

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF
GOVERNMENT ETHICS



MAY 12 2016

The Honorable John Boozman
Chairman
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
133 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Coons
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
125 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Boozman and Ranking Member Coons:

The U.S. Office of Government Ethics (OGE), established by the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, provides overall leadership and oversight of the executive branch ethics program designed to prevent and resolve conflicts of interest. OGE's mission is part of the very foundation of public service. To carry out its leadership and oversight responsibilities, OGE promulgates and maintains enforceable standards of ethical conduct for approximately 2.7 million employees in over 130 executive branch agencies and the White House; oversees a financial disclosure system that reaches more than 26,000 public and more than 380,000 confidential financial disclosure report filers; ensures that executive branch agency ethics programs are in compliance with applicable ethics laws and regulations; provides education and training to the more than 4,500 ethics officials executive branchwide; conducts outreach to the general public, the private sector, and civil society; and provides technical assistance to state, local, and foreign governments and international organizations.

The authority in Section 609 (128 Stat. 2374) of Division E of P.L. 113-235 permits 50% of FY2015 unobligated balances to be used by September 30, 2016. Consistent with the terms of that provision, OGE requests the Subcommittee's approval to use \$185,464 of OGE's FY 2015 appropriation in FY2016 for one-time, mission-critical expenses.

Salaries and Expense Appropriation	
Total FY 2015 Unobligated Balance Carryover	\$370,928
50 Percent (Carryover available in FY 2016)	\$185,464

The unobligated balance of OGE’s FY 2015 appropriation as of April 30, 2016, was \$370,928, half of which is \$185,464.¹ If authorized, OGE would use the requested funds toward one-time mission-critical expenses to further secure and enhance *Integrity*, OGE’s executive branchwide electronic filing system for public financial disclosure. This system is already being used by the White House for Presidentially-appointed, Senate-confirmed (PAS) nominees and will be critical to the success of the nominations process during the upcoming Presidential transition. Therefore, OGE requests the use of these funds to make recently identified improvements to this important executive branchwide system. The chart below describes the specific system functionality toward which OGE would use the requested funding.

<i>Integrity</i>		
Executive Branchwide Electronic Public Financial Disclosure Filing System		
IMPROVEMENT	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST
Automated system monitoring	Improve system security through automated monitoring, enabling OGE to more effectively monitor and respond to critical security reports from system-generated audit logs.	\$110,784
Audit trail export functionality	Increase system functionality by enabling the system to export audit trails to portable document format (pdf) to preserve records in compliance with recent Presidential Records Act determinations regarding <i>Integrity</i> .	\$89,808
TOTAL		\$200,592

¹ This increase from prior year requests is due to an accounting error by OGE’s Financial Shared Services Provider, the Bureau of Fiscal Service (BFS). The error occurred at the end of fiscal year 2015 but OGE was not notified of the error until fiscal year 2016, preventing OGE from obligating the remaining funds in fiscal year 2015. A detailed letter of explanation from BFS has been provided to your staff. We note that OGE insisted that BFS immediately implement processes to ensure that this type of error will not occur in the future.

Hon. John Boozman

Hon. Chris Coons

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If you or your staff need additional information or have any questions about this request, please contact me at (202) 482-9314 or Diana Veilleux, Chief, Legal, External Affairs and Performance Branch at (202) 482-9203. An identical request is being sent to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Financial Services and General Government.

Sincerely,



Shelley K. Finlayson

Chief of Staff and Program Counsel