ASSOCIATION OF INSPECTORS GENERAL

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OPEN LETTER TO THE CORAL GABLES CITY COMMISSION

November 10, 2026

Mayor Vince Lago and Members of the Coral Gables City Commission
405 Biltmore Way
Coral Gables, FL 33134

Re: Preserving Independence and Public Trust in the City of Coral Gables Inspector General Program

Dear Mayor Lago and Coral Gables City Commissioners:

For 30 years, the Association of Inspectors General (AIG) has been promoting excellence among offices of inspectors general (OIG) and advancing government integrity and accountability. AIG is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and nonpartisan organization that represents thousands of members working in hundreds of offices across nearly all 50 states, U.S. territories and internationally.

As part of its work, AIG publishes and promotes the Principles and Standards for Offices of Inspector General (known as the "Green Book")—widely recognized as the industry standard of principles and best practices for OIGs at every level of government.

AIG's Green Book identifies foundational elements necessary for effective OIG oversight, including organizational independence, access to information, adequate resources, transparency, accountability, and professional competency. In evaluating legislation affecting OIGs, AIG assesses whether proposed changes strengthen or diminish these core principles.

AIG has been following the Coral Gables City Commission's efforts to implement the inspector general framework recently approved by Coral Gables voters. Their vote in favor of independent oversight calls for a commitment to transparency, accountability, and public trust in municipal government. We commend the City of Coral Gables for taking this responsibility seriously.

However, AIG is concerned by recent public reporting indicating the Commission is currently considering proposals that would require a majority vote of the Commission to authorize inspector general investigations, authorize the selection of investigators, determine funding levels for individual investigations, and potentially influence whether investigations move forward.

The Green Book makes clear that an inspector general must be able to **exercise independence in fact and appearance** from operations, programs, policies, and procedures over which the inspector general has authority. Any interference or direction from a governmental entity related

to the work of an inspector general also conflicts with the federal Inspector General Act of 1978, which states that no government leader "shall prevent or prohibit the Inspector General from initiating, carrying out, or completing any audit or investigation, or from issuing any subpoena during the course of any audit or investigation."

AIG has serious concerns whenever a governmental entity takes steps to direct or interfere with an inspector general's capacity to function independently. Inspectors general exist to provide fair and independent oversight and accountability on behalf of taxpayers.

The cornerstone of an inspector general's public credibility is its independence. Based on our 30-year history of establishing and promoting inspector general quality standards and best practices, AIG encourages the Coral Gables City Commission to reject any proposal that would infringe upon the independence of inspector general investigations and operations. We further call on the Commission to consider well-established OIG best practices when developing the City's new inspector general program.

The public must be assured that an inspector general's investigations can proceed without political influence or authorization from those who may be affected by their findings. Investigations are most appropriately conducted on professional assessments of jurisdiction, evidence, risk, and public interest, rather than political consensus.

Not every complaint becomes a full investigation but effective independent oversight programs allow an inspector general to independently assess allegations and determine whether further inquiry is warranted, adhering to established standards, fairness and objectivity. This approach protects against both abuse and undue interference.

The residents of Coral Gables voted to establish an inspector general program because they recognized the value of independent oversight. As the Commission drafts the implementing ordinance, you have a unique opportunity to establish an oversight model that promotes efficiency, fiscal responsibility, and accountability while maintaining the independence necessary to earn public confidence and produce meaningful results.

The Association of Inspectors General would be happy to serve as a resource to the City of Coral Gables as the Commission continues this process. AIG has experience and expertise in providing guidance to government stakeholders on these complex issues and, as a nonpartisan and nonprofit organization, stands ready upon request to provide counsel and experience regarding standing up an impartial and impactful inspector general.

Respectfully,



Will Fletcher
President
Association of Inspectors General