



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

City of Chicago

Joseph M. Ferguson
Inspector General

740 N Sedgwick, Suite 200
Chicago, Illinois 60654
Telephone: (773) 478-7799
Fax: (773) 478-3949

February 10, 2016

To the Taxpayers and Residents of the City of Chicago:

Today the City Council transferred oversight of its members and staff from the Office of Legislative Inspector General to this office. The action brings to close chapters in Chicago's ignominious ethics history by shuttering an office devised to create the appearance of oversight, but designed to fail.

Unfortunately, the Council still failed to fully meet the moment. Instead of embracing oversight for itself consonant with that for the rest of City government and operations, it retreated. The Council amended legislation that was carefully and thoughtfully constructed and negotiated amongst representatives of all constituent parties, facilitated by the Office of the Mayor and the City's Law Department, that had the support of the general public, good government organizations, and a purported (and documented) majority of the City Council. In short, aldermen squandered what could and should have been a singularly successful moment in the City's civic history.

Today's oversight transfer legislation nudges the ball forward, but leaves Chicago with a form of Council oversight that is still separate (procedurally) and unequal (substantively), from the rest of City government. The new law hands to the City of Chicago Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigative oversight that is jurisdictionally constricted and fully amputates from the negotiated legislation, audit and program review authority in relation to programs and operations that Chicago alone among major cities administers through its legislative body.

It is the legislative province of the City Council to make such decisions about oversight for the City and for itself. Most remarkable, however, is that it has chosen to do so at a moment when our City is under intense national scrutiny for a host of individual, institutional, social, and civic issues resulting from the historical structural deficiencies in the City's police oversight. Such action signals to those watching and investigating the City regarding these issues, that its City Council either does not understand, or lacks the will to embrace, comprehensive and effective oversight.

The City Council has made its choice. Our job now, as always, is to implement professional and effective oversight as far as allowed by the new law. OIG welcomes these new responsibilities and, effective immediately, will receive complaints and, when warranted, pursue investigations of aldermen and their staff.

You may submit your complaints to OIG the following ways,

- By telephone at (866) IG-TIPLINE (866-448-4754)
- By fax at (773) 478-3949
- By email at reportcorruption@chicagoinspectorgeneral.org
- Online at ChicagoInspectorGeneral.org
- By mail to City of Chicago Office of Inspector General, 740 N. Sedgwick, Suite 200, Chicago, IL 60654

I encourage you to stay engaged, report wrong doing, and help us in helping the City to improve by assuring a fully accountable municipal government.

Respectfully,



Joseph M. Ferguson
Inspector General
City of Chicago