

JACKIE SPEIER
14TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

2465 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-0514
(202) 225-3531
FAX: (202) 226-4183
155 BOVET ROAD, SUITE 780
SAN MATEO, CA 94402
(650) 342-0300
FAX: (650) 375-8270
WWW.SPEIER.HOUSE.GOV
WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/JACKIESPEIER
WWW.TWITTER.COM/REPSPEIER

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0514

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
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SUBCOMMITTEES:
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NSA AND CYBERSECURITY
Senior Whip

August 25, 2017

The Honorable Richard V. Spencer
Secretary of the Navy
1000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Spencer:

I am writing in response to an extensive report by Federal News Radio August 21, 2017, titled "Investigation: Navy shipyard wasted \$21 million building off-the-books police force.¹" The article details the findings of an investigation by the Inspector General of Naval Sea Systems Command, who concluded in 2014 that a team of unarmed security guards at Norfolk Naval Shipyard improperly obtained weapons, vehicles, and fuel in order to stand up an unauthorized police force. These activities took place under a series of seven different commanding officers, none of whom intervened. The IG reportedly took the lead on investigating this case because military criminal investigators and federal prosecutors declined to do so.

According to the IG, the guards stocked an on-base armory with illegally-acquired Berettas, thousands of rounds of ammunition, night vision goggles, ballistic vests, and helmets. The team used a government purchase card to procure a high-speed interdiction boat for \$150,000, and then spent at least another \$206,000 to tie it up at a private marina instead of using available space at the shipyard itself. The guards, through the Defense Logistics Agency, also improperly acquired at least 92 vehicles for which they created fake license plates. The IG reported that the guards would turn on unauthorized lights and sirens they had installed on the vehicles themselves to perform traditional law enforcement duties, exposing the government to tremendous liability.

In addition to the \$10.4 million wasted on equipment, the guard force apparently went on a hiring spree to the tune of \$10.6 million. The IG concluded that the positions were filled not with security specialists, but with "friends from church, family friends, family members..." constituting "abuse of authority and preferential treatment."

As a member of the House Committee on Armed Services, I have heard multiple urgent pleas from the Pentagon for more funding to address a "readiness crisis," with shipyard maintenance highlighted as an urgent concern. It's therefore particularly concerning that the Navy could allow such waste to continue for years, ignored by installation leadership and criminal investigators.

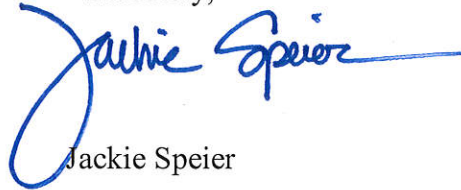
¹ <https://federalnewsradio.com/defense-news/2017/08/investigation-navy-shipyard-wasted-21-million-building-off-the-books-police-force/slide/3/>

I respectfully request answers to the following questions related to this case:

- Why was the NAVSEA IG review concluded in 2014, but only being reported now? Were any efforts made at the time to brief Congress on the IG findings?
- Why did the Naval Criminal Investigative Service decline to take up the case?
- What administrative punishments have already been handed out as a result of the IG review? Have the seven commanding officers received any sort of reprimand?
- Have criminal charges been pursued against the guard team members? If not, why?
- What actions is the Navy taking to recover the missing equipment?
- What actions has the Navy taken to ensure that this misconduct isn't occurring at other installations?

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your prompt response within two weeks of your receipt of this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jackie Speier". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right from the end of the name.

Jackie Speier

cc: Admiral John M. Richardson, Chief of Naval Operations