

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 22, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

J. Brett Blanton
Former Architect of the Capitol

Dear Mr. Blanton:

According to an investigation and report issued by the Architect of the Capitol (AOC) Office of Inspector General (OIG), during your time as the AOC, you 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 your 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. Specifically, the report noted that “[your] actions have violated every pillar the OIG operates under including theft, fraud, waste and abuse against not only the AOC but also the taxpayer.”¹ You 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 your specific position. Instead, you logged 29,291 miles and allowed your family to use the vehicles.² The OIG evaluated additional mileage to AOC vehicles, including “wear and tear, and extra maintenance” due to your improper use, and determined the cost to the taxpayer to be \$12,434.³ 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 \$1,409.80.⁴

In total, at the time of the report, the OIG “identified no less than \$13,926.56 as net questioned costs associated with [your] use of AOC vehicles.”⁵ 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 “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.

³ *Id.* at 2.

⁴ *Id.* at 3.

⁵ “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, 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.

more because the OIG report was issued on October 26, 2022⁶ and Blanton didn't leave federal service until February 13, 2023⁷.

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 clear findings, when will you repay the American taxpayer the \$13,926.56 that you illegally cost them? Please provide an answer no later than March 8, 2023.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget

cc: Ms. Chere Rexroat
Acting Architect of the Capitol

⁶ *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).

⁷ *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).