



Written by [Ralph R. Reiland](#) on June 30, 2015

## “Doesn’t Work and Can’t Be Fired”

Here’s the phony ad copy for a gun that a friend recently emailed to me: “Ruger is coming out with a new pistol in honor of the Senate and House of Representatives. It will be named ‘The Congressman.’ It doesn’t work and can’t be fired.”

That would be funnier if we weren’t the ones picking up the tab for all the government waste and incompetence.

One more explanatory feature could be added to “The Congressman” gun’s description, given Congress’ excessive pay scales and exorbitant benefits: “It doesn’t work, can’t be fired and is way overpriced.”

Unfortunately, that description of ineptitude goes far beyond the Senate and House and extends to most every major federal bureaucracy.

Increasingly, a steady stream of recent reports and studies have unmasked the widespread ineffectiveness, unlawfulness, financial malfeasance and maltreatment in the federal bureaucracies, including the recent discovery that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) repeatedly delivered flawed forensic evidence in U.S. court testimony against American criminal defendants over the past two decades.

More broadly, the National Security Agency (NSA) and a dozen other federal surveillance agencies have established an aggressive, secretive, indiscriminate, and massive system of spying on U.S. citizens, including the specific targeting of American news agencies, policy organizations, reporters and political activists.

The *Washington Post*’s well-documented series “Top Secret America” in 2010 reported that the NSA was at that time collecting and storing approximately 1.7 billion pieces of information every 24 hours.

In May, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) received a failing grade in stopping potential terrorism in the U.S. when Homeland Security agents posing as passengers in dozens of the nation’s busiest airports were able to get guns, fake bombs, and other contraband past TSA agents in 67 out of 70 tests — a 95 percent failure rate.

In an especially disconcerting breach during the tests, a TSA screening officer failed to notice a plastic explosive taped to an undercover agent’s back.

Following this failing performance, the acting head of the TSA, Melvin Carraway, was reassigned to the Office for State and Local Law Enforcement at DHS headquarters, a top-level operation with the job of coordinating federal security programs with local law enforcement agencies.

Mirroring the description of “The Congressman” gun, which doesn’t work, isn’t cheap and can’t be fired, the TSA now has a federally documented 95 percent rate of not working, the agency’s acting head was reassigned, not fired, and the whole boondoggle came with a price tag of over \$100 million per





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year for equipment and training over the past six years.

It's the same story of uselessness and resource squandering at the Federal Election Commission (FEC) and the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

"People think the FEC is dysfunctional," stated Ann Ravel, chairwoman of the FEC, in an interview with the *New York Times*. "It's worse than dysfunctional."

Similarly, Lois Lerner, the IRS official who oversaw tax-exempt groups, admitted in May 2013 that the targeting of conservatives for extra tax scrutiny, specifically aiming at groups with the words "patriot" or "tea party" in their names, during the 2012 presidential election was "absolutely inappropriate."

At one point during questioning at an American Bar Association news conference about whether the number of conservatives being targeted by the IRS was disproportionate, Ms. Lerner exclaimed: "I'm not good at math."

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