

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 15, 2009

The Honorable Lisa Jackson
Administrator
Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson:

We are concerned that the Administration has yet to appoint a full time Inspector General for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Inspector General position at any federal agency is an important “watchdog” position that allows the public to know that oversight is occurring.

It has been nearly a year since the Administration has been in office. Over that time, the EPA has proposed a series of regulations to monitor and regulate greenhouse gases which could cost millions of Americans their jobs. The process behind these regulations has raised many unanswered questions about how they were developed. We are concerned that not having a full time EPA Inspector General appointed by the President, and confirmed by the Senate, fails to provide proper oversight of your agency’s actions.

For example, Dr. Alan Carlin and a colleague, “prepared a 98-page analysis” arguing the EPA should “take another look” at the EPA’s scientific data behind the endangerment finding that carbon dioxide is a threat to public health and welfare. A senior EPA official suppressed this detailed account of the most up-to-date science of climate change. This raises serious questions about the process behind, and the substance of, the EPA’s proposed finding that greenhouse gases endanger public health and welfare. It also raises questions if the conduct was proper, and if not, whether adequate safeguards were instituted by EPA to prevent similar situations in the future.

There are also a number of questions about the role of Presidential “czars” and their influence over regulatory policy-making at federal agencies, including the EPA. Despite assurances that proper procedures and lines of authority established by law are being followed, there is no ability for Congress to independently confirm that such is occurring. The appointment of an Inspector General would provide the independent oversight needed to ensure that the duties and responsibilities of EPA officials are in compliance with law.

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Not moving forward with a nomination to the Senate for an EPA Inspector General fails to meet the Administration's objective to put a premium on transparency and openness. We offer our assistance in filling this important position without delay.

Sincerely,


JOHN BARRASSO, MD
Ranking Member,
Subcommittee on Oversight


JAMES M. INHOFE
Ranking Member,
Senate Environment and
Public Works Committee