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TONI PRECKWINKLE
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OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT INSPECTOR GENERAL

PATRICK M. BLANCHARD
INSPECTOR GENERAL

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Chicago, Illinois 60602
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April 23, 2015

Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
and Members of the Board of Commissioners
of Cook County
118 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Re: Proposed State Legislation for IG Oversight of County and County Funded Officials

Dear President Preckwinkle and Members of the Board of Commissioners:

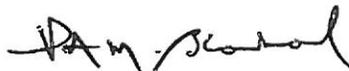
As you know, both the Office of the Independent Inspector General (OIIG) and the Board of Ethics are currently engaged in litigation with the Cook County Assessor's Office over various issues, including jurisdiction. While the OIIG prevailed on its complaint involving the Assessor's Office in the Circuit Court, the matter is now on appeal and will involve considerable time and expense and likely an appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court before the matter is finally resolved.

In addition to pursuing litigation to resolve the objection to OIIG jurisdiction over the Assessor's Office, the OIIG proposed state legislation that would not only resolve the issues presented in the lawsuit against the Assessor but also further confirm our office's jurisdiction over all separately elected Cook County officials and government officials whose offices are funded in whole or in part by the County pursuant to the County's annual appropriation bill. Attached is a copy of our proposed state legislation on this issue. We plan to pursue this issue with the Illinois Legislature and would greatly appreciate your support in achieving enactment and resolving these issues. This approach recently proved successful in the enactment of our proposed legislation regarding the jurisdiction of the OIIG and the Board of Ethics over County appointees. See 5 ILCS 430/70-20 (attached). Additionally, we believe that the proposed state legislation could be amended to include not only Inspector General oversight but also Ethics oversight of the separately elected County and other government officials.

Hon. Toni Preckwinkle and Members of the
Board of Commissioners of Cook County
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Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to further discussions with you concerning these important issues.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. M. Blanchard", written in a cursive style.

Patrick M. Blanchard
Inspector General

encl.

cc: Ms. Kimberly Foxx, Chief of Staff, Office of the President
Ms. Tasha Cruzat, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the President
Ms. Laura Lechowicz Felicione, Counsel to the President
Mr. Ranjit Hakim, Executive Director, Department of Human Rights and Ethics

Proposed amendment to the Illinois Counties Code regarding oversight for separately elected county officials and government officials funded by the County.

Chapter 55. Counties

Article 3. Officers and Employees

Division 3-16. Inspector General Oversight

All elected and appointed County officials and all government officials whose offices are funded in whole or in part by the County pursuant to the County's annual appropriation bill or otherwise receive funds from the County for their operations shall be subject to the jurisdiction of the County's Inspector General and the Inspector General's enabling legislation. The Inspector General's jurisdiction extends to anyone who is, or is seeking to be, an employee, agent, contractor, subcontractor, licensee, or grantee of any such County or County-funded government official.

55 ILCS 5/3-16001



Illinois General Assembly

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Illinois Compiled Statutes

(5 ILCS 430/70-20)

Sec. 70-20. Members appointed by a county. In addition to any other applicable requirement of law, any member of a governmental entity appointed by the president or chairperson of the county board, or by any member or members of the county board, with or without the advice and consent of the county board, shall abide by the ethics laws applicable to, and the ethics policies of, that county and, if applicable, shall be subject to the jurisdiction of that county's ethics officer or inspector general.

(Source: P.A. 98-457, eff. 8-16-13; 98-894, eff. 1-1-15.)