

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. Duane Townsend
Acting Inspector General
Department of Commerce
Herbert Clark Hoover Building
1401 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20230

Inspector General Townsend,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

Federal Inspectors General (IGs) were established by Congress in the Inspector General Act of 1978. IGs help Congress uncover waste, fraud, and abuse at federal agencies, and help agencies find efficiencies that can improve service to the American public. As such, you are uniquely positioned to determine the impact large scale RIFs have had on your agency.

The Trump administration's first round of RIFs began in February, 2025 soon after President Trump's Executive Order "Implementing The President's 'Department of Government Efficiency' Workforce Optimization Initiative." Agencies were instructed to begin submitting plans for large-scale workforce reductions on February 26, 2025. Within weeks, agencies began implementing layoffs and rapid reorganizations justified as cost-saving measures.

However, early reports suggest these actions have instead produced costly disruptions. In cases across several agencies, employees who had been separated were later instructed to continue working during the shutdown period or were asked to rejoin their agency – actions that cost precious time and administrative resources, both of which reflect additional cost to the American taxpayer.

These actions appear to have introduced new inefficiencies that may be impacting the delivery of services to everyday Americans. At the Department of Veterans Affairs, for example, the initial wave of RIFs reportedly eliminated hundreds of positions within benefits processing centers, raising concerns about the Department's capacity to maintain timely delivery of benefits. Veterans now seem to be experiencing increased delays in paperwork processing and benefit determinations, and broader operational strains across the agency have been observed since the first round of RIFs. Developments like these highlight the need to examine whether workforce reductions across the federal government have compounded existing backlogs, service disruptions, and inefficiencies.

The administration has refused to provide Congress with concrete data on the scope or impact of these RIFs. Given this lack of transparency, and your mandate as Inspector General, we believe your office is best positioned to determine how these actions have impacted efficiencies or driven waste within your department.

As the administration threatens to initiate another round of RIFs amid the ongoing government shutdown, with even fewer resources available to manage such a complex process, it is more important than ever to ensure accountability and transparency. Congress and the public deserve a clear understanding of how such workforce reductions are affecting the use of taxpayer funds, the delivery of government services, and the overall effectiveness of the federal government.

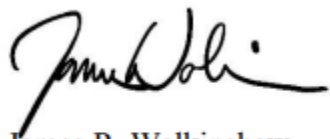
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2. Were these analyses reviewed or approved by OMB?
3. Did your agency maintain a record of the financial impact of RIFs on the agency, including costs associated with severance, rehiring, contract supplementation, or administrative rework?
 - a. If not, why not?
 - b. Based on information available, what is the estimated financial impact of RIFs on your agency?

4. Have RIFs contributed to measurable service disruptions, processing backlogs, or performance declines within your agency's core programs?
5. Have program offices demonstrated increased reliance on contractors or temporary employees as a result of workforce reductions? Are plans in place to address any shortage of federal employees implied by such changes?
6. Did your agency issue any rescinded layoff notices or other actions intended to draw federal employees back to their posts after they had been RIFd?
 - a. If so, how many of these notices or actions did your agency issue?
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7. Did agency RIFs comply with all personnel requirements, collective bargaining obligations, and statutory notice requirements throughout the RIF process?
8. How have these workforce reductions affected the agency's ability to maintain internal controls, conduct oversight, and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse?
9. Has the agency's whistleblower volume changed in correlation with the RIFs, and if so, how?
10. Has the loss of experienced personnel impeded ongoing audits, investigations, or compliance activities intended to protect taxpayer funds?
11. Did OMB or agency leadership track or evaluate the operational outcomes of the first round of RIFs before proposing additional reductions during a shutdown period?
12. What mechanisms, if any, are currently in place to measure the downstream effects of workforce reductions on program performance?

13. What corrective actions or policy recommendations would your office suggest to mitigate or prevent further waste, fraud, abuse, or service degradation resulting from past and future RIFs?

Sincerely,

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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

The Honorable Joseph Cuffari
Inspector General
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane, SW
Washington, DC 20528

Inspector General Cuffari,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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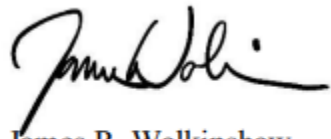
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

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October 10, 2025

Mr. Steven Stebbins
Acting Inspector General
Department of Defense
4800 Mark Center Dr
Alexandria, VA 22350

Inspector General Stebbins,

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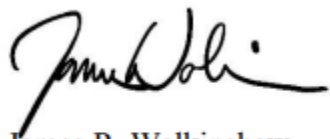
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Ms. Heidi Semann
Acting Inspector General
Department of Education
550 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Inspector General Semann,

