

# [***Washington: Pallone Requests Information on Impact of Budget Cuts For Inspectors General of Five Agencies***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:5P52-B051-JDG9-Y0RM-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

Washington, DC: Energy & Commerce Committee United States House of Representatives  has issued the following press release:

“Potential conflicts of interest in the Trump administration underscore the need for robust and effective inspectors general”

Energy and Commerce Ranking Member Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) sent letters to the Inspectors General of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Department of Energy (DOE), Department of Commerce (DOC), and Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) today requesting information on the impact of the Trump administration’s proposed budget cuts to their offices within the agencies.  The request comes after President Trump released a budget blueprint that proposed devastating funding cuts to a number of federal government programs and follows a recent report by Politico alleging that high-ranking officials in the Trump White House hold millions in energy company stocks, including Exxon Mobil, Chevron, Kinder Morgan, BP, Halliburton, Marathon Petroleum, and Energy Transfer Partners LP.

“The budget blueprint eviscerates programs and services that help hardworking Americans, including the elimination of long-standing federal government programs to assist low-income Americans, fund important scientific research, and help protect human health and the ***environment***,” Pallone wrote.

“Reports of potential conflicts of interest in the Trump administration underscore the need for robust and effective inspectors general.  By eliminating funding for federal agencies, President Trump’s budget also threatens to undermine the important work of inspectors general,” Pallone continued. “The Committee has a longstanding interest in ensuring the government operates in an open and transparent manner.  While we understand that difficult fiscal choices must be made, agency inspectors general are one of the federal government’s best resources for reducing fraud, waste, and abuse, and actually saving taxpayer dollars.”

The letters follow immense public outcry about the impact the draconian budget cuts could have on all Americans.  The Washington Post outlined the proposed budget cuts, which would eliminate more than $20 billion in funding from the five Agencies combined, including a $5.8 billion cut to the National Institute of Health.

In addition to the challenges posed by potential budget reductions, Pallone wrote that the civilian hiring freeze also threatens to undermine the effectiveness of inspectors general in fulfilling their responsibilities.

In the letter, Pallone requests answers to several questions including :

    How would budget cuts impact the ability of the Agency’s Office of Inspector General to conduct audits, evaluations, and investigations?     Have you initiated, or are you planning to initiate, a hiring freeze, reduction in force, or any other actions that may reduce your available staffing levels?     What changes have you made or are you planning to make to your fiscal year 2017 and 2018 Work Plans because of reduced budget resources?

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