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Office of the House of Representatives Inspector General

The Office of the House of Representatives Inspector General (IG) conducts audits of the financial and administrative functions of House officers and joint entities. The first House IG was appointed in the first session of the 103rd Congress (1993-1994).

Background and History

Following the House banking scandal of 1991, the House of Representatives instituted numerous administrative reforms, including shutting down the House bank and hiring a nonpartisan administrator. As part of the reform efforts, the House created an Inspector General (IG) to provide periodic reports to the House leadership on audits of House officers.

Initially proposed in the 100th Congress (1987-1988), the Office of the Inspector General was first created in the 102nd Congress (1991-1992) with the adoption of H.Res. 423, the House Administration Reform Resolution of 1992. The House has amended H.Res. 423 with the adoption of rules packages.

The resolution also establishes an Office of the Inspector General, who would be appointed jointly by the Speaker, the majority leader and the minority leader, and who would be charged with conducting audits of the financial operations of the house, and reporting irregularities or abuses resulting from audits.

—Representative Timothy Roemer, *Congressional Record*,
April 9, 1992 [p. 9063]

The Inspector General leads the office and is jointly appointed by the Speaker, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader.

Past House Inspectors General

The first House IG—John W. Lainhart IV—was selected in the first session of the 103rd Congress (1993-1994). In 2022, Joseph C. Picolla was appointed as the sixth House IG. Currently, the House has an acting IG. In total, there have been six IGs appointed by congressional leadership. **Table 1** provides the name and term of service for House IGs.

Table 1. House of Representatives Inspectors General

Name	Term of Service
John W. Lainhart IV	1993 to 1999
Steven A. McNamara	2000 to 2005

Name	Term of Service
James J. Cornell	2006 to 2010
Theresa M. Grafenstine	2010 to 2017
Michael T. Ptasienski	2018 to 2021
Joseph C. Picolla	2022 to 2025

Source: U.S. Congress, House, Office of the Inspector General, “Background and History,” <https://oig.house.gov/about>.

Notes: The Office of the House IG is managed by an acting IG until a new IG is appointed by the House leadership. For example, the former IG, Michael Ptasienski, served as acting IG from October 2017 until his appointment in February 2018 (Speaker of the House of Representatives, “Speaker Ryan Announces Appointment of Mike Ptasienski as House Inspector General,” press release, February 15, 2018). **Table 1** does not list acting IGs.

Current Status and Duties

Since its initial authorization, the House IG has been reauthorized by the House for each succeeding Congress. The House IG’s authority is found in House Rule II, clause 6. The House IG is also subject to the policy direction and oversight of the Committee on House Administration.

Pursuant to House Rule II, clause 6, the House IG has five main duties:

- (1) provide audit, investigative, and advisory services to the House and joint entities in a manner consistent with government-wide standards;
- (2) inform the officers or other officials who are the subject of an audit of the results of that audit and suggesting appropriate curative actions;
- (3) simultaneously notify the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, and the chair 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;
- (4) simultaneously submit to the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on House Administration a report of each audit conducted under this clause; and
- (5) report to the Committee on Ethics information involving possible violations by a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House 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.

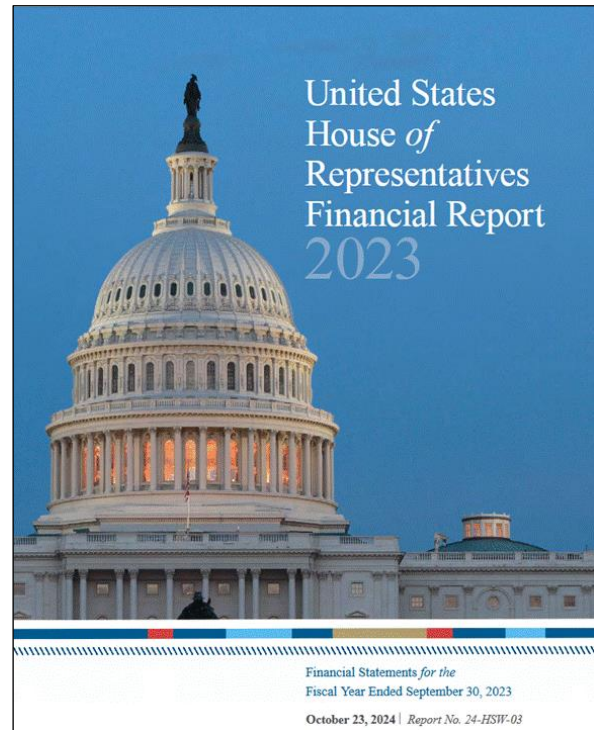
Reporting Fraud, Waste, or Abuse

The House IG is authorized to accept allegations of violations of law or misconduct by House employees and to investigate contract fraud, bribery and acceptance of gratuities, mismanagement and waste of funds, conflicts of interest, abuse of authority, theft or abuse of government property, computer crimes, purchase card fraud, improper use of House resources, and violations related to administration of the House. Should the IG receive information outside of its authority, it is to refer the information to other House entities (e.g., the House Ethics Committee), or noncongressional entities, as appropriate.

Publications

The Office of the House IG produces numerous audits, management advisory opinions, and investigative reports. Among the House IG's reports is an annual financial audit of the House of Representatives. **Figure 1** shows the cover of the most recent audit of the House's financial statements. Copies of the most recent audits are available on the House IG's public website.

Figure 1. United States House of Representatives Financial Audit Report, 2023



Source: U.S. Congress, House, Office of the Inspector General, "Financial Audit Reports," <https://www.house.gov/the-house-explained/officers-and-organizations/inspector-general>.

Contact Information

The Office of the House Inspector General is located in the Ford House Office Building. The office may be contacted by telephone (6-1250), by fax (5-4240), through its hotline (202-593-0068), or through its webform (<https://www.house.gov/contact-oig>). Additional information on the office of the Inspector General, including publicly available reports, is available from the office's public website at <https://www.house.gov/the-house-explained/officers-and-organizations/inspector-general>. The Inspector General also maintains an internal website, which includes a contact email address, on Housenet at <https://oig.house.gov/>. Housenet is available only within the internal House of Representatives network.

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