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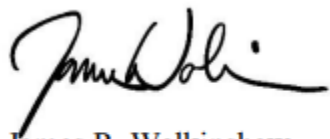
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James R. Walkinshaw
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11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Ms. Sarah Nelson
Acting Inspector General
Department of Energy
Forrestal Building
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Inspector General Nelson,

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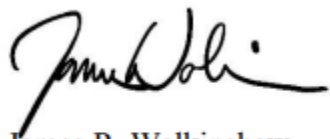
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October 10, 2025

Ms. Nicole Murley
Acting Inspector General
Environmental Protection Agency
William Jefferson Clinton Federal Building
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Inspector General Murley,

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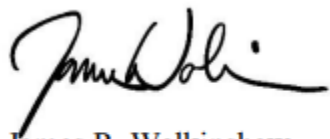
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Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. Robert Erickson
Acting Inspector General
General Services Administration
1800 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20405

Inspector General Erickson,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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However, early reports suggest these actions have instead produced costly disruptions. In cases across several agencies, employees who had been separated were later instructed to continue working during the shutdown period or were asked to rejoin their agency – actions that cost precious time and administrative resources, both of which reflect additional cost to the American taxpayer.

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The administration has refused to provide Congress with concrete data on the scope or impact of these RIFs. Given this lack of transparency, and your mandate as Inspector General, we believe your office is best positioned to determine how these actions have impacted efficiencies or driven waste within your department.

As the administration threatens to initiate another round of RIFs amid the ongoing government shutdown, with even fewer resources available to manage such a complex process, it is more important than ever to ensure accountability and transparency. Congress and the public deserve a clear understanding of how such workforce reductions are affecting the use of taxpayer funds, the delivery of government services, and the overall effectiveness of the federal government.

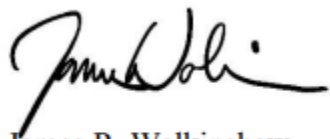
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2. Were these analyses reviewed or approved by OMB?
3. Did your agency maintain a record of the financial impact of RIFs on the agency, including costs associated with severance, rehiring, contract supplementation, or administrative rework?
 - a. If not, why not?
 - b. Based on information available, what is the estimated financial impact of RIFs on your agency?

4. Have RIFs contributed to measurable service disruptions, processing backlogs, or performance declines within your agency's core programs?
5. Have program offices demonstrated increased reliance on contractors or temporary employees as a result of workforce reductions? Are plans in place to address any shortage of federal employees implied by such changes?
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9. Has the agency's whistleblower volume changed in correlation with the RIFs, and if so, how?
10. Has the loss of experienced personnel impeded ongoing audits, investigations, or compliance activities intended to protect taxpayer funds?
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12. What mechanisms, if any, are currently in place to measure the downstream effects of workforce reductions on program performance?

13. What corrective actions or policy recommendations would your office suggest to mitigate or prevent further waste, fraud, abuse, or service degradation resulting from past and future RIFs?

Sincerely,

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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Ms. Juliet Hodgkins
Acting Inspector General
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Inspector General Hodgkins,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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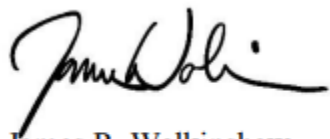
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. Brian Harrison
Acting Inspector General
Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20410

Inspector General Harrison,

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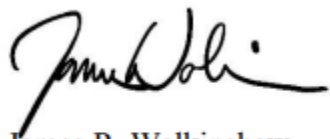
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Dr. Nicole Brzymialkiewicz
Acting Inspector General
Department of the Interior
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Inspector General Brzymialkiewicz,

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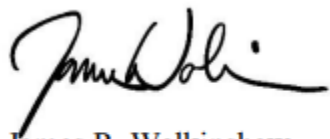
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. William Blier
Acting Inspector General
Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Inspector General Blier,

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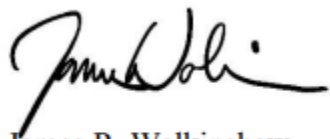
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Congress of the United States
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Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. Michael Mikula
Acting Inspector General
Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Inspector General Mikula,

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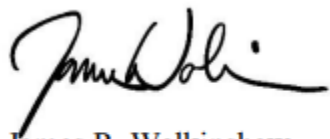
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Acting Inspector General
Two Independence Square
300 E Street, SW
Washington, DC 20546

Inspector General Steinau,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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The administration has refused to provide Congress with concrete data on the scope or impact of these RIFs. Given this lack of transparency, and your mandate as Inspector General, we believe your office is best positioned to determine how these actions have impacted efficiencies or driven waste within your department.

