



**OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE INSPECTOR GENERAL
CITY OF CHICAGO**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 21, 2014**

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**Office of the Legislative Inspector General of the City of Chicago files lawsuit
to protect office's important function for the interests of the City of Chicago and its citizens**

The Office of the Legislative Inspector General (OLIG) filed a lawsuit today against both Mayor Emanuel and City Council. This is the result and culmination of years of frustration and disappointment in the development of this Office within this City.

As currently proposed for 2015, and identical to the past two years, the OLIG will be again one of the lowest funded agencies in this City. Why is this an issue? At \$354,000.00, its budget allotment, the OLIG:

- Employs only six staff members, far less than what is actually needed to staff an investigative agency,
- Can pay its staff only from January until August of 2015. This is at a 35 hour work week with an hourly pay rate;
- Cannot pay overtime;
- Cannot pay basic health and/or vacation/sick benefits;
- Cannot purchase basic office supplies;
- Cannot pay for additional law enforcement resources such as database access;
- Cannot pay invoices or bills;
- Cannot pay subpoena costs, as mandated by law;
- Cannot pay for office transportation, such as investigative vehicle use;
- Cannot pay for legal costs, such as lawyers;
- Has no legal counsel, as afforded to every other agency in the City;
- Cannot afford an independent website;
- Cannot afford phone charges;
- Cannot afford to purchase computers, printers or toner;
- Cannot afford to purchase a copier and paper supplies;
- Cannot afford postage.

For this year, 2014, the underfunding prevents this Office from actually fulfilling its mandate for the citizens of Chicago. We need funding to complete this year in its entirety and then Fiscal Year 2015, as well. Despite our exhaustive efforts, both City Council and the Mayor have refused to provide adequate funding.

As an example of misplaced priorities, in 2015 the City will spend \$500,000 on a "decorative fountain", over 40% more money than the entire yearly budget of this investigative agency.

Let me be clear: This lawsuit today is not about job security or any other political or professional agenda. It is simply about giving a City agency the resources to effectively do its job. The OLIG remains committed in continuing its fight against Council corruption. Unfortunately, our attempts to secure adequate resources have been repeatedly rebuffed and denied. This must change. As leaders and legislators, each elected official has a responsibility to protect taxpayers

from corruption, not contribute to it. And eliminating an agency or marginalizing it either fiscally or legally on whimsical motives or false pretenses, is not a form of leading. Nor is passing the buck by labeling it someone else's problem.

And unlike others, this Office is not about to give up on ethics reform in Chicago. We will continue to grind away at changing the culture of corruption embedded in this municipality, to one day actually get good, open, and honest governance. This Office will continue to push for real changes in the day to day practice of City employees and elected officials, and continue to demand an ethical accountability that is concrete, rather than abstract and illusory.

More than merely willing, this office invites appropriate managerial audit (with protections for the absolute confidentiality of its investigations and complaints), to evaluate the Office's processes and procedures, in order to ascertain the necessary resources and funding for the OLIG to fulfill its important duties for the people of Chicago.

This is now election season for all of Chicago's elected officials. Now, more than ever candidates must be subjected to rigorous scrutiny before the election, so taxpayers will have a real opportunity to decide whether a candidate is worthy of their vote. To get there, we must turn the tide of the disappearance of oversight. As many are aware, oversight of campaign financing was made to disappear, by shifting hundreds of potential investigations to the Board of Ethics, an agency who did not want this responsibility to begin with, who identified conflicts of interest if oversight was returned to them, and already have a significant backlog of cases going as far back as 2007. In similar fashion the OLIG has been impeded by significantly inadequate funding. This must end. Ethics reform and oversight can no longer be accepted as mere catchphrases for aspiring or incumbent politicians, tossed around casually every four years for people to hear. This Office must be funded properly to complete its mandate. By failing to fund this Office, City Council simply obstructs justice. Because of this, we have been left with no choice but to go to Court, in order to accomplish what the law requires, what taxpayers want, and what its leaders say –first class oversight in a first class city.

Please direct any questions to Mr. Clint Krislov at Krislov & Associates, Ltd, 20 N Upper Wacker Dr Ste 1350, Chicago, IL 60606, Tel - (312) 606-0500.

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