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May 31, 2016

Mary Kendall  
Deputy Inspector General  
Office of Inspector General  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Kendall:

As you are aware, the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations has been conducting oversight of ethics violations within the Department of the Interior. On May 27, 2016, the Office of Inspector General (“OIG”) released a summary of the OIG’s “Investigative Report of BLM Land Sale, Henderson, NV,” which concluded that Bob Abbey, while serving as Director of the Bureau of Land Management (“BLM”), was “personally and substantially involved” in a land transaction from which he stood to receive personal financial gain. The summary indicates that another BLM employee, who worked closely with Mr. Abbey’s business partner, “appeared to violate Federal regulations that prohibit preferential treatment and the improper use of nonpublic information.” These are troubling findings, and serve as further evidence of exacerbating corruption within the Department of the Interior (“DOI”) that was highlighted during the Subcommittee’s ethics oversight hearing on May 24, 2016.

It is similarly troubling that the OIG waited until three days after the Subcommittee’s hearing on DOI ethics violations to release this report summary, particularly since the summary notes that the U.S. Attorney declined to prosecute Mr. Abbey eight months ago and Subcommittee staff specifically asked OIG staff about the disposition of this investigation during a meeting on May 20, 2016. As someone who investigates dishonesty, you certainly understand that evasive answers designed to mask the truth are in and of themselves dishonest and further evidence of a major problem.

Ms. Mary Kendall

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Please provide a complete and unredacted copy of the original report to the Subcommittee and make available upon request by designated Subcommittee staff underlying documents related to the investigation. Your staff may contact Jessica Conrad or Megan Olmstead of the Subcommittee staff at 225-7107 with any questions and to arrange for delivery of the requested report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Louie Gohmert". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "L" and "G".

Louie Gohmert  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight and  
Investigations