

HOUSE PASSES COOPER WATCHDOG REFORM BILL BY VOTE OF 404-11

Inspectors general strengthened to provide independent oversight of federal agencies

WASHINGTON - U.S. Congressman Jim Cooper released the following statement in anticipation of bipartisan passage of H.R. 928, the Improving Government Accountability Act:

"Inspectors general are important watchdogs who identify waste, fraud and abuse in government. The 58 current IGs have saved taxpayers millions of dollars and justified their salaries many times over.

"Too often, however, IGs are subject to pressure by political appointees who want to stifle negative findings about their agencies. In other cases, errant IGs violate rules with impunity because administrators don't want to be seen firing the watchdog.

"H.R. 928 addresses all of these concerns. It strengthens inspectors general, protects them from political interference and holds them accountable for their independent oversight work. It sets a fixed term for service, gives them more independence from agency heads and sets out specific grounds for their removal. In short, it makes government work the way it's supposed to.

"Transparency and accountability are the keys to good government, and this bill improves both. It makes government work on behalf of the American people.

"I applaud the bipartisan majority that voted to pass it, and I look forward to Senate consideration so we can send this bill to the president's desk."

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