



Senate Democratic Policy Committee Hearing “The Mistreatment of Iraq Contracting Whistleblowers”

Friday, September 21, 2007
10:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.
226 Dirksen Senate Office Building

Recent reports from auditors suggest that questioned and unsupported costs associated with Iraq reconstruction and military support contracts exceed \$10 billion (or more than one in six dollars audited). Since the start of the war in Iraq, the Democratic Policy Committee has held a series of hearings to examine allegations of waste, fraud and abuse in Iraq contracting. The hearings featured whistleblowers who spoke out about improper bidding practices and contractors who were paid for work that was never done or for work that was performed in an incompetent manner.

Throughout these hearings, a common theme developed: evidence of waste, fraud and abuse uncovered by whistleblowers was being ignored by contractors and the government and, in many cases, the whistleblowers were being mistreated. This hearing will feature witnesses who have been fired, demoted, threatened, intimidated and even detained for speaking the truth about Iraq contracting practices. We will also hear from expert witnesses who will recommend policy reforms to address whistleblower mistreatment and strengthen protections in current law.

Bunnatine Greenhouse: Ms. Greenhouse, the former highest-ranking civilian contracting official at the Army Corps of Engineers, was removed from her position because she “steadfastly resisted and attempted to alter what can be described as casual and clubby contracting practices by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Commanders.”

Barry Godfrey: Mr. Godfrey is a former KBR employee who alleges he was fired after he complained to his superiors about fraudulent overcharges. Mr. Godfrey will testify about the retaliation against him and the Bush Administration’s failure to assist whistleblowers who have alleged waste, fraud, and abuse in Iraq contracting.

Donald Vance: Mr. Vance, a Navy veteran and former employee of Shield Group Security Company, will testify that after reporting that his employer was engaged in illegal gun sales in Iraq, he was detained by the military and subjected to harsh interrogation over a three-month period. Mr. Vance will testify about the treatment he received from Shield Group after he spoke out about evidence of criminal activity.

Robert Isakson: Mr. Isakson, who was a co-plaintiff in a *qui tam* lawsuit against Custer Battles, won the first civil verdict for Iraq reconstruction fraud. The verdict was later overturned by the trial court judge, who ruled that because the Coalition Provisional Authority was not part of the U.S. government, the plaintiffs were not entitled to relief under the *qui tam* statute.

Stephen Kohn: Mr. Kohn, who is the Executive Director of the National Whistleblower Center, is an expert on whistleblower protection law and the author of the first legal treatise on whistleblowing. He currently represents Bunnatine Greenhouse and has represented whistleblowers in the World Trade Center and Oklahoma City bombing cases.

Alan Grayson: Mr. Grayson represents whistleblowers, including Robert Isakson, in *qui tam* lawsuits. He has stated that “the Bush Administration has not litigated a single case against a contractor alleged to have defrauded the U.S. Government in Iraq.” Mr. Grayson will testify about the Administration’s continued failure to prevent and respond to retaliation against Iraq contracting whistleblowers.