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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6175

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April 3, 2012

The Honorable Barbara Boxer
Madam Chairman
Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Boxer:

On April 2, 2012, the Office of Inspector General of the U.S. General Services Administration released a report looking into the General Services Administration Public Buildings Service 2010 Western Regions Conference. The report found many examples of “excessive and wasteful” spending and instances where GSA did not follow “federal procurement laws nor its own policy on conference spending.” Further, this has led to the resignation of the GSA Administrator, Public Buildings Service chief, a top advisor, and the placement of four managers on administrative leave. I, therefore, respectfully request that the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works conduct an oversight hearing on how this happened and to examine the safeguards GSA has put in place to prevent this from happening again.

Reducing government waste and being responsible stewards of taxpayer money is a bipartisan goal. When informed about the report, White House Chief of Staff, Jack Lew, stated that, “The President...was outraged by the excessive spending, questionable dealings with contractors, and disregard for taxpayer dollars.” He went on to say, “President Obama made clear that the people who serve in his Administration are keepers of the public trust and that public service is a privilege.” As the Committee with oversight responsibilities over GSA and the Public Buildings Service, it is clear that we should take the appropriate steps to ensure that events like this do not happen again. I would also request that the GSA Inspector General, Brian D. Miller, be asked to testify at the hearing.

The Environment and Public Works Committee has a long bipartisan tradition of responsible oversight of the federal agencies under its jurisdiction. We now have an opportunity to restore the public’s trust and make certain that federal agencies are acting in the best interest of the American people.

I look forward to working with you and your staff to schedule this hearing as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



James M. Inhofe
Ranking Member, Senate Committee on
Environment and Public Works