

Durbin, Lee Introduce Bipartisan Inspector General Access Act

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WASHINGTON – U.S. Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and U.S. Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) today introduced bipartisan legislation to expand the jurisdiction of the Department of Justice’s (DOJ) Office of the Inspector General to include alleged DOJ attorney misconduct. Currently, the DOJ Inspector General (IG) has no authority to investigate professional misconduct by DOJ lawyers. DOJ is the only agency whose IG has such a jurisdictional carve-out. The *Inspector General Access Act* would simply strike this loophole, which leads to an unfair double standard where every DOJ employee—including FBI and DEA agents, U.

S. Marshals, and federal prison guards—can be investigated by the DOJ IG except DOJ lawyers.

“This is a simple, bipartisan bill that would close a glaring loophole in the law,” Durbin said. “This is not a partisan issue. We should all agree that whoever the Attorney General is, he or she should be subject to independent oversight. I’m thankful to Senator Lee for his leadership and partnership on this important bill.”

“The current IG oversight exemption for DOJ attorneys is nonsensical and undermines accountability in our justice system. Our simple bill changes that, ensuring DOJ attorneys are no longer off-limits for IG investigations. I’m proud to partner with Senator Durbin on this common-sense bipartisan effort,” said Lee.

The *Inspector General Access Act* solves the problem that has long prevented independent oversight of DOJ prosecutors by simply striking the jurisdictional carve out in Section 413 of Title 5, United States Code. As a result, DOJ’s Inspector General would be fully empowered to investigate allegations of misconduct against Department lawyers. In addition to enhancing oversight and public accountability at DOJ, this simple, commonsense reform will bring DOJ in line with the practices in other federal agencies where allegations of attorney professional misconduct are already subject to investigation by Inspectors General.

Along with Durbin and Lee, the bill is cosponsored by Senators Chuck Grassley (R-IA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Ted Cruz (R-TX), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Josh Hawley (R-MO), Chris Coons (D-DE), Marco Rubio (R-FL), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Peter Welch (D-VT), and Laphonza Butler (D-CA).