

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

2157 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6143

MAJORITY (202) 225-5051  
MINORITY (202) 225-5074

<http://oversight.house.gov>

September 17, 2019

The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings  
Chairman  
Committee on Oversight and Reform  
2157 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Government Operations  
Committee on Oversight and Reform  
2157 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cummings and Chairman Connolly:

We write to ask you to reconsider your decision to deny our request that Geoffrey Cherrington, the Inspector General for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), testify at an upcoming Subcommittee on Government Operations about inspectors general. Aside from violating House rules and long-standing Committee practice,<sup>1</sup> your refusal to allow Mr. Cherrington to testify prevents Members from assessing whether his office can fully and independently examine the allegations levied against District of Columbia (DC) Councilmember Jack Evans—an examination that you asked him to do.<sup>2</sup>

On Friday, we notified you that Mr. Cherrington would testify as the minority witness for the Subcommittee's hearing. Late that afternoon, we learned that you had refused to invite Mr. Cherrington because he "is not a member of CIGIE [the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency]." Although Mr. Cherrington is not a member of CIGIE, he can testify about the challenges facing inspectors general—like him—who do not have statutory protections guaranteeing independence and adequate resources. This perspective alone would be beneficial for all Members to hear.

In addition, you have apparently chosen to outsource the Committee's oversight of DC Councilmember Jack Evans to Mr. Cherrington's office. As of 2017, however, Mr. Cherrington

---

<sup>1</sup> See Rules of the House of Representatives, R. XI cl. 2(j)(1) and practice of the H. Comm. on Oversight & Reform.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from Elijah Cummings, Chairman, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, and Gerald Connolly, Chairman, Subcomm. on Government Operations of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, to Geoffrey Cherrington, Inspector General, Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (Sept. 12, 2019).

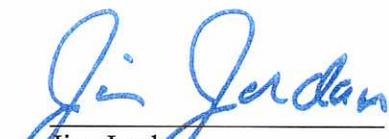
The Honorable Elijah E. Cummings  
The Honorable Gerald E. Connolly  
September 17, 2019  
Page 2

did not have an independent legal counsel, was required to obtain permission from the WMATA Board prior to releasing his report, and relied on WMATA's human resources office to hire personnel.<sup>3</sup> Documents produced to the Committee also suggest that Evans may have attempted to misuse Mr. Cherrington's authority by directing him to initiate an investigation that would advance Evans's personal business interests.<sup>4</sup> Although we understand that you may invite Mr. Cherrington to testify in October, we assume that you would want to ensure now—as early as possible—that Mr. Cherrington could conduct a thorough and independent examination of Evans's misconduct.

As the authorizing Committee for inspectors general, we always welcome the opportunity to discuss a topic squarely within the Committee's jurisdiction. Inspectors general are an indispensable tool that assist the Committee in rooting out fraud, waste, and abuse. Mr. Cherrington's testimony would directly inform the Committee's evaluation of legislative proposals to reform and enhance inspector general authority. Although he is not a member of CIGIE, Mr. Cherrington's perspective and experiences are as relevant as the other inspectors general who will testify.

We hope that you will reconsider your decision to deny us a witness at the Subcommittee hearing and immediately extend an invitation to Mr. Cherrington to testify at the Subcommittee's September 18th hearing. Thank you for your prompt attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Jim Jordan  
Ranking Member



Mark Meadows  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Government Operations

---

<sup>3</sup> See Letter from Ron Johnson, Chairman, & Claire McCaskill, Ranking Member, S. Comm. on Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs, to Paul Wiedefeld, Gen. Manager & Chief Exec. Off., Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority (Nov. 14, 2017).

<sup>4</sup> See Letter from Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, and Mark Meadows, Ranking Member, Subcomm. on Government Operations of the H. Comm. on Oversight and Reform, to Paul Smedberg, Chair, Washington Metropolitan Transit Authority Board of Directors (Jul. 16, 2019) (on file with the Committee).