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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

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January 31, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We request that the Office of Presidential Personnel be directed to reverse its action removing the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Inspector General, Michael J. Missal. We believe this action, done without the statutorily-required 30-day notice or substantive justification to Congress, will undermine the bipartisan work carried out by Congress, particularly the Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs. It will also sideline a tireless and non-partisan partner who has served as an effective check on waste, fraud, and abuse across multiple Administrations on behalf of our nation's veterans.

Veterans deserve for VA to be held accountable to meet the highest standards of efficiency and integrity in health care, benefits, and all the services it provides. That is why we have so strongly supported the important work of the independent, non-partisan, Office of Inspector General (OIG) at VA. The OIG serves a critical function of monitoring VA programs and highlighting areas in need of Executive Branch and congressional action while partnering with federal law enforcement entities to hold accountable those who attempt to or have harmed veterans or defraud the taxpayer. Over the last eight years, under the leadership of Mr. Missal, OIG oversight has identified \$37.6 billion, including \$1.5 billion in 2023, in savings, cost avoidance, and questionable costs. These efforts have saved taxpayer dollars; cracked down on waste, fraud, and abuse; and improved government efficiency. We believe these are priorities you share with us.

As legislators who have long worked on oversight of VA programs so they deliver for veterans, we have seen and partnered with VA OIG under Mr. Missal's leadership in its reviews of VA operations, facilities, and programs in a non-partisan, balanced, and thorough manner regardless of who was in the White House or in control of Congress. In our states, and states across the country, VA OIG's reports and investigations have resulted in improvements in quality of care and safety for veterans, increased compliance with laws passed by Congress, and identification of needed reforms across VA.

We again ask that you direct your Office of Presidential Personnel to reverse this decision, so the VA OIG can continue to perform its critical functions for veterans and taxpayers.

Sincerely,



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



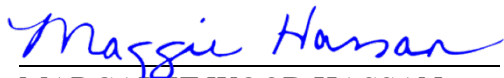
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