FORTNEY PETE STARK
THIRTEENTH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

WAYS AND MEANS
JOINT ECONOMIC

March 7, 2003

George W. Bush
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Bush:

I was pleased to learn that you accepted the resignation of the current Inspector General for the Department of Health and Human Services, Janet Rehnquist. I have long been troubled by reports of her mismanagement of that office, which -- before her arrival -- had earned a reputation as one of the most effective and highly respected offices in the federal government.

Under Ms. Rehnquist's leadership, the office has suffered tremendous upheaval and has lost extremely qualified career professionals. To avoid any further disruptions and to begin the rebuilding process for that office as soon as possible, I urge you to accelerate the effective date of her resignation. There is no need to prolong the damage she has caused in real and perceived terms for an additional three months.

I respectfully request that Ms. Rehnquist's resignation become effective immediately and that you appoint one of the current or recently resigned consummate career professionals from that office as acting Inspector General. This is the smoothest path to restore the morale and high performance standards of the office and to ensure the integrity of the Medicare and Medicaid programs.

Sincerely,

Pete Stark
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Health

cc: HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson

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