As the administration threatens to initiate another round of RIFs amid the ongoing government shutdown, with even fewer resources available to manage such a complex process, it is more important than ever to ensure accountability and transparency. Congress and the public deserve a clear understanding of how such workforce reductions are affecting the use of taxpayer funds, the delivery of government services, and the overall effectiveness of the federal government.

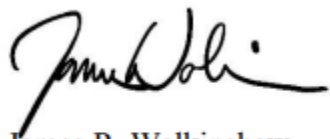
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 - a. If not, why not?
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

The Honorable Robert Feitel
Inspector General
Nuclear Regulatory Commission
11555 Rockville Pike
Rockville, MD 20852

Inspector General Feitel,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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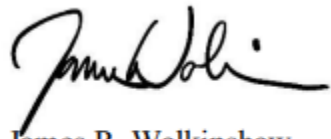
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Ms. Megan Wallace
Acting Inspector General
National Science Foundation
2415 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22314

Inspector General Wallace,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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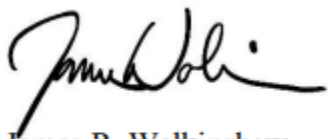
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. Norbert Vint
Acting Inspector General
Office of Personnel Management
Theodore Roosevelt Federal Building
1900 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20415

Inspector General Vint,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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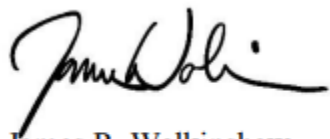
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. William Kirk
Inspector General Designate
Small Business Administration
409 3rd Street, SW
Washington, DC 20416

Inspector General Kirk,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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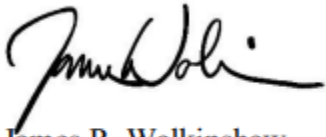
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Congress of the United States
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Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Ms. Michelle Anderson
Acting Inspector General
Social Security Administration
Meadows East Building
6401 Security Boulevard
Baltimore, MD 21235

Inspector General Anderson,

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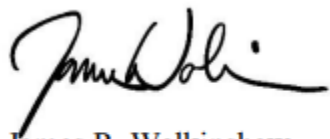
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Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. Mitchell Behm
Acting Inspector General
Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Inspector General Behm,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

Federal Inspectors General (IGs) were established by Congress in the Inspector General Act of 1978. IGs help Congress uncover waste, fraud, and abuse at federal agencies, and help agencies find efficiencies that can improve service to the American public. As such, you are uniquely positioned to determine the impact large scale RIFs have had on your agency.

The Trump administration's first round of RIFs began in February, 2025 soon after President Trump's Executive Order "Implementing The President's 'Department of Government Efficiency' Workforce Optimization Initiative." Agencies were instructed to begin submitting plans for large-scale workforce reductions on February 26, 2025. Within weeks, agencies began implementing layoffs and rapid reorganizations justified as cost-saving measures.

However, early reports suggest these actions have instead produced costly disruptions. In cases across several agencies, employees who had been separated were later instructed to continue working during the shutdown period or were asked to rejoin their agency – actions that cost precious time and administrative resources, both of which reflect additional cost to the American taxpayer.

These actions appear to have introduced new inefficiencies that may be impacting the delivery of services to everyday Americans. At the Department of Veterans Affairs, for example, the initial

wave of RIFs reportedly eliminated hundreds of positions within benefits processing centers, raising concerns about the Department's capacity to maintain timely delivery of benefits. Veterans now seem to be experiencing increased delays in paperwork processing and benefit determinations, and broader operational strains across the agency have been observed since the first round of RIFs. Developments like these highlight the need to examine whether workforce reductions across the federal government have compounded existing backlogs, service disruptions, and inefficiencies.

The administration has refused to provide Congress with concrete data on the scope or impact of these RIFs. Given this lack of transparency, and your mandate as Inspector General, we believe your office is best positioned to determine how these actions have impacted efficiencies or driven waste within your department.

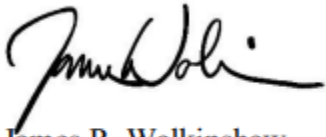
As the administration threatens to initiate another round of RIFs amid the ongoing government shutdown, with even fewer resources available to manage such a complex process, it is more important than ever to ensure accountability and transparency. Congress and the public deserve a clear understanding of how such workforce reductions are affecting the use of taxpayer funds, the delivery of government services, and the overall effectiveness of the federal government.

The following questions are designed to determine the extent of any waste, inefficiencies, or loss of internal oversight and accountability controls generated by these large-scale RIFs to date.

