

October 20, 2023

Joseph V. Cuffari, Inspector General
Office of Inspector General/MAIL STOP 0305
Department of Homeland Security
245 Murray Lane SW
Washington, DC 20528-0305

Dear Mr. Inspector General:

The American Accountability Foundation is a non-profit government accountability group that focuses on researching the leaders in American government. We are writing today to ask to you immediately open an investigation into Ms. Claire Trickler-McNulty and her approval of problematic contracts at U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

On January 20, 2021, Family Endeavors, Inc. (Endeavors) named Andrew Lorenzen-Strait as its Senior Director for Migrant Services and Federal Affairs. Prior to this, he counted Endeavors as a client of his consulting firm. Just two months later in March, ICE awarded an \$86 million no-bid contract to Endeavors to provide beds and services for illegal immigrants at hotels. Lorenzen-Strait is a former Biden transition team official and ICE official. While at ICE, Lorenzen-Strait worked alongside Claire Trickler-McNulty. Claire Trickler-McNulty is now the Assistant Director of the Office of Immigration Program Evaluation and reportedly reviews and approves all contracts for detention and alternatives to detention.

Your office launched an investigation over this sole-source contract in April 2021. In your April 2022 report "ICE Spent Funds on Unused Beds, Missed COVID-19 Protocols and Detention Standards while Housing Migrant Families in Hotels", you found that ICE "did not adequately justify its use of sole source contracting in selecting endeavors. ... Based on our analysis of ICE's justification for sole sourcing the contract to Endeavors, we determined ICE did not have supporting documentation to establish that Endeavors was the only contractor that could provide the services needed. ICE records showed that Endeavors had no experience providing the services covered by the sole source contract, including hotel beds or all-inclusive emergency family residential services. Rather, the contractor only had experience providing staffing for other migrant services. Further, there was no documentation to show that Endeavors had the capability to provide such services, other than the statements made in its proposal."

According to your office's findings, the Endeavors contract wasted government and taxpayer funds when ICE "spent approximately \$17 million for hotel space and services at six hotels that went largely unused between April and June 2021." The report noted, "ICE's sole source contract with Endeavors resulted in millions of dollars being spent on unused hotel space." Not only was money wasted, but Endeavors didn't follow proper COVID-19 testing protocol and put "migrant families and the outside population at risk of contracting COVID-19."



The report was a significant first step in rooting out the corruption in this contract and in improving the understanding over how this contract was approved. We believe, however, that significant further investigation is warranted both to hold leaders accountable and to ensure that this type of contract award abuse does not happen again.

Your previous report does not make any mention of who at ICE approved this sole-source contract. In August, Project Veritas released a video of Lorenzen-Strait in which he [said](#) that the Endeavors contract was a “corrupt bargain.”

The public deserves to know who at ICE approved this improper contract. It is unclear if your previous investigations probed this issue – if they have, immediate disclosure of your findings would provide clarity to the public on how the corrupt process went awry. If your team did not probe the approval process, we believe an immediate investigation is required to discourage future procurement failures and to punish those responsible for any wrongdoing.

We strongly encourage you to open an investigation of the approval process for this highly unusual sole source contract. Without a fulsome and public investigation, it is unlikely that the American people and their leaders will have confidence that ICE funds are being awarded fairly and without improper bias.

Sincerely,
Thomas Jones
President

