

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

December 18, 2024

The Honorable Deb Haaland  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Louis DeJoy  
Postmaster General  
U.S. Postal Service  
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW  
Washington, DC 20260

Dear Secretary Haaland and Postmaster DeJoy,

The House Committee on Natural Resources (“Committee”) seeks information regarding the existing interagency agreement between the Department of the Interior (“DOI”) and the U.S. Postal Service (“USPS”) National Equal Employment Opportunity Investigative Services Office (“NEEOISO”) (“USPS-DOI agreement”), as well as the policies associated with information sharing and reporting to NEEOSIO and the DOI Office of Inspector General (“DOI OIG”).

As you know, NEEOISO is contracted under the authority of 39 USC § 411<sup>1</sup> by federal agencies, including all DOI agencies, to assist DOI with investigations<sup>2</sup> and other services such as “counseling, mediation, acceptance and dismissal, harassing conduct (HC) investigations, EEO investigative and final decision services.”<sup>3</sup> On July 23, 2024, during the Committee hearing *Investigating How the Biden Administration Ignored Cries for Help from Students at Haskell Indian Nations University*, Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Brian Newland, testified regarding allegations of misconduct submitted by Haskell Indian Nation University (“HINU”) students to the BIE Human Resources Office, and later referred to NEEOISO for an independent investigation.<sup>4</sup> Assistant Secretary Newland stated that:

“Each of the 28 [HINU student] allegations was promptly submitted to the U.S. Postal Service’s National Equal Employment Opportunity Investigative Services Office (USPS NEEOISO) for independent investigation to inform further action, as needed. USPS NEEOISO has ongoing interagency agreements with DOI, providing services such as Harassing Conduct Investigations (HCIs) for DOI and all of its sub agencies, including BIE.”<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See 39 USC § 411.

<sup>2</sup> See *Investigating How the Biden Administration Ignored Cries for Help from Students at Haskell Indian Nations University*: Hearing before the Subcomm. on Oversight and Investigations, 118 Cong. (2024) (Statement of the Honorable Bryan Newland, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Indian Affairs).

<sup>3</sup> See Email from Michelle D. Christensen, Policy Analyst, Congressional Resource Services, to Committee staff (Nov. 19, 2024), on file with the Committee.

<sup>4</sup> See Newland, *supra* note 2.

<sup>5</sup> *Id.*

Assistant Secretary Newland's testimony notes that the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) responded to allegations of misconduct and inappropriate behavior at HINU in late fall and early winter of 2021 by referring the allegations to USPS NEEOISO. However, the DOI OIG has been investigating similar allegations since 2018, and continues to look into this matter at present.<sup>6</sup> A year later, similar complaints were referred to local law enforcement, as well as a BIE HR Officer, which were in turn referred to the DOI OIG.

The Committee would like to determine the scope of investigations currently being outsourced to NEEOISO by DOI, the process under which the DOI refers investigations to NEEOISO, and any protocols or guidance that may establish how an investigation is referred within DOI. In addition, the Committee seeks to understand how information gleaned from an investigation conducted separately from DOI OIG is shared with DOI OIG and Congress. Furthermore, the Committee seeks to understand the general process between DOI and NEEOISO for determining the need for contracting, conducting, and reporting investigations and the roles of the DOI Human Resources Offices, the Office of the Solicitor, and the Office of Inspector General in this process. As such, the Committee requests a joint briefing from DOI and USPS on the USPS-DOI agreement and related issues.

Additionally, to assist the Committee in its oversight efforts, please provide the following records, documents, communications, or information, in electronic format, as soon as possible, but no later than January 1, 2025:

1. A copy of the current USPS-DOI agreement.
2. A copy of all information, handbooks, or procedures related to sharing information obtained from NEEOISO with Congress.
3. A copy of all investigative reports related to all DOI agencies produced under the USPS-DOI agreement from January 20, 2021 to present.

An attachment to this letter provides additional instructions for responding to the requests from the Committee on Natural Resources. Please contact the Majority staff for the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee at (202) 225-2761 or [HNRR.Oversight@mail.house.gov](mailto:HNRR.Oversight@mail.house.gov) with any questions. Under House Rule X, the Committee on Natural Resources has "general oversight" of any matter relating to its jurisdiction, including all matters concerning the Department of the Interior and relations between the United States and Tribal organizations.

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<sup>6</sup> *Investigation of Misconduct Allegations at Haskell Indian Nations University*, Office of Inspector General, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, Report No. 17-0074, Issued November 15, 2018, <https://www.doioig.gov/reports/investigation/investigation-misconduct-allegations-haskell-indian-nations-university-0>.

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Sincerely,



Bruce Westerman  
Chairman  
Committee on Natural Resources



Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations



Raul Grijalva  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Natural Resources



Melaine Stansbury  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations