

PATRICK J. LEAHY, VERMONT, CHAIRMAN

EDWARD M. KENNEDY, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH R. BIDEN, JR., DELAWARE
HERB KOHL, WISCONSIN
DIANNE FEINSTEIN, CALIFORNIA
RUSSELL D. FEINGOLD, WISCONSIN
CHARLES E. SCHUMER, NEW YORK
RICHARD J. DURBIN, ILLINOIS
BENJAMIN L. CARDIN, MARYLAND
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND

ARLEN SPECTER, PENNSYLVANIA
ORRIN G. HATCH, UTAH
CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, IOWA
JON KYL, ARIZONA
JEFF SESSIONS, ALABAMA
LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, SOUTH CAROLINA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
SAM BROWNBACK, KANSAS
TOM COBURN, OKLAHOMA

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

BRUCE A. COHEN, *Chief Counsel and Staff Director*
STEPHANIE A. MIDDLETON, *Republican Staff Director*
NICHOLAS A. ROSSI, *Republican Chief Counsel*

September 16, 2008

The Honorable Michael B. Mukasey
Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530

Dear Attorney General Mukasey:

We write with respect to reports released last week by Department of the Interior Inspector General Earl E. Devaney detailing abuses within the Minerals Management Service, which collects royalties from oil and gas leases on federal government land.

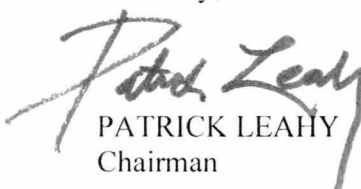
Inspector General Devaney found that numerous employees of this program, including its former director, accepted lavish gifts and outings from energy companies, were paid improperly for outside work, and engaged in "a culture of substance abuse and promiscuity" with the very companies they purportedly regulated. Given the vast sums of money and vital energy interests administered by this office, these allegations of systematic corruption are shocking and outrageous. As Congress prepares to make important policy decisions to deal with the looming energy crisis, we believe it is crucial to restore accountability for those who administer our energy policy.

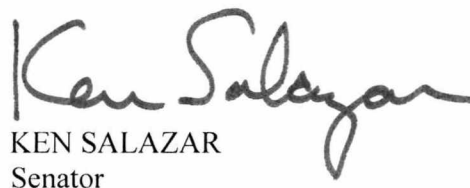
According to media reports, one retired official has pleaded guilty to a conflict of interest charge in connection with this investigation, but the Department of Justice has declined to prosecute the two highest ranking officials named in the reports. Given the Inspector General's findings of serious and pervasive wrongdoing within the Minerals Management Service, we hope that you will continue to investigate and consider whether criminal charges are justified and that you will promptly bring any charges determined to be appropriate.

Please let us know whether any criminal investigation is ongoing in connection with Inspector General Devaney's investigation into the Minerals Management Service. To the extent that the Department of Justice has already formally declined to prosecute individuals referred to the Department in connection with this investigation, please tell us the basis for these decisions.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,


PATRICK LEAHY
Chairman


KEN SALAZAR
Senator