

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

September 28, 2006

The Honorable David M. Walker
Comptroller General
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Walker:

We are deeply concerned about your failure to honor the commitment you made during House and Senate hearings held in 2003 to provide an across-the-board pay increase to all GAO employees that received a “meets expectations” rating. As you know, under the auspices of GAO’s Band II restructuring, there are hundreds of employees who received a “meets expectations” rating but did not receive the across-the-board pay increase for 2006.

We would like you to provide us with explanations for your actions and why Congress was not consulted prior to denying GAO employees the annual across-the-board pay increase.

At a July 16, 2003, hearing on GAO’s human capital proposal before the House Subcommittee on Civil Service and Agency Organization, you committed:

to guarantee annual across the board purchase power protection and to address locality pay consideration to all employees rated as performing at a satisfactory level or above (i.e., meeting expectations or above) absent extraordinary economic circumstances or severe budgetary constraints.

You later reiterated this commitment in response to a question from Representative Chris Van Hollen. Mr. Van Hollen stated, “You have provided an assurance that except under extraordinarily bad budget scenario...you would assure that employees who are meeting the minimal expectation would receive a COLA and locality pay; is that right?” You responded, “Yes...they would receive protection against erosion of purchasing power due to inflation, and some consideration of locality at a minimum.”

In March 2006, Representative Steny H. Hoyer submitted questions for the record during GAO’s appropriations hearing. In reply, you stated that after the completion of the Watson Wyatt Worldwide market based compensation study for GAO your views were altered about whether and when employees should receive pay adjustments. Still, we are concerned that you did not consult with Congress before denying GAO employees the annual pay adjustments. Had we been aware of your unwillingness to follow through with your publicly stated commitment to

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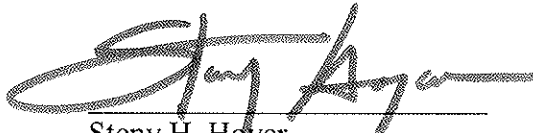
provide the across-the-board increase, the Congress and this Committee would have taken steps to do so through the legislative process.

Please explain the reasons for your change of position and let us know whether or not you intend to honor your commitment in the future.


Sincerely,



Danny K. Davis
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Federal Workforce
and Agency Organization



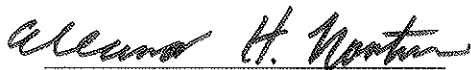
Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress



C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



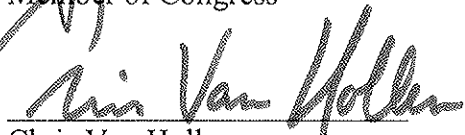
Benjamin L. Cardin
Member of Congress



James P. Moran
Member of Congress



Albert Russell Wynn
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress