

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 22, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Ms. Chere Rexroat
Acting Architect of the Capitol
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ms. Rexroat:

According to an investigation and report issued by the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) Office of Inspector General (OIG), during J. Brett Blanton's time as the AOC, he engaged in unnecessary, expensive, and impermissible conduct. That report, titled *J. Brett Blanton, Architect of the Capitol, Abused His Authority, Misused Government Property and Wasted Taxpayer Money, Among Other Substantiated Violations*, provides a shocking amount of detail with respect to his improper conduct while working for the taxpayer. The OIG report found unauthorized vehicle use, misrepresentation as a law enforcement officer, ethics violations and appropriations violations.¹ Specifically, the report noted that "[his] actions have violated every pillar the OIG operates under including theft, fraud, waste and abuse against not only the AOC but also the taxpayer."² He must be held accountable for that behavior.

With respect to unauthorized vehicle use, the report details many abuses. The report notes that the OIG approximated 10,438 miles of permitted vehicular use in his specific position. Instead, he logged 29,291 miles and allowed his family to use the vehicles.³ The OIG evaluated additional mileage to AOC vehicles, including "wear and tear, and extra maintenance" due to his improper use, and determined the cost to the taxpayer to be \$12,434.⁴ In addition, during the non-government use of a government vehicle, a collision occurred at a brewery in Northern Virginia. That collision cost the taxpayer \$1,409.80.⁵

In total, at the time of the report, the OIG "identified no less than \$13,926.56 as net questioned costs associated with Blanton's use of AOC vehicles."⁶ However, that figure could be

¹ Architect of the Capitol Office of the Inspector General, 2021-0011-INVI-P – *J. Brett Blanton, Architect of the Capitol, Abused His Authority, Misused Government Property and Wasted Taxpayer Money, Among Other Substantiated Violations* (2022). [2021-0011-INVI-P-Oversight-Post-Final_0.pdf](#)

² *Id.* at 9.

³ "Round-trip mileage from Blanton's residence to the U.S. Capitol is 34 miles. While some minor incidental use of government vehicles to and from work is generally permitted by both the AOC OGC and Federal Management Regulation 102-5, HTW Transportation, the OIG does not concur that use constitutes an additional 18,853 miles." *Id.* at 2.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ *Id.* at 3.

⁶ "Net questioned costs, as defined in Section 5(f)(1) of the Inspector General Act, means a cost that is questioned by the OIG because of '(a) an alleged violation of a provision of a law, regulation, contract, grant, cooperative agreement,

more because the OIG report was issued on October 26, 2022⁷ and Blanton didn't leave federal service until February 13, 2023⁸.

The OIG report describes conduct that is the very example of what a government employee should never do. Government employees exist to serve the people, not fleece them. Considering the OIG report's findings, will you seek repayment from Mr. Blanton to make the taxpayer whole? If not, why not? In addition, what measures and steps have you taken to ensure that these abuses are never repeated? Please provide a response to these questions no later than March 8, 2023.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget

or other agreement or document governing the expenditure of funds; (b) a finding that, at the time of the audit, such cost is not supported by adequate documentation; or (c) a finding that the expenditure of funds for the intended purpose is unnecessary or unreasonable.” *Id.* at 3.

⁷ *J. Brett Blanton, Architect of the Capitol, Abused His Authority, Misused Government Property and Wasted Taxpayer Money, Among Other Substantiated Violations*, Oversight.gov, <https://www.oversight.gov/report/AOC/J-Brett-Blanton-Architect-Capitol-Abused-His-Authority-Misused-Government-Property-and> (last visited Feb. 21, 2023).

⁸ *Biden fires Trump-appointed Architect of the Capitol Brett Blanton after alleged misconduct, White House says, Insider*, <https://www.businessinsider.com/architect-of-the-capitol-brett-blanton-fired-by-biden-2023-2> (last visited Feb. 21, 2023).