

March 2, 2018

The Honorable Daniel Coats  
Director of National Intelligence  
Office of the Director of National Intelligence  
Washington, D.C.

Dear Director Coats:

We are at a particularly sensitive time in the transfer of leadership within the office of your Intelligence Community Inspector General. This office is charged with protecting both the flow of lawful Intelligence Community whistleblowing disclosures and the whistleblowers who make those disclosures.

The President's nominee to head the office, Mr. Michael Atkinson, recognized the office's leadership crisis before the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence. In his opening statement, he presented the impression that "the office is not currently functioning as effectively as Congress intended."<sup>1</sup> Responding to Ranking Member Mark Warner, he promised to "right the ship" by "clearing house." This week, the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee voted Mr. Atkinson out of committee. As Mr. Atkinson's nomination goes to the Senate floor, however, this is the moment that the civil society community finds most unsettling.

Staff and leadership hostile to robust whistleblowing programs may use this period of time to "dig in" and front load their agencies with freshly-minted hires in order to limit the exercisable authority of new confirmees. Likewise, valued executives may be terminated just short of a new confirmee's arrival to prevent those executives from assisting the new leadership.

Mr. Dan Meyer, the Executive Director of IC Whistleblowing & Source Protection, is experiencing the latter. On administrative leave for three months without notice of the allegations against him, Mr. Meyer's case is before your Principal Deputy for review. We ask that you suspend or stay the proposed termination of Mr. Meyer for 30 days so as to give Mr. Atkinson an opportunity to serve as referee in this matter that has received so much attention over the past few months.

Sincerely,

The Government Accountability Project  
The Project on Government Oversight

cc: Senate Select Committee on Intelligence

---

<sup>1</sup> [Statement](#) of Michael K. Atkinson Nominee for Inspector General of the Intelligence Community Before the United States Senate Select Committee on Intelligence.

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee

Senate Whistleblowing Caucus