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House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON OVERSIGHT AND REFORM

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Opening Statement

Chairwoman Carolyn B. Maloney

Subcommittee on Government Operations

“Restoring Independence: Rebuilding the Federal Offices of Inspectors General”

April 20, 2021

Chairman Connolly and Ranking Member Hice, thank you for calling this important hearing on Inspectors General. Inspectors General play a crucial role in our democracy by independently and objectively working to expose waste, fraud, and abuse in government.

Supporting Inspectors General and the need for adequate independence and access has long been a bipartisan issue in this Committee. The Committee regularly relies on the work of IGs to identify issues in need of reform and recommendations for how that reform can be achieved.

It is critical to have experienced, competent, and independent Inspectors General at every agency.

Unfortunately, President Trump repeatedly attacked the independence of IGs by removing or replacing IGs in what appeared to be retaliation for investigating misconduct of his own Administration.

That is why last year, I introduced the [Inspector General Independence Act](#) with House Majority Leader Hoyer, Chairman Connolly, and Chairman Lynch. The Inspector General Independence Act would protect IGs from being fired as a result of political retaliation by only allowing an IG to be removed for one of a set list of reasons.

I want to build on that proposal with an even bolder package of reforms. Yesterday, I introduced the IG Independence and Empowerment Act.

This comprehensive package includes a number of proposals, many of which have received broad bipartisan support. Just a few examples include the Enhanced Whistleblower Engagement Act, a bill introduced by Chairman Connolly to enhance whistleblower training for IGs and their staff, and a bill introduced by Vice Chair Jimmy Gomez to give IGs the ability to compel testimony from contractors and former federal employees.

We have important work to do to both preserve and protect the independence and authority of Inspectors General going forward.

I look forward to the testimony of our witnesses today and appreciate their willingness to help us draw attention to the importance of Inspectors General and the work they do.

Thank you, and I yield back.

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