

# Congress of the United States

## House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

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March 1, 2016

Ms. Allison C. Lerner  
Inspector General  
National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Boulevard  
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Ms. Lerner,

The Committee on Science, Space, and Technology is investigating a series of grants worth millions of dollars awarded to Dr. Jagadish Shukla.<sup>1</sup> The Committee's investigation has revealed serious concerns related to Dr. Shukla's management of taxpayer money. To assist the National Science Foundation (NSF) Office of Inspector General (OIG) in any review you may deem appropriate, the Committee is sharing information obtained during its investigation, including an audit conducted by GMU. Please keep the Committee apprised of any work your office engages in on this matter.

IGES has apparently received \$63 million from taxpayer funded grants since 2001, comprising over 98 percent of its total revenue.<sup>2</sup> These grants were awarded by the NSF, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).<sup>3</sup> Since 2001, as President of IGES, Dr. Shukla appears to have paid himself and his wife a total of \$5.6 million in compensation -- an excessive amount for a non-profit relying on taxpayer money.<sup>4</sup> This information raises serious questions about Dr. Shukla's financial management of IGES.

It appears IGES may have improperly commingled taxpayer funds with private charitable contributions when it shifted \$100,000 to an education charity in India founded by Dr. Shukla, the Institute of Global Education Equality of Opportunity and Prosperity, Inc.<sup>5</sup> This raises

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Hon. Lamar Smith, Chairman, H. Comm. on Science, Space, & Tech., to Dr. Jagadish Shukla, President, IGES (Oct. 1, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> See Lachlan Markay, *Scientist Demands Federal Investigation of Climate Change Skeptics*, FREE BEACON, Sept. 22, 2015, available at <http://freebeacon.com/issues/scientist-demands-criminal-investigation-of-climate-change-skeptics/>.

<sup>3</sup> See IGES.org *About*, available at <http://grads.iges.org/aboutiges.html>.

<sup>4</sup> See Ian Tuttle, *Getting Rich Off Climate Extremism*, NAT'L REVIEW, Oct. 1, 2015, available at <http://www.nationalreview.com/article/424875/getting-rich-climate-extremism-ian-tuttle>.

<sup>5</sup> See Tuttle, *supra* note 4.

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concerns that taxpayer money intended to be used for climate research was redirected to an overseas organization favored by Dr. Shukla.

The recent audit conducted by GMU appears to reveal that Dr. Shukla engaged in what is referred to as “double dipping.” In other words, he received his full salary at GMU, while working full time at IGES and receiving a full salary there. This practice may have violated GMU’s university policy, his employment contract with the university, and Virginia state law.<sup>6</sup> For example, according to GMU’s Faculty Handbook, “outside employment and paid consulting cannot exceed the equivalent of one day per work week without written authorization from the collegiate dean or institute director.”<sup>7</sup> Dr. Shukla violated this policy five different time periods from 2003 to 2015 because he failed to receive approval for paid consulting in excess of one day per week.<sup>8</sup> This allowed Dr. Shukla to double dip by receiving his full salary from GMU while receiving an excessive salary for working 28 hours per week at IGES. In another instance, in 2014, Dr. Shukla received \$292,688 in compensation from IGES for working 28 hours per week while simultaneously receiving 100% of his GMU salary.<sup>9</sup> In total, Dr. Shukla received \$511,410 in compensation from IGES and GMU during 2014, without ever receiving the appropriate permission from GMU officials, apparently violating university policy.<sup>10</sup>

According to Grants.Gov, “[a] grant is a way the government funds your ideas and projects to provide public services and stimulate the economy.”<sup>11</sup> The public expects non-profit organizations that receive taxpayer money to exercise responsible stewardship of their tax dollars. In this case, it appears that grants provided to IGES did not serve the intended purpose of providing services to the public. Instead, taxpayers picked up the tab for excessive double dipping salaries, nepotism, and questionable money transfers.

If the Committee may be of further assistance, please contact Committee staff at 202-225-6371. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Lamar Smith  
Chairman

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<sup>6</sup> See University Policy #4001: *Financial Conflicts of Interest in University Contracts with Businesses under Virginia Law* (Dec. 2009); University Policy #4010: *Financial Conflicts of Interest in Federally Funded Research; Virginia Conflicts of Interests Act* (Aug. 24, 2012); *Faculty Handbook and the Office of Research Integrity & Assurance’s Conflict of Commitment guidance*.

<sup>7</sup> Memo from Edward R. Dittmeier, Director, Internal Audit and Management Services, GMU, to M. Siddique Sheikh, Chairman, Audit Committee of the Board of Visitors, GMU (Dec. 9, 2015).

<sup>8</sup> *Id.*

<sup>9</sup> See IGES & GMU Salary History of Jagadish Shukla.

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> Grants.Gov, *Grants 101*, available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/learn-grants/grants-101.html>.

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Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson, Ranking Minority Member

The Honorable France A. Córdova, Ph. D., Director, The National Science Foundation