPA Region 5 Great Lakes National Program Office.¹ In addition to sharing concerns about how the allegations were managed, the employees testified that they faced retaliation from senior managers for blowing the whistle. According to one witness at the hearing, the retaliation extended to the Region 6 office in Dallas after that employee was transferred there.²

These allegations raise serious concerns that deserve a thorough investigation and finding of facts. Accordingly, we request that you investigate whether Region 5 managers appropriately handled allegations of sexual harassment, and whether managers retaliated against employees who raised concerns. If allegations related to retaliation are substantiated, we request that you and your staff provide recommendations to ensure that all EPA staff are aware of their rights and obligations with respect to whistleblowers.

During the hearing, EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy testified that this matter should be referred to your office. We agree. It is our expectation that all agency employees will fully cooperate with your investigation. Please advise us immediately if that is not the case.

If you have any questions about this request, please contact Bill McGrath of Chairman Chaffetz's staff at (202) 225-5074 or Lena Chang of Ranking Member Cummings' staff at (202) 225-5051. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jason Chaffetz
Chairman



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member

¹House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, *Hearing on EPA Mismanagement Part II*, 114th Cong. (July 29, 2015).

²*Id.*