

**OGR Full Committee Hearing Opening Statement - DOD and DHS:
Implementing Agency Watchdog's Recommendations Could Save Taxpayers
Billions
Congressman Cárdenas (CA-29)**

Thank you Chairman Issa and Ranking Member Cummings for calling this important hearing today to get some clarity on the steps that the Department of Defense (DOD) and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are taking to ensure they are not wasting billions of taxpayer dollars on programs that are failing to deliver for the American people.

During a time when the Ryan Budget is slashing billions from critical programs that many middle class and working families depend on, the DOD and DHS Inspector Generals (IG) have identified \$1.025 and \$1.158 billion of potential savings in each respective agency. Failing to implement these recommendations means that a total of \$2.183 billion will be washed down the drain.

I cannot help but imagine how many children we can properly educate in public schools; how many young adults we can send to college or train to be competitive in this global economy; how many families that have been devastated by this economic downturn we can help get back on their feet; how many elderly people we can ensure live out a dignified life after contributing so much to our country; or how many employees DOD can avoid giving furlough notices to in light of the estimated \$46 billion in across-the-board cuts it will experience this year as a result of sequestration. We cannot allow bureaucratic inaction to let this situation continue.

The DOD and DHS are two of three largest agencies in the federal government, with the Department of Veterans Affairs coming in second. They are charged with the great responsibility of ensuring our security at home and abroad. In FY 2012, DOD's budget stood at \$553 billion and DHS' budget was \$46.9 billion.

I am a strong supporter of our military and national security apparatus. I am committed to ensuring that both DOD and DHS are well-resourced so they may continue to defend America and its interests. But with great budgets, comes great

responsibility. We cannot afford to waste millions of dollars in programs that do not further our security.

As we grapple with fiscal challenges of our day, we must strongly demand that all agencies and departments do everything in their power to ensure they are not wasting valuable taxpayer money.

I look forward to hearing from the witnesses about the concrete actions their respective agencies are taking to remedy the critical problems that have been highlighted by the Inspector Generals. Running ineffective or failing programs that are costing billions cannot be the standard mode of operation of any federal agency or department. The times do not allow for it.