

## IG's Comments on the FY 2019 President's Budget



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL

FEB 9 2018

The Honorable Mick Mulvaney  
Director  
Office of Management and Budget Executive Office  
of the President Washington, D.C. 20503

Dear Mr. Mulvaney:

As you are aware, the Inspector General Act of 1978, as amended, 5 U.S.C. app. 3, § 6(g)(2), provides that:

In transmitting a proposed budget to the President for approval, the head of each establishment or designated Federal entity shall include... (D) any comments of the affected Inspector General with respect to the proposal.

The proposed fiscal year (FY) 2019 budget creates a significant challenge for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) Office of Inspector General (OIG) and its ability to accomplish its agency oversight mission. The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) request uses the FY 2018 Annualized Continuing Resolution as the basis for the FY 2019 submission. A budget at this level would destabilize the OIG and have an immediate negative impact on the OIG's production capacity. As such, I do not agree with the President's Budget request, and argue that such a proposal would substantially inhibit the OIG from performing the duties of the office, including mandatory OIG responsibilities explicitly required by federal law.

The OIG's primary deliverables are audits, evaluations, and criminal and employee misconduct investigations. All of these activities are labor intensive. A budget of \$46 million will virtually eliminate the OIG's ability to perform discretionary audits and evaluations. These services assist EPA leadership and Congress, help to hold the agency accountable, and are valuable management tools that represent a substantial source of the OIG's ability to produce a positive return on investment to taxpayers. Further, the OIG's mandatory audits and investigations are not performed by any other entity within the EPA. As such, untimely responses due to limited resources create an unacceptable risk to the agency and to the taxpayers' investment.

I urgently and respectfully request that the OMB recognize the work the EPA OIG has done in reshaping the workforce, and the greater vulnerability to the agency that any reduction of OIG funding would create, along with the loss of return on investment it would represent. I also request that the OIG's budget request of \$62 million, which is consistent with my FY 2017 request, be recognized. If

not, as provided by the Inspector General Act, I request that these comments be included in transmitting the President's Budget to Congress.

If you or your staff have any questions, or would like to meet to discuss this matter, you may reach me at (202) 566-0847 or [elkins.arthur@epa.gov](mailto:elkins.arthur@epa.gov).

Sincerely,



Arthur A. Elkins Jr.

cc: Michael Horowitz, Chair, Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency  
Matthew Z. Leopold, General Counsel, EPA  
David Bloom, Deputy Chief Financial Officer, EPA