

News

# Mismanagement, sinking morale plague energy department security office

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The office that provides security for Energy Secretary Steven Chu and other senior officials in the department is the subject of a scathing letter reporting mismanagement, drinking on the job and a variety of other problems, according to the Washington Free Beacon. (AP Photo)

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Special security agents at the U.S. Department of Energy are quitting in droves as a result of a culture of wasteful spending, dishonest management and lack of needed equipment and authority, according to a protest letter obtained by the Washington Free Beacon.

The letter describes a chaotic situation within DOE's Office of Special Operations, which is responsible for the protection of Energy Secretary Steven Chu and other high-level officials at the department.

"From wasteful spending habits to agents consuming alcohol on the job, the security officers decry a culture of 'mismanagement' and cronyism that has led at least 14 'highly qualified and experienced line agents' to quit their posts in protest over the past several years," the letter said, according to the WFB.

"This negligence has perpetuated a disgusting cycle of promoting unqualified agents to key positions which has lead to an incredibly high attrition rate among line agents, an inappropriately low level of tactical readiness, and ultimately an increased liability and risk to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and special agents," the letter continued, WFB said.

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As a result, OSO agents lack the security equipment they need to do their work and have yet to receive clear guidance on firearms policies they are required to follow, according to the letter.

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The letter also decries special treatment the authors claim the office has been forced to provide to DOE Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman on his international travels.

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The WFB quoted an unnamed congressional source saying "Deputy Secretary Poneman has wasted hundreds of thousands of dollars in taxpayer's money as one of the most traveled administration officials because he thinks he's too good to sit with the 99 percent. Not only does he owe Congress and the administration an answer for this, he owes us our money back."

A DOE spokesman declined to comment, according to WFB. The letter obtained by WFB was delivered to DOE's Inspector-General three weeks ago. [Go here](#) for the complete WFB report.

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