

SENATOR MICHELLE BENSON
SENATE DISTRICT 31
Deputy Majority Leader
Chair, Health & Human Services Finance & Policy



Senate

State of Minnesota

August 19, 2019

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Deputy Commissioner Chuck Johnson
Minnesota Department of Human Services
540 Cedar Street
St Paul, MN 55155

Deputy Commissioner Johnson:

During the August 13th joint Senate Health and Human Services, and Human Services Reform Committee hearing, I as chair, stated that we would be following up with requested testifiers to seek answers to questions we believe were not sufficiently answered in our hearing. We ask that you please respond to each question, in writing, no later than close of business on Friday, August 23rd.

1. Was there a specific event or an accumulation of events that motivated you to submit a letter of resignation? What was/were those events? And to whom did you submit the letter?
2. What were your specific concerns about the direction of the department?
3. Did you ever have a conversation with Commissioner Lourey about your concern about the direction of the department? And how were your concerns received?
4. Did you ever have a conversation with Governor Walz or his staff about your concerns with the direction of the department? If so, who did you speak with? And how were your concerns received?
5. Do you believe that Commissioner Lourey's vision for the agency differed from Governor Walz's vision? If so, what were the differences?
6. Why did you decide to return to the department? Did anyone specifically ask you to return? If so, who?
7. When was the decision made to appoint Bob Jacobson to serve as interim Inspector General? And how was he selected?
8. How many current FTEs are open in the Office of the Inspector General (OIG)?
9. Who managed the day-to-day operations of the OIG from the time Ms. Ham was put on leave until Mr. Jacobson began?
10. Prior to the investigation into Ms. Ham's conduct, did DHS leadership receive any complaints about her conduct?
11. When was the decision made to reassign Ms. Ham to the Office of General Counsel?

12. Has the number of FTE investigators at the OIG changed over the past year? If so, how much and in what direction?
13. It has come to my attention that open investigator FTEs were being filled with licensing staff, is this true? And if so, why?
14. Have any investigators been reassigned from conducting investigations? If so why and how many?
15. Was there a continuous improvement program in place as of January 1, 2019? And was there one in place as of March 1, 2019?
16. I understand Public Financial Management, Inc. (PFM) was hired to review concerns from CCAP investigators; why was an outside firm hired?
17. I have heard reports that CCAP investigators have not been permitted to use cameras in their investigations any longer; is this true? Or have there been any substantive changes to investigation policy within the last year? What are those changes?

If any answer to the previous questions contains information you don't believe you can legally provide to us, we ask that that information be sent to the Office of the Legislative Auditor for review of confidentiality, and that you include a citation of what specific statute or rule you believe prevents you from sharing that information in your response to us.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michelle Benson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Michelle Benson