

**Statement of Scott J. Bloch
Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs
"Nominations Hearing"
November, 12 2003**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, members of the committee. I am grateful and deeply honored by the nomination of the President of the United States to the Office of Special Counsel. I am equally honored by the introduction from Senator Brownback from my great state of Kansas and his and Senator Roberts' support of my nomination to this honorable position within our federal government. I would like to take this opportunity to thank members of my family for being here, my wife, Catherine, and my daughter, Mary, whose confirmation ceremony I attended last Monday at our Church. Now she is reciprocating. My daughter Beatrice is also with me here. I have five other children who could not be here. My youngest, Anna, celebrates her first birthday today. I'm most disappointed that my oldest son, Michael, who is a Marine and just returned from Iraq, could not be here because he had to report back to duty in California. I honor him for his service to our country. Last but certainly never least, my brother, William Bloch, a plaintiff's employment attorney in Los Angeles, who took the red eye flight to be here with me.

The challenges to the Special Counsel are daunting, but not insurmountable. If you honor me with confirmation to this position, I will do my utmost to carry on the high standards of integrity and efficiency of the Office of Special Counsel if I am confirmed. As I reflect today on my background which has prepared me for this challenge, I am reminded that I grew up with an understanding of the importance of the underdog. My father was a lifelong member of a union, the Writers Guild of America, and he taught me the need for protections for those who are trying to earn a living for their families, who stand as a lone voice against a powerful industry. In my law practice, I learned to champion the small worker and found this work to be the most rewarding of my legal career. That sense of justice and the rule of law inspired me to come to Washington for a career in public service; it continues to inspire me in this new position for which I have been nominated.

In Plato's Republic, Socrates asks whether justice is merely the will of the stronger. Socrates was the gadfly of Athens and may have been the first whistleblower, for he exposed official corruption and called for real justice based on principle, based on each person's due. OSC stands as a gadfly to those who would impose their will on the weaker, who would punish whistleblowers for exposing corruption, waste, and illegality that endanger the public. OSC stands as a guardian of justice and accountability in the executive branch. Responsible government is vital to the functioning of our country. The Founders of our nation set up a system of self-government with checks and balances. From the important protections of whistleblowers and civil and political rights of

employees, to enforcing the Hatch Act, to protecting reemployment rights and veterans preferences for those who are literally putting their lives at risk for our liberty and the liberty of others throughout the world -- I see this office as being part of the system of checks and balances and part of an ethical, self-governing nation.

I look forward to helping protect our country and the important work of nearly 3 million civilian employees in the executive branch. I look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, and the members of this committee, and the professional staff at OSC, to improve the merit system of civil service. I thank you Senators for this opportunity to appear before you and to answer your questions.