

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA ON WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTIONS

Statements of support since November election:

Often the best source of information about waste, fraud, and abuse in government is an existing government employee committed to public integrity and willing to speak out. Such acts of courage and patriotism, which can sometimes save lives and often save taxpayer dollars, should be encouraged rather than stifled. We need to empower federal employees as watchdogs of wrongdoing and partners in performance. Barack Obama will strengthen whistleblower laws to protect federal workers who expose waste, fraud, and abuse of authority in government. Obama will ensure that federal agencies expedite the process for reviewing whistleblower claims and whistleblowers have full access to courts and due process.

--President-elect Obama's transition website.

Those of us who manage the public's dollars will be held to account - to spend wisely, reform bad habits, and do our business in the light of day - because only then can we restore the vital trust between a people and their government,"

--President Obama's inaugural address.

"That means strengthening whistle blower protections for government employees who stepped forward to report wasteful spending."

--President Obama's Weekly Radio Address, April 18, 2009.

During the presidential campaign, President Obama responded to a questionnaire from the National Whistleblower Center. He pledged to do the following:

- Advocate for the passage of a law which would give employees who are illegally terminated for blowing the whistle the same procedural and substantive protections as other discharged employees under laws such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
- Ensure that the individual appointed as Special Counsel, whose primary duty is to protect federal whistleblowers, has expertise in whistleblower law and a firm commitment to protecting whistleblowers.
- Ensure that the statute of limitations applicable to environmental whistleblowers is extended from its current 30-day limit to 180 days.
- Appoint a liaison responsible for interacting with whistleblower advocates in order to better ensure that no employer illegally retaliates against employees who expose violations of law or waste, fraud and abuse.
- Candidate Obama also stated in that questionnaire that he supported protecting government whistleblowers under the framework of the House-passed Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act, H.R. 985.