

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-2509

October 24, 2023

The Honorable Teri L. Donaldson  
Office of Inspector General  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Inspector General Donaldson,

Thank you for your recent testimony in front of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources in which we discussed the Energy Department's compliance with ethics rules. I write to formally request you open an investigation into Secretary Granholm's misleading testimony before the Committee about her financial holdings, as well as her repeated violations of federal ethics rules. I also request you conduct an audit of the Department's compliance with existing ethics laws to determine whether senior officials own shares in companies they regulate.

Secretary Granholm's most recent violation of federal stock trading laws is just the latest in a series of ethics indiscretions. Prior to her false testimony before the Committee, Secretary Granholm had already violated federal stock disclosure laws *nine times*.<sup>1</sup> Then, during her testimony before the Committee on April 20, 2023, Secretary Granholm testified three times, in response to my questions, that she no longer held any stocks. This was not true. At the time, she held stocks in six separate companies.

Instead of being forthright about either her continued stock holdings or her misleading testimony, Secretary Granholm waited until May 18, 2023, to sell the remaining stocks she held. Then, she waited several more weeks to inform the Energy Committee that her testimony to us was untrue.

Secretary Granholm is not the only official at the Energy Department who has traded stocks while in office. As we learned in February of this year, federal employees throughout the Energy Department hold energy-related stocks.<sup>2</sup> I likewise request that, in addition to investigating Secretary Granholm, you conduct an audit of Department of Energy employees to determine whether they are in compliance with ethics rules concerning individual stocks ownership.

Senior officials have no business trading stocks, especially stocks in the industries they regulate. The repeated ethics violations by Energy Department officials undermine the public's trust in our government and the rule of law.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Josh Hawley  
United States Senator

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/20/energy-secretary-jennifer-granholm-violated-stock-disclosure-law-9-times.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wsj.com/articles/hundreds-of-energy-department-officials-hold-stocks-related-to-agencys-work-despite-warnings-73198908>