Recent News

On January 30, 2013, three OEIG investigative reports were publicly released:

- **In re: Salvador Godinez and Jerry Buscher**, 11-01738, involved hiring violations relating to the Illinois Department of Corrections.

- **In re: Margarita Lopez**, 09-00681, involved a DHS employee who fraudulently approved state benefits for her own relatives, among others. She was subsequently charged and found guilty of various criminal violations. Ms. Lopez was also ordered to pay restitution and discharged.

- **In re: Curtis Thompson**, 12-00407, involved a CMS employee who improperly requested leave pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act. Mr. Thompson was discharged.

Please visit the OEIG’s website to view these cases and the site’s new link to information concerning the OEIG’s Grant Initiative Review Team (GRIT).

Rep. Crespo Reintroduces Two Ethics Bills

On January 25, 2013, State Representative Fred Crespo (44th District) reintroduced two bills intended to promote ethics and transparency in state government.

House Bill 970 would allow an executive inspector general to publicly disclose founded summary reports in certain instances when the Executive Ethics Commission (EEC) elects not to do so. Present law mandates the EEC’s public release of founded summary reports only in instances where a state employee is terminated or suspended for three or more days.

“We continue to support efforts to increase transparency and we believe doing so discourages future wrongdoing.” – Ricardo Meza

House Bill 971 would set a minimum fine of $250 for the failure of a state employee to complete mandatory ethics training. This proposed legislation would promote timely and efficient employee compliance with ethics training requirements.

We support these bills, which will advance ethical conduct by state employees and officials, and we encourage others to support both of them.

Cole S. Kain
Chief of Staff & General Counsel

Executive Ethics Commissioner Fined $2,500 for Violating Ethics Act


To better ensure impartiality, the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act includes provisions that apply specifically to EEC employees and commissioners, among others. These select individuals are thereby limited with respect to their involvement in political activities.

The EEC determined that Rev. Thurston violated the Ethics Act when, on March 25, 2011, during his term as an EEC commissioner, he engaged in proscribed political activity.

“In this case, the $2,500 fine imposed upon Rev. Stephen Thurston was wholly appropriate under the circumstances.” – Asst. IG Tiffany Stedman

Any state employee with questions concerning these or other restrictions under the Ethics Act should contact his or her ethics officer.

Erin K. Bonales
Deputy Inspector General & Chief of Chicago Division