

STATEMENT OF ANDREW R. COCHRAN  
NOMINEE FOR INSPECTOR GENERAL  
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

BEFORE THE  
SENATE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 2, 2007

Good morning, Madam Chairman and distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works. I am Andrew Cochran of Springfield, VA, and I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee for Inspector General of the Environmental Protection Agency.

I am grateful to President Bush and EPA Administrator Steven Johnson for offering this opportunity. If confirmed, I look forward to working with EPA, this Committee, and the entire Congress as an independent, objective voice to assess and report upon EPA's work to economically and efficiently improve human health and environmental quality. The Inspector General Act mandates the selection and confirmation of Inspectors General "without regard to political affiliation and solely on the basis of integrity and demonstrated ability in accounting, auditing, financial analysis, law, management analysis, public administration, or investigations." I have years of experience and accomplishments in five of the named areas of expertise. I practiced law and public accounting in the private sector; advised the Deputy Secretary of Commerce in the 1980s of potential improvements and budgetary savings in Commerce Department operations; conducted numerous program analyses and audits as a career professional in the Commerce Department's Office of Inspector General; and conducted Congressional investigations into corporate accounting and stock offering irregularities as senior oversight counsel of the House Financial Services Committee. Since 2004, I have represented the concerns of terrorism victims, homeland security-related firms, and high-tech companies before Congress and the Executive Branch, working to obtain bipartisan approval of beneficial legislation and regulations. I also started and still direct one of the premier online centers in the world for the dissemination of independent and objective

terrorism and counterterrorism news and expert analysis. Much of my professional success has involved reaching across the aisle to build coalitions with parties of different interests and desires.

I wish to focus on the nearly 11 years, from 1990 to 2001, during which I was a career professional in the Commerce OIG. I directed numerous audits and inspections that significantly improved the management of Commerce Department programs, reported on important policies and procedures, or resulted in significant cost savings. I was the first director of a performance audit division focused totally on the operations of NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. In that role I directed the first performance audit of a regional fishery management allocation decision by NOAA and a fishery management council. I have already provided a copy of the report on the fishery management allocation decision to the Committee. The Inspector General awarded me the Bronze Medal, the highest award in the OIG, for that report. I also directed the first OIG audit of a range of export licensing decisions; the first OIG audit of a spectrum licensing decision (which affected development of the then-infant digital messaging industry); and the first OIG audit report to recommend that an official Commerce Department publication should be disseminated entirely on the Internet (in 1999). These reports provided our expert and unbiased opinion on an important decision or standard practice, without quantifiable cost savings. They were among a number of highly sensitive audits that I directed and, along with many others, included findings and recommendations that were unwelcome within the audited agency. But when I left the Commerce OIG in 2001, all of the recommendations in my final performance audit reports had been resolved. I also directed audits that, in total, saved tens of millions of dollars for the taxpayer. Three peer reviews conducted by other departments during my tenure concluded that audits issued under my direction were conducted in compliance with generally accepted government auditing standards.

In March 2001, I was selected as the first senior oversight counsel for the new House Financial Services Committee and served there during the period covering the 9-11 attacks and the corporate accounting scandals. I was lead counsel for hearings and

investigations into terrorism issues and the accounting scandals, including the first Congressional hearings on the accounting issues at Enron, Global Crossing and WorldCom. During my tenure, I worked in partnership with Democratic committee staff to ask GAO and the Inspectors General of Treasury, HUD, and the federal financial regulators to conduct audits and report to Congress on issues such as the response of the regulators and financial markets to the 9-11 attacks; the protection of critical infrastructure from future attacks and disasters; mismanagement of public housing authorities; single-family mortgage fraud; and the search for dictators' assets hidden throughout the world.

My high respect for the men and women who occupy the position of Inspector General, and for the standards governing their conduct and performance, started with my first positions here in Washington. During the summer of 1979, I was a Congressional intern for my Congressman from Ohio, the Honorable Clarence J. Brown, who was an original co-sponsor of the Inspector General Act of 1978. In 1983, he became the Deputy Secretary of Commerce, and I left the Cincinnati office of Arthur Andersen & Co., where I had practiced as a CPA, to assist him in overseeing the management of the Department of Commerce.

I have enjoyed working with many outstanding Inspectors General on management issues over the past 24 years, from Sherman Funk at the Commerce Department in the 1980s, to Gaston Gianni and Jeffrey Rush when I was at the House Financial Services Committee. These examples of a commitment to professional excellence, independence, and personal courtesy will guide me in the years ahead and, if confirmed, I will seek the advice of the respected veterans now serving as Inspectors General. I assure the Committee that, should I be confirmed, I will faithfully and independently discharge my duties to uphold the legacy established by so many in the position. To quote from the recent hearing chaired by Senator Lieberman to consider how to strengthen the role of Inspectors General, I will be neither a lapdog nor a junkyard dog, but a watchdog.

The Environmental Protection Agency stands as the Federal guardian protecting our environmental resources, and I am excited at the prospect of serving as the Inspector General of this agency, which has a direct impact on the health and safety of all Americans every day. The taxpayers of our nation need an Office of Inspector General of committed, trained, assertive, and competent professionals to prevent and detect waste, fraud, and abuse in the delivery of EPA's services. An Inspector General can serve as a positive force for change and, if confirmed, I pledge to continue the OIG's record of honorable achievements and service to the taxpayers.

If confirmed, I will work constructively in a respectful atmosphere with the OIG employees, EPA management, Congress, and other stakeholders. I will direct the work of the OIG in accordance with the high standards, principles, and traditions of the profession. I will maintain frequent and open communications with EPA management and the Congress, and will report significant problems to the Congress when uncorrected by EPA.

Madam Chairman and members of the Committee, this nomination provides me with the opportunity to serve the nation as a federal management expert at the highest level of an Executive Branch agency. Thank you again for holding this hearing to consider my nomination, and I look forward to your questions.