1. What planning, cost analysis, or risk assessments were conducted prior to implementing RIFs within your agency?
2. Were these analyses reviewed or approved by OMB?
3. Did your agency maintain a record of the financial impact of RIFs on the agency, including costs associated with severance, rehiring, contract supplementation, or administrative rework?
 - a. If not, why not?
 - b. Based on information available, what is the estimated financial impact of RIFs on your agency?
4. Have RIFs contributed to measurable service disruptions, processing backlogs, or performance declines within your agency's core programs?

5. Have program offices demonstrated increased reliance on contractors or temporary employees as a result of workforce reductions? Are plans in place to address any shortage of federal employees implied by such changes?
6. Did your agency issue any rescinded layoff notices or other actions intended to draw federal employees back to their posts after they had been RIFd?
 - a. If so, how many of these notices or actions did your agency issue?
 - b. If applicable, what was the estimated cost of these actions?
7. Did agency RIFs comply with all personnel requirements, collective bargaining obligations, and statutory notice requirements throughout the RIF process?
8. How have these workforce reductions affected the agency's ability to maintain internal controls, conduct oversight, and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse?
9. Has the agency's whistleblower volume changed in correlation with the RIFs, and if so, how?
10. Has the loss of experienced personnel impeded ongoing audits, investigations, or compliance activities intended to protect taxpayer funds?
11. Did OMB or agency leadership track or evaluate the operational outcomes of the first round of RIFs before proposing additional reductions during a shutdown period?
12. What mechanisms, if any, are currently in place to measure the downstream effects of workforce reductions on program performance?
13. What corrective actions or policy recommendations would your office suggest to mitigate or prevent further waste, fraud, abuse, or service degradation resulting from past and future RIFs?

Sincerely,

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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Mr. Loren Scieurba
Acting Inspector General
Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Inspector General Scieurba,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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However, early reports suggest these actions have instead produced costly disruptions. In cases across several agencies, employees who had been separated were later instructed to continue working during the shutdown period or were asked to rejoin their agency – actions that cost precious time and administrative resources, both of which reflect additional cost to the American taxpayer.

These actions appear to have introduced new inefficiencies that may be impacting the delivery of services to everyday Americans. At the Department of Veterans Affairs, for example, the initial wave of RIFs reportedly eliminated hundreds of positions within benefits processing centers, raising concerns about the Department's capacity to maintain timely delivery of benefits. Veterans now seem to be experiencing increased delays in paperwork processing and benefit determinations, and broader operational strains across the agency have been observed since the first round of RIFs. Developments like these highlight the need to examine whether workforce reductions across the federal government have compounded existing backlogs, service disruptions, and inefficiencies.

The administration has refused to provide Congress with concrete data on the scope or impact of these RIFs. Given this lack of transparency, and your mandate as Inspector General, we believe your office is best positioned to determine how these actions have impacted efficiencies or driven waste within your department.

As the administration threatens to initiate another round of RIFs amid the ongoing government shutdown, with even fewer resources available to manage such a complex process, it is more important than ever to ensure accountability and transparency. Congress and the public deserve a clear understanding of how such workforce reductions are affecting the use of taxpayer funds, the delivery of government services, and the overall effectiveness of the federal government.

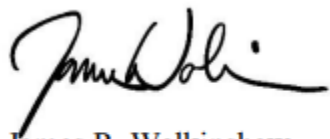
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8. How have these workforce reductions affected the agency's ability to maintain internal controls, conduct oversight, and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse?
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12. What mechanisms, if any, are currently in place to measure the downstream effects of workforce reductions on program performance?

13. What corrective actions or policy recommendations would your office suggest to mitigate or prevent further waste, fraud, abuse, or service degradation resulting from past and future RIFs?

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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

Ms. Janet Sorensen
Acting Inspector General
Department of Agriculture
Jamie L. Whitten Federal Building
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Inspector General Sorensen,

We write to express serious concern that the large-scale reductions in force (RIFs) initiated under Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought since the outset of this Trump administration have fueled waste, reduced efficiency, and weakened agencies' ability to detect fraud and abuse. We are particularly concerned that additional RIFs threatened during a government shutdown, as reportedly proposed by Director Vought, would not only be illegal under the Antideficiency Act but would also further erode efficiency, increase waste, and hinder agencies' oversight and accountability functions. Accordingly, we request that you conduct an investigation into the effects of these actions within your agency.

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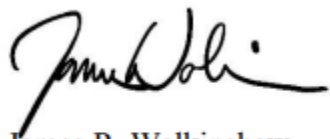
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James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress
11th District of Virginia

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2025

The Honorable Cheryl Mason
Inspector General
Department of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Inspector General Mason,

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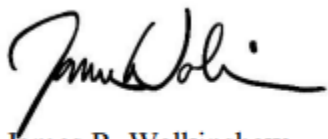
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