

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 25, 2015

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Nomination of Inspector General for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge you to nominate an Inspector General (IG) for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) as soon as possible to help rebuild the trust that was lost through systemic failures in accountability and transparency at the Department.

On June 3, 2015, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee held a hearing entitled *Watchdogs Needed: Top Government Investigator Positions Left Unfilled for Years*. At the hearing, a number of Senators expressed concerns about the vacant VA IG position and multiple Senators have written to you in the past urging you to nominate a permanent Inspector General for the VA. As you know, the former IG left the position in late 2013 and Mr. Richard Griffin assumed the IG duties at the agency. However, he is not serving in a permanent capacity. Simply put: permanent leadership of the Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General is long overdue.

At the hearing, several witnesses stressed that IGs nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate are viewed as more independent by members of Congress and the public than acting IGs. The witnesses also stated that permanent IGs are more likely to address long-term and sometimes embarrassing issues at the agency.

It is imperative that you nominate a permanent IG for the VA to provide stable leadership and oversight of the agency. Over the past two years, the VA has faced well-documented challenges, including the failure to provide timely health care nationwide. A permanent IG would help to address these failures and would play a critical role in auditing and evaluating VA programs, conducting health care inspections and investigating allegations of serious violations of policies and procedures by high-ranking members of the Department.

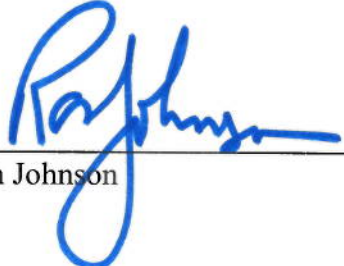
Providing adequate programs and services for our nation's veterans is one of our greatest responsibilities. We hope that you will ensure consistent management and accountability at VA by nominating a permanent IG as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Respectfully,



Tammy Baldwin



Ron Johnson

Kelly A. Ayotte

Kelly Ayotte

Cory A. Booker

Cory A. Booker

Thomas R. Carper

Thomas R. Carper

Michael B. Enzi

Michael B. Enzi

Joni Ernst

Joni Ernst

Gary C. Peters

Gary C. Peters

Claire McCaskill

Claire McCaskill

Jon Tester

Jon Tester