

1990

National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (1990-1991): Correspondence 07

Nancy Jarrer

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April 16, 1990

James B. Thomas, Jr., Inspector General
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, Suite 4006
Washington, DC 20202-1510

RE: White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services
Hiring and Procurement Illegalities

Dear Sir:

On December 21, 1989, I was engaged by the White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services (WHCLIS) to bring their procurement office into sound fiscal management. After working on this project for almost four months, I have become aware of numerous illegalities in WHCLIS procurement and hiring procedures.

Concerning the WHCLIS hiring process, alleged illegalities have occurred in the hiring of the current Executive Director, Ms. Linda Resnik. Personnel Form 52, authorizing the Executive Director's hire was signed by Daniel H. Carter, Chairman of the Advisory Committee for WHCLIS. Under directive from the Department of Justice, an advisory committee chairman does not have the authority to sign in this capacity. To compound the situation, the hiring process was expedited by Mr. Carter through the Department of Education's Personnel Department and proper clearance checks were not preformed. There were also irregularities in the selection of Linda Resnik for the position of Executive Director again instigated by Daniel Carter.

Secondly, in my attempt to give the WHCLIS procurement office direction, in accordance with sound fiscal management, I uncovered numerous irregularities in the WHCLIS procurement process. Some of these irregularities are as follows:

- A) In FY89, Daniel Carter, Chairman of the Advisory Committee and a non-federal employee, authorized the expenditure of over \$175,000 of WHCLIS funds without signatory authority to do so.
- B) Reconciliation of FY89 in-house records to those of Department of Education's records indicate that there are major discrepancies between the two sources. This is attested to by the fact that Department of Education's Finance Office has contacted my office, on a weekly basis, in an attempt to clear the situation.

- C) Attempts to bring WHCLIS procurement records on-line to Department of Education so that reporting and reconciliation can be accomplished in an accurate and timely manor were halted by Ms. Resnik as not being necessary.
- D) During my tenure as Procurement Officer for WHCLIS, my office was restricted from reporting any accounting data to The National Commission on Libraries and Information Sciences(NCLIS), WHCLIS's parent agency and the agency ultimately responsible for any and all actions of the Conference.
- E) A memo from Charles Reid, Chairman of the National Commission, establishing reasonable, operative signatory authority for Ms. Resnik to conduct WHCLIS day to day operations, was misconstrued to read that Ms. Resnik had been given final signatory authority to conduct all affairs of the Conference and therefore approval of purchase orders, etc., by a NCLIS official was no longer needed. A copy of this memo was requested but never furnished to my office.

Given this environment and the alleged misfeasance of the Advisory Committee Chairman and Executive Director, on April 9, 1990, without prior notice and for no apparent wrong doing on my part, I was told by the Executive Director that my services were no longer needed. Because of the facts stated above a \$3.2 million appropriation has been put at risk. With an Advisory Committee Chairman who has allegedly abused the procurement process in the past and having put into office an Executive Director through allegedly illegal means and no accounting controls in place because of my termination, there is nothing to stop the misappropriation or conversion for personal gain of public funds.

Please be advised that this letter is not written from a disgruntled, terminated employee or out of revenge. It is written totally out of concern and not an attempt to retain my position with WHCLIS. I am a degreed accountant with two parts of the CPA exam and have an excellent work history. Other employment at or above the wages earned with WHCLIS is offered continually. I do, however, feel strongly about one of the purposes of the Conference, that of literacy. I have worked directly with the Texas Department of Corrections and the Texas Employment Commission in their endeavor to educate those citizens, who for what ever reason, want to work but cannot due to lack of skills. I have seen first hand the human misery caused by ignorance and the possibility of alleged abuses of public monies earmarked to

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begin the process of eliminating this kind of suffering is too much for me to sit quietly and let it happen.

It is my sincere hope that you will take this letter seriously and initialize an investigation into this matter. I will cooperate fully with your office in what ever capacity you feel necessary. I will allow my name to be used and be available for any depositions as may be needed. Thank you in advance for any consideration that you may give in this matter.

Yours truly,



Nancy Jarrar
10 Auburn Court, Apt E
P. O. Box 2836
Alexandria, VA 22305
(703) 548-7988

Copy:

William H. Natcher
House of Representatives Subcommittee Chairman on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
2358 Raburn, House of Representatives Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Attn: Mike Stephens, Staff Liaison

Thomas Hawkins
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee Chairman on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
186 Durkson, Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Attn: Mike Hall, Staff Liaison

Carl Lewis
Senate Subcommittee Chairman on Oversight of Government Management
442 Hart, Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Attn: Elise Bean, General Council