



Office of the House of Representatives Inspector General

Jacob R. Straus
Analyst on the Congress

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Summary

The Office of the House of Representatives Inspector General conducts audits of the financial and administrative functions of House officers and joint entities. In accordance with government-wide standards for Inspectors General, the results of the audits are simultaneously provided to the subject of the audit and to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the House, and the Minority Leader of the House. In the event that financial irregularities or ethics violations are identified, the report is also forwarded to the chair and ranking member of the Committee on House Administration or the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, respectively.

Background and History

The Office of the Inspector General was created in 1992 by the House of Representatives to provide periodic reports to the House leadership on audits of House officers, in response to the House Post Office and banking scandals.¹ Initially introduced in the 100th Congress (1987-1989), the rules changes necessary to allow the creation of the Inspector General were not approved until the passage of H.Res. 423 in the 102nd Congress (1991-1993).² The House Inspector General was first selected at the beginning of the 103rd Congress.

Structure and Function

The office is led by the Inspector General who is jointly appointed by the Speaker, the majority leader, and the minority leader each Congress. Established under House Rule II, the office is subject to the policy direction of the Committee on House Administration. The duties of the office include

- conducting periodic audits of the financial and administrative functions of the House and joint entities;
- informing the officers or other officials who are the subject of an audit of the results and suggest appropriate curative actions;
- simultaneously notifying the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, and the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration in the case of any financial irregularity discovered in the course of carrying out responsibilities under this clause;
- simultaneously submitting to the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, and the chairman and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration a report of each audit conducted under this clause; and
- reporting to the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct information involving possible violations by a House Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of any rule of the House or of any law applicable to the performance of official duties or the discharge of official responsibilities that may require referral to the appropriate federal or state authorities under clause 3(a)(3) of rule XI.³

On January 6, 2009, the Inspector General duties were amended by the 111th Congress (2009-2011) rules package. Section 2(a) of H.Res. 5 amends Rule II clause 6(c)(1) to require that the

¹ Rep. Lee Hamilton, "Questions About Congress," *Congressional Record*, vol. 139, part 2 (February 3, 1993), p. 2087.

² H.Res. 423 (102nd Congress), agreed to by roll-call vote.

³ U.S. Congress, *Constitution, Jefferson's Manual, and Rules of the House of Representatives of the United States, One Hundred Tenth Congress*, prepared by John V. Sullivan, Parliamentarian, 109th Cong., 2nd sess., H.Doc. 109-157 (Washington: GPO, 2007), pp. 372-373.

Inspector General “provide audit, investigative, and advisory services to the House and joint entities in a manner consistent with government-wide standards.”⁴

Contact Information

The Office of the House Inspector General is located in room 386, Ford House Office Building. The office may be contacted by telephone (6-1250), or by fax (5-4240). Additional information on the office of the Inspector General, including publically available reports, is available from the office’s website at <http://www.house.gov/IG>.

Author Contact Information

Jacob R. Straus
Analyst on the Congress
jstraus@crs.loc.gov, 7-6438

⁴ H.Res. 5 (111th Congress), agreed to by roll-call vote. For more information on government-wide standards for Inspectors General, see CRS Report RL34176, *Statutory Inspectors General: Legislative Developments and Legal Issues*, by Vanessa K. Burrows and Frederick M. Kaiser.