

LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, SOUTH CAROLINA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
MICHAEL S. LEE, UTAH
TED CRUZ, TEXAS
JOSH HAWLEY, MISSOURI
THOM TILLIS, NORTH CAROLINA
JOHN KENNEDY, LOUISIANA
MARSHA BLACKBURN, TENNESSEE
ERIC SCHMITT, MISSOURI
KATIE BOYD BRITT, ALABAMA
ASHLEY MOODY, FLORIDA

RICHARD J. DURBIN, ILLINOIS
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
AMY KLOBUCHAR, MINNESOTA
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, DELAWARE
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, CONNECTICUT
MAZIE HIRONO, HAWAII
CORY A. BOOKER, NEW JERSEY
ALEX PADILLA, CALIFORNIA
PETER WELCH, VERMONT
ADAM B. SCHIFF, CALIFORNIA

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

July 24, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

I applaud your efforts to eliminate waste and fraud within the federal government. For decades, my oversight work has exposed bloated government that's broken faith with the American taxpayer. Trillions of dollars of taxpayer money have been lost to waste, fraud and abuse while some within the federal workforce ride the gravy train without actually doing the job for which they're on payroll. As you work to eliminate government waste and fraud, it is necessary to reduce the federal workforce and federal building footprint. However, I write today because it's important that federal agencies aren't using this downsizing initiative as an excuse to retaliate against federal workers who have made protected whistleblower disclosures. If that has happened, this would not only be unlawful but also have a severe chilling effect on federal employees who would otherwise blow the whistle.

Accordingly, I write to you concerning a potential subset of federal employees: federal employees outside of your administration's Reduction in Force initiative who have been fired or otherwise retaliated against because they made legally protected whistleblower disclosures. If a federal employee fits within that category, it's critically important that any individual personnel action and the federal agency's investigation into allegations of reprisal are fair and comply with constitutional and statutory whistleblower protections. As a first step, I strongly encourage your administration to identify the universe of federal employees who were terminated outside of any Reduction in Force initiative and who made legally protected whistleblower disclosures. If federal employees within that universe do, in fact, exist, I further request that their case be individually reviewed to ensure that their termination, or pending termination, was not done because of that protected disclosure.

Whistleblowers are the government's most powerful tool to root out waste, fraud, and abuse. Indeed, our Founding Fathers recognized the significant importance of whistleblowers by enacting the first whistleblower protection legislation in our nation's history in 1778 during the Second Continental Congress. In many circumstances, the misconduct and wrongdoing these patriotic whistleblowers risk their careers, livelihoods, and reputations to bring to light would have never been known to Congress, the federal government, or the American people if they didn't have the guts to come forward. Yet, in many instances, they aren't thanked for coming forward; rather, they're treated like skunks at a picnic.

For example, the brave Internal Revenue Service (IRS) whistleblowers who made legally protected disclosures about misconduct in the handling of the Hunter Biden investigation faced retaliation by the IRS and several attempts to discredit their reputations and ruin their careers. I was glad to see that your administration has done right by the IRS whistleblowers and promoted them, where the Biden administration retaliated against them. The same can be said of the Department of Homeland Security/Customs and Border Protection whistleblowers who faced years of retaliation for blowing the whistle on the government's failure to collect DNA at the border. Your administration gave them their guns, badges, and retirement back. Many other whistleblowers from all over the federal government have done and continue to do the same, putting everything on the line to expose waste, fraud, abuse, and misconduct. These patriotic whistleblowers ought to be rewarded for their courage and sacrifices, not subjected to retaliation.

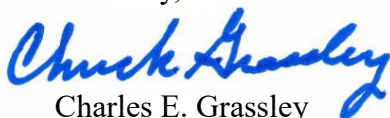
Throughout my career I've committed to ensuring that federal agencies treat whistleblowers fairly and are held accountable for whistleblower retaliation. I coauthored and helped lead the introduction of the original *Whistleblower Protection Act*, which passed Congress unanimously and was signed into law by then-President George H.W. Bush. I also cosponsored and worked to get the *Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012* signed into law, which included language I authored, known as the "anti-gag" provision. This provision makes federal agency nondisclosure policies, forms, and agreements unenforceable unless they contain a provision notifying the employee that the agreement doesn't prohibit them from making whistleblower disclosures to Congress, the Office of Special Counsel, or an Inspector General.

Further, I've championed laws and legislation to expand whistleblower protections to employees of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Intelligence Community. But just because we've passed good laws does not mean we can stop paying attention to the issue. I founded the bipartisan Whistleblower Protection Caucus to encourage my Senate colleagues to further strengthen protections for whistleblowers and to recognize the sacrifices they make for our country. Those who fight waste, fraud, and abuse in government should be lauded for their patriotism. Accordingly, I strongly urge federal agencies to ensure all allegations of whistleblower retaliation are given fair and appropriate review, investigation, and consideration.

And, finally, I kindly remind you of my outstanding request that you hold a Rose Garden ceremony for whistleblowers.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary