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United States Senate
**COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE,
AND TRANSPORTATION**
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6125
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October 6, 2025

The Honorable Russell T. Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20503

Director Vought:

My office was recently informed that the National Science Foundation (NSF) Office of Inspector General (OIG) no longer has a dedicated website for whistleblowers to report waste, fraud, and abuse because the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is withholding funding for the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency (CIGIE)—which hosts NSF OIG’s website along with the websites of 27 other independent inspectors general. OMB is withholding these funds even though Congress has already appropriated funding to support these vital whistleblower resources, even during a government shutdown.¹ In other words, it appears the Trump Administration is not only illegally withholding congressional funding once again; it is choosing to undermine efforts to prevent corruption and combat misuse of taxpayer dollars. I am calling on you to reverse course and release these funds immediately.

OMB’s decision to withhold funding for CIGIE unnecessarily curtails proven methods to promote transparency and encourage whistleblower disclosures.² Until recently, CIGIE provided hotline and whistleblower reporting capabilities through its website Oversight.gov for 28 OIGs, including the OIGs for NSF, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), all of which fall under the jurisdiction of the Commerce Committee. The Oversight.gov website is now shutdown and simply reads: “Due to a lack of apportionment of funds, this website is currently unavailable.”³ Stated differently, because OMB is illegally withholding these funds, this critical whistleblower resource is now closed.

¹ See letter to Congress from CIGIE (Sep. 27, 2025) (on file with Committee).

² Kornfield, Meryl, “Trump administration moves to defund inspector general watchdog group”, *The Washington Post*, (Sep. 30, 2025); <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2025/09/30/inspector-general-watchdog-cuts-trump/>; see also Alms, Natalie, “Trump administration knocks out at least 15 oversight websites, saying IGs ‘lied to the public’”, *NextGov*, (Oct. 1, 2025); <https://www.nextgov.com/digital-government/2025/10/government-watchdog-websites-go-dark-omb-withholds-funds-ig-committee/408524/?oref=ng-homepage-river>.

³ Webpage, “Oversight.gov”; <https://www.oversight.gov/>.

Without the platform that Oversight.gov provides, whistleblowers' ability to report cases of waste, fraud, and abuse will be needlessly disrupted—and these OIGs' ability to fulfill their statutory missions and comply with privacy statutes for whistleblowers will be derailed.⁴ For example, without a dedicated website, NSF OIG informed my office that it is unable to publish audit, evaluation, and inspection reports, and it cannot educate NSF awardees about research security and research misconduct. Instead, impacted OIGs are now forced to pursue inefficient and costly alternatives to a centrally hosted website⁵—all while OMB withholds readily available funding that would continue supporting the current reporting system.

This is not the first time this Committee has been informed that OMB is illegally withholding congressional funds and undermining the effective operation of our government. According to multiple whistleblowers at NASA, OMB has been directing NASA—since early summer—to begin implementing the devastating cuts called for in the president's proposed budget for fiscal year 2026, in clear violation of the Constitution and without regard for the impacts on NASA's science missions and workforce.⁶ This pattern of misconduct must stop—now.

I was pleased to see OMB recently reverse course and release withheld funds for another oversight committee.⁷ I urge you to follow suit and immediately release the congressionally mandated funds for CIGIE and support these OIGs' work of preventing corruption and rooting out waste, fraud, and abuse.

Sincerely,



Maria Cantwell
Ranking Member

⁴ See 5 U.S.C. § 420(b).

⁵ See, e.g., Webpage, “National Science Foundation, Office of Inspector General” (Oct. 3, 2025); <https://www.oig.nsf.gov/>; see also Webpage, “U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, Office of Inspector General” (Oct. 3, 2025); <https://www.cpsc.gov/OIG>; see also Webpage, “Federal Trade Commission, Office of Inspector General” (Oct. 3, 2025); <https://oig.ftc.gov/>.

⁶ See Report, “‘The Destruction of NASA’s Mission’: Whistleblowers reveal OMB’s Unconstitutional Plot to Gut the Agency”, *U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation*, (Sep. 2025); <https://www.commerce.senate.gov/services/files/B1CC17F2-50CE-4C0B-89C9-B713FE76E146>.

⁷ See Press Release, “OMB Releases \$5 Million for PRAC Following Push by Senators Collins, Grassley”, <https://www.collins.senate.gov/newsroom/omb-releases-5-million-for-prac-following-push-by-senators-collins-grassley>.