

Washington, DC – At today’s Oversight and Government Reform Committee hearing on wartime contracting, Ranking Member Elijah E. Cummings urged Chairman Darrell Issa to support legislation introduced by Congressman John Tierney, the Ranking Member of the Subcommittee on National Security, Homeland Defense, and Foreign Operations, to establish a permanent Inspector General to oversee contractors in war zones and root out waste, fraud, and abuse.

Tierney’s legislation, [H.R.2880](#) , would implement a key recommendation from the Commission on Wartime Contracting, which estimated that as much as \$60 billion may have been “lost to waste and fraud” due to a lack of effective competition, oversight, and enforcement in contingency contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan

“I hope the Chairman will work with me, Rep. Tierney, and others on our side to focus more of our Committee’s resources on this issue,” Cummings said. “If we cannot put in place the personnel to oversee contractors in war zones, then we need to rethink the mission rather than blindly pressing forward with poorly designed contracts.”

At today’s hearing, the Commissioners testified that Tierney’s legislation would help fight waste, fraud, and abuse in contracting overseas:

- Commissioner Dov S. Zakheim called Tierney’s bill a “no brainer.”
- Commissioner Katherine Schinasi said Tierney’s proposal would be “an efficient way to look at the money that the U.S. government as a whole is spending.”
- Commissioner Christopher Shays, a former Republican Member of the Oversight Committee and Co-Chair of the Commission, touted Tierney’s bill and called for bipartisan support of the legislation.
- Commissioner Clark Kent Ervin pointed out that, unlike other agency Inspectors General with limited jurisdictions, the Special Inspector General proposed in Tierney’s bill would oversee the Department of Defense, the Department of State, and USAID so all contingency contracting would be monitored effectively.

“Simply stated, we cannot afford to fail at getting a handle on contingency contracting waste, fraud, and abuse in Iraq and Afghanistan,” Tierney said. “Not only does it squander precious taxpayer resources, it can seriously undermine the mission and even fund those who attack our brave men and women in uniform.”

The Oversight Committee has an extensive history of investigations that have uncovered waste and abuse in overseas contracts. These efforts have led to significant changes. In Iraq, the State Department has dramatically increased its management of private security contractors, and the number of use-of-force incidents has plummeted as a result of the Committee's work. In Afghanistan, General Petraeus responded to Rep. Tierney's investigation by issuing new contracting guidelines and charging two task forces with tracking U.S. contracting dollars to reduce corruption.

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