

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 9, 2012

Mr. Robert D. Grant  
Special Agent in Charge  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
2111 W. Roosevelt Road  
Chicago, IL 60608

Dear Special Agent in Charge Grant,

We write to you regarding a U.S. Department of Homeland Security Inspector General report raising serious questions about the implementation of Cook County's "Project Shield" initiative. As you may know, Project Shield was a \$45-million federally-funded County program to install video and data sharing equipment in first responder vehicles. The Inspector General's findings confirm numerous media reports of waste, fraud and abuse of taxpayer dollars. According to the report, Project Shield "...was not implemented effectively, and millions of tax dollars may have been wasted on equipment that does not perform as intended." Of particular concern is potentially criminal misuse of federal taxpayer dollars.

The Inspector General found that Cook County, the State of Illinois, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Urban Area Working Group did not plan effectively, nor did the organizations provide proper oversight of the program. Cook County in particular was found to be in violation of procurement, property and record requirements.

The Inspector General "found missing records, improper procurement practices, unallowable costs, and unaccountable inventory items." Among the issues raised were a non-competitive \$11.3 million contract for Phase 2 work, \$7 million in prohibited maintenance costs, and significant contract changes without approval. Expenditures were not adequately verified or authorized, which was attributed to "Cook County's inadequate management of the project, as well as the ineffective monitoring by FEMA and the State of Illinois."

These findings warrant further investigation into the potential criminal misuse of federal funds. Last June, Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle canceled the program, which was created and implemented by Presidents John Stroger and Todd Stroger. This step is in line with Inspector General recommendations, but more must be done to ensure federal and local accountability. We have enclosed the full Inspector General report for your review.

Should you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact our offices.

Sincerely,



Mark Kirk  
U.S. Senator



Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

Enclosure: DHS IG Report