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HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

The Information Commissioner of Canada
30 Victoria Street
Gatineau, Québec
K1A 1H3

March 4th 2015

RE: Requesting an investigation into Ministerial staffer systematically deleting emails

Dear Ms. Legault,

In finding that a Conservative Minister's senior policy advisor at ESDC violated the Conflict of Interest Act, the Conflict of Interest and Ethics Commissioner's recent report titled the "*Brunner Report*" stated:

"Mr. Bonner explained that he could not provide me with any emails related to my examination because he had deleted them, as his usual practice was to delete emails every two weeks."

The deletion of Ministerial records every two weeks is deeply troubling. What is possibly even more troubling is that the disappearance of these emails may have eliminated governmental records of violations of the Conflict of Interest Act and inappropriate relationships between Ministerial staff and lobbyists. The Commissioner's report outlines an all-too cozy relationship between Conservative Ministerial staff and lobbyist insiders who violated section 11 of the Conflict of Interest Act with behaviour that might reasonably be seen to have been given to influence the public office holder in the exercise of an official power, duty or function.

And, I am concerned that these practices spread further than this isolated case. The deletion and lack of retention of records is a disturbing pattern set by this Conservative government. In the PMO scandal involving Conservative Senator Mike Duffy we learned that the emails from the lawyer for the Prime Minister were deleted and then found again. The Canada Revenue Agency recently stated that it has destroyed certain electronic records and disabled logging of these electronic records in the future. I also note that in your pin-to-pin report you found entire departments and ministerial offices failing to retain certain electronic records which in your words:

"has been particularly problematic for our investigations into missing record complaints, which have increased noticeably in the past two years."

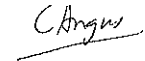
And that the

"Reliance on the goodwill of individual public servants and ministerial staff to identify, save and store records of business value is insufficient to address the risk

that information that should be subject to the Act will be lost without a means of being recovered or retrieved.”

Conservative failures in transparency and accountability have proven your assertions that we can't rely on the goodwill of individuals to protect Canadians access to information, which is a quasi-constitutional right. I ask you to undertake an examination under section 30.(3) of the *Access to Information Act* on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Angus". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Charlie Angus
MP Timmins-James Bay