



ASSOCIATION OF INSPECTORS GENERAL

524 West 59th Street, 53334HH
New York, NY, 10019
212-237-8001

July 21, 2025

OPEN LETTER TO BALTIMORE COUNTY EXECUTIVE AND COUNTY COUNCIL

The Honorable Katherine A. Klausmeier, County Executive
The Honorable Pat Young, Council District 1
The Honorable Izzy Patoka, Council District 2
The Honorable Wade Kach, Council District 3
The Honorable Julian E. Jones, Jr, Council Chairman & Council District 4
The Honorable David Marks, Council District 5
The Honorable Mike Ertel, Council District 6
The Honorable Todd K. Crandell, Council District 7

400 Washington Avenue
Towson, MD 21204

Re: Inspector General Appointment and Process

Honorable County Executive Klausmeier and Council Members:

The Association of Inspectors General (AIG), is an independent, non-partisan 501(c)(3) organization representing thousands of members working in hundreds of Inspectors General offices across the United States and internationally. The AIG promulgates the Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General, known as the Green Book; that is widely considered to be the gold standard for state and local government Offices of Inspector General. At its core, the AIG's mission is to support the development of independent Offices of Inspector General (OIG).

The AIG has been monitoring Baltimore County's efforts to appoint, or reappoint, an Inspector General, and is deeply concerned that the current effort is irreparably damaged. The procedures that govern the appointment of an Inspector General, including the foundational law and the processes employed, is itself an essential element of the independence required for effective government oversight. The selection of an Inspector General under this current process would not, and should not, garner the trust of the public.

The Association of Inspectors General strongly recommends that the law and processes be re-evaluated and that Baltimore County government proceed with careful deliberation and caution.

The AIG wrote to Baltimore County on July 05, 2021, concerning potentially damaging legislation. Fortunately, the County abandoned that effort and adopted several ordinance amendments over the following years that have advanced the OIG's independence. There remains work to be done. We would like to address several issues that stand out as contrary to the well-established *Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General*.

1. Failure to conform with Baltimore County Ordinance 3-14-103. Inspector General (“Ordinance 3-14-103 on Inspector General Selection”)

Current law is very clear that the Inspector General is “*appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council.*” See 3-14-103(a)(1). Further, the law addresses the process for the reappointment of an Inspector General to a second term directing that they “*shall be subject to appointment for a second term in accordance with the provisions of subsection (a)(1) of this Section*”. See 3-14-103(b)(1). Simply put, the Administration either submits the existing Inspector General's name for reappointment to the County Council for confirmation or they decline to do so and conduct an “open search”, designed to recruit new candidates under 3-14-103(a)(2).

Inexplicably, the Administration has chosen to depart from the Ordinance by conflate the two distinct provisions by launching the “open search” provision while at the same time inviting the current Inspector General to apply. The public record is replete with reporting that indicates there is dissension on this issue among the Baltimore County Executive Klausmeier, the nominating authority, and a significant portion of the Council, the confirming authority. The process of selecting an independent Inspector General must be lawful and the actions the County Administration has pursued thus far appears to depart from the process set forth in law.

2. Conflicts of Interest

An inherent conflict of interest exists where any person who can be investigated by the OIG is also vested with decision-making authority in selecting or reappointing the Inspector General. But that's what appears to be happening in Baltimore County where the County Executive nominates Inspector General candidates.

The AIG believes that Baltimore County's current search process for an Inspector General doesn't align with the essential principles of independence. We urge County lawmakers to fix this problem quickly so that the OIG can be truly independent, and the public can have faith in the process of selecting an Inspector General.

In June 2025, an IG Selection Panel (IGSP) was created consisting of five individuals that were not affiliated with the County. However, four of the five members were named by County leadership. Further, in July 2025 the three finalists for the position participated in a final interview panel including County Executive Klausmeier, Panel member Arthur Elkins and Baltimore County Ethics Commission member Mande Heinl. The AIG again notes the inherent conflict of interest with the County Executive, but also Ethics Commissioner Heinl who was appointed by the County Executive.

The AIG observes that the Baltimore County Administration appears to treat the selection of an Inspector General as substantially similar to the appointment of other senior staff who are charged to advance the agenda (including the political agenda) of the County Executive. Conversely, an Inspector General is charged with acting independently of the County Executive and indeed has the authority to review the actions of the executive. We strongly encourage the County Executive to exercise great care and ensure appropriate prophylactic measures are implemented until such time as the issue can be addressed legislatively.

The AIG knows from decades of experience that these issues are not unique to Baltimore County, but have manifested in various forms throughout the country wherever Inspectors General exist. Like those in any democratic society, the citizens of Baltimore County deserve and expect that their government will serve their best interest, and also be transparent and accountable to the public. The County must ensure it always acts to support and enhance the independence of the OIG and recommends the County Executive and Council take expedient action, consistent with the AIG's recommendations.

The AIG possesses the experience and expertise in navigating these complex issues and, as a non-partisan and not-for-profit organization, stands ready to assist or provide a more detailed analysis.

Sincerely,



Will Fletcher
President, Association of Inspectors General

DM/wf