

Grassley Cites More Evidence for Reforming Government Charge Card System

Written by Sen. Charles Grassley
Monday, 29 March 2010 08:51

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WASHINGTON – Chuck Grassley today cited a new report by the Office of the Inspector General at the Social Security Administration as further evidence that the federal government’s charge card program continues to be ripe for fraud and abuse. The report found many of the same deficiencies that have been found in other agencies, such as a lack of documentation to support transactions.

“This is more evidence as to why the House should take up and pass my legislation. With the amount of money coming in and going out of the federal bureaucracy, it’s more important than ever to ensure that the taxpayers’ dollars are accounted for,” Grassley said.

Grassley introduced legislation in April 2009 to require federal agencies to establish safeguards and controls for government charge card programs. The bill also requires agencies to set penalties for violations. Grassley said he hopes the House of Representatives will act quickly on this common-sense legislation. The bill cleared the full Senate in October and now awaits House approval.

Grassley has done extensive oversight with the Government Accountability Office to determine how federal government employees are using government charge cards to make purchases for personal use. He first began looking into the issue in 2001, starting at the Department of Defense. Since then, abuses have been documented at the Departments of Defense and Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Forest Service, the Federal Aviation Administration and others.

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The Government Accountability Office reports identified an inadequate and inconsistent control environment across numerous federal agencies with respect to both government purchase cards and government travel cards.

Grassley said the lack of controls have led to millions of dollars in taxpayers' money wasted. The reports outlined purchases that were fraudulent, of questionable need, or were unnecessarily expensive, including kitchen appliances, sapphire rings, gambling, cruises, gentlemen=s clubs and legalized brothels.

-30-