

United States Senate

May 23, 2019

VIA ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Mr. Charles J. Sheehan
Acting Inspector General
Office of Inspector General
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Acting Inspector General Sheehan:

I write to request that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Inspector General (OIG) initiate an independent investigation into whether the EPA Administrator and other senior political appointees inappropriately granted Small Refinery Exemptions (SREs) to manipulate the price of Renewable Identification Numbers (RINS) and reduce biofuel consumption levels below the minimum levels required by statute.

Recent document disclosures reveal that the EPA misled Members of Congress, industry and the public in regard to the agency's motivations and justifications for its SRE policy. This deception by EPA political appointees may indicate improper motives and conflicts of interest, and it warrants a thorough review by the EPA OIG.

In addition to potential violations of the legal requirements under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) program and the Administrative Procedures Act, I am also troubled that certain appointees may have risked violating section 208 of title 18, United States Code, which is the principle Federal criminal statute prohibiting Executive Branch officials from participating personally and substantially in matters affecting a personal financial interest.

The bottom line is that Congress established and continues to support the RFS program. It is the law of the land and any indication that EPA may be failing to faithfully execute existing statutory requirements warrants careful scrutiny. Thank you in advance for your consideration of my request. If you have any questions, please reach out to Radha Adhar at (202) 224-2324 or Radha_Adhar@duckworth.senate.gov.

Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth
Ranking Member

Subcommittee on Fisheries, Water and Wildlife
Committee on Environment and Public Works