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U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, DC 20515

August 22, 2012

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Mary Kendall
Deputy Inspector General
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, N.W. – Mail Stop 4428
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Ms. Kendall:

For several months, the Committee on Natural Resources has been looking into questions about possible political interference, lack of independence, and conflict of interest involving an investigation by the Office of Inspector General (“IG”) into the editing of a Department of the Interior offshore drilling report in May 2010.

In order to learn more about the operations and activities of the IG during the Obama Administration, the IG was recently asked to provide lists of all audits, investigations, and reviews concerning the Department’s renewable energy programs on federal lands, restoration of the Klamath Basin, and the Department’s implementation of its scientific integrity policy, including any scientific integrity complaints investigated by the IG.

In a July 20, 2012 letter, you responded that “an evaluation conducted in 2010 on renewable energy was suspended following a meeting with the Department to discuss our draft report.” The letter goes on to explain that the broad review was abandoned due to questions about the accuracy and timeliness of the data obtained from the Department. Given the existing questions about possible political interference into IG activities, the circumstances surrounding the decision to abandon the renewable energy investigation are troubling.

In order to better understand the actions and the Department’s role surrounding the IG’s decision not to finalize 2010 renewable energy program evaluation, please provide the following information and documents no later than September 5, 2012:

1. Complete and unredacted copies of the draft IG report, including the version provided to the Department for review.

2. Complete and unredacted copies of all emails and other documents that were created, sent, or received by Mary Kendall, Steve Hardgrove, Kris Kolesnik, Bruce Delaplaine, Kim Elmore, Melanie Sorenson, Donald Cairns, John Dupuy, Scott Culver, Rob Knox, Michael Colombo, Charles Haman, David Brown, Jack Rohmer, and Keith Kuczka concerning any comments by or edits from any Department official on the draft report.
3. Complete and unredacted copies of all emails and other documents that were created, sent, or received by Mary Kendall, Steve Hardgrove, Kris Kolesnik, Bruce Delaplaine, Kim Elmore, Melanie Sorenson, Donald Cairns, John Dupuy, Scott Culver, Rob Knox, Michael Colombo, Charles Haman, David Brown, Jack Rohmer, and Keith Kuczka concerning the decision to not finalize the report.
4. Complete and unredacted copies of all calendar entries, meeting agendas, minutes, notes, emails and other documents concerning any meetings to discuss the IG's review of renewable energy programs that was not finalized with any Department official, including not limited to the Secretary, the Deputy Secretary, the Chief of Staff, the Solicitor, the Assistant Secretary for Policy Management and Budget, and the Assistant Secretary for Land and Minerals Management.

Please contact Byron Brown, Office of Oversight and Investigations, at (202) 225-2761 with any questions regarding this request, or to make arrangements for the production. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Doc Hastings
Chairman