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November 17, 2026

The Honorable Rand Paul
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

The Honorable Gary Peters
Ranking Member, Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate

Dear Chairman Paul and Ranking Member Peters:

On behalf of Research!America, a nonpartisan, nonprofit alliance advocating for science, discovery, and innovation to achieve better health for all, thank you both for your leadership of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

We are also thankful for the role you play as members of the bipartisan, bicameral commission responsible for recommending candidates for Comptroller General of the United States, and as leaders of the Senate committee responsible for considering the President's nominee. You are uniquely positioned to ensure the leader of the Government Accountability Office (GAO) is nonpartisan and has no divided loyalties, and we ask you to postpone any vote on a nominee until the commission has completed the deliberative, bipartisan selection process.

GAO's value rests on the trust both parties place in it. Lawmakers across the political spectrum turn to its audits and analysis because its findings are not seen as belonging to either side. Preserving that trust begins with how its leader is chosen.

Congress anticipated this. As you know, under the General Accounting Office Act of 1980, a bipartisan, bicameral commission of congressional leaders recommends at least three candidates to the President, who then makes a nomination to the Senate. Every Comptroller General has come through that process since then. In the two most recent selections, the commission accepted applications, Members and staff interviewed candidates, and the eventual nominee had the backing of commission members from both parties.

Acting Comptroller General Orice Williams Brown, a GAO veteran of more than 35 years, has kept the agency on steady footing. Americans

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241 18th Street South
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P 703-739-2577
F 703-739-2372
E info@researchamerica.org

would be well served by her continued leadership while the commission—and then your committee—undertakes a thorough, bipartisan selection process. (GAO has also operated under acting leadership for more than two years on two previous occasions: from 1996 to 1998, before David Walker's appointment, and from 2008 to 2010, before Gene Dodaro's.)

We therefore urge you to postpone consideration of a nominee until a thorough, bipartisan, and deliberative process has been completed. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Russ Paulsen
President and CEO
Research!America