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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6350

June 15, 2000

By Facsimile: (202) 693-5114

Ms. Patricia Dalton
Inspector General, Acting
U. S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N. W.
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Ms. Dalton:

This letter supplements my letter of May 9, 2000. In that letter I requested that the Office of Inspector General (OIG) examine the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA/Agency) use of certain contracts during the ergonomics rulemaking process. New information has come forward triggering further questions I would like your office to consider reviewing.

In particular, it was reported that OSHA let about 25 contracts to witnesses that testified at the public hearings the Agency held on the proposed rule. It is my further understanding that: 1) each of these contracts was for \$10,000 and 2) one of OSHA's contractors (although not necessarily one that was involved in testifying) was also listed as an employee of OSHA while under contract.

Accordingly, we would like the OIG to expand its initial review and examine all contracts, issued either directly or indirectly to support OSHA's ergonomics rulemaking. Specifically, please confirm or negate whether OSHA paid their witnesses to appear at the hearings and if so, how much; and confirm or negate that one of OSHA's contractors was also an employee at the same time. In addition, I would like to know to whom each of the contracts let during this rulemaking went, how much it was worth, and the work it covered.

Unfortunately, OSHA is moving with great speed to complete and issue a final ergonomics regulation. As a result your review of this matter will play an important role as Congress moves to debate legislation that is affecting this regulation. For this reason, I request that this request be given the OIG's highest priority.

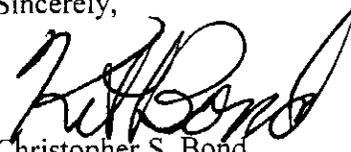
If you have any questions regarding this matter, please feel free to contact Marc Freedman or Emilia DiSanto of the Small Business Committee staff at (202) 224-5175.

Ms. Patricia Dalton

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Thank you in advance for your continued assistance. In addition, I wish to take this opportunity to commend the OIG for its work on assessing the integrity of the Welfare-to-Work (WtW) program at the Department of Labor. That work has and will continue to play an important role as the Congress continues to examine, among other things, the successes of the WtW program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Bond", written in a cursive style.

Christopher S. Bond
Chairman

cc: Joe McGowan
Preston Firmin