



**ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES – Bill Language**  
**AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT**

**TITLE V--FINANCIAL SERVICES AND GENERAL  
GOVERNMENT**

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*[Appropriation for Board; available for transfer to any IG, OMB, GSA, etc. pursuant to section 1524(f):]*

**RECOVERY ACT ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY BOARD**

For necessary expenses of the Recovery Act Accountability and Transparency Board to carry out the provisions of title XV of this Act, \$84,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2011.

**TITLE IX--LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**

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**GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE**

**Salaries and Expenses**

For an additional amount for "Salaries and Expenses" of the Government Accountability Office, \$25,000,000, to remain available until September 30, 2010.

**GENERAL PROVISIONS--THIS TITLE**

**Sec. 901. GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REVIEWS AND REPORTS.**

**(a) REVIEWS AND REPORTS.—**

(1) In General.--The Comptroller General shall conduct bimonthly reviews and prepare reports on such reviews on the use by selected States and localities of funds made available in this Act. Such reports, along with any audits conducted by the Comptroller General of such funds, shall be posted on the Internet and linked to the website established under this Act by the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board.

(2) Redactions.—Any portion of a report or audit under this subsection may be redacted when made publicly available, if that portion would disclose information that is not subject to disclosure under section 552 of title 5, United States Code (commonly known as the Freedom of Information Act).

**(b) EXAMINATION OF RECORDS.--**The Comptroller General may examine any records related to obligations and use by any Federal, State, or local government agency of funds made available in this Act.

## **Sec. 902. ACCESS OF GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE.**

(a) **ACCESS.**—Each contract awarded using funds made available in this Act shall provide that the Comptroller General and his representatives are authorized—

(1) to examine any records of the contractor or any of its subcontractors, or any State or local agency administering such contract, that directly pertain to, and involve transactions relating to, the contract or subcontract; and

(2) to interview any officer or employee of the contractor or any of its subcontractors, or of any State or local government agency administering the contract, regarding such transactions.

(b) **RELATIONSHIP TO EXISTING AUTHORITY.**—Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to limit or restrict in any way any existing authority of the Comptroller General.

# **TITLE XV--ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY**

## **SEC. 1501. DEFINITIONS.**

In this title:

(1) **AGENCY.**--The term ``agency" has the meaning given under section 551 of title 5, United States Code.

(2) **BOARD.**--The term ``Board" means the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board established in section 1521.

(3) **CHAIRPERSON.**--The term ``Chairperson" means the Chairperson of the Board.

(4) **COVERED FUNDS.**--The term ``covered funds" means any funds that are expended or obligated from appropriations made under this Act.

(5) **PANEL.**--The term ``Panel" means the Recovery Independent Advisory Panel established in section 1541.

## **Subtitle A--Transparency and Oversight Requirements**

### **SEC. 1511. CERTIFICATIONS.**

With respect to covered funds made available to State or local governments for infrastructure investments, the Governor, mayor, or other chief executive, as appropriate, shall certify that the infrastructure investment has received the full review and vetting required by law and that the chief executive accepts responsibility that the infrastructure investment is an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars. Such certification shall include a description of the investment, the estimated total cost, and the amount of covered funds to be used, and shall be posted on a website and linked to the website established by section 1526. A State or local agency may not receive infrastructure investment funding from funds made available in this Act unless this certification is made and posted.

## SEC. 1512. REPORTS ON USE OF FUNDS.

(a) *Short Title.*--This section may be cited as the ``Jobs Accountability Act''.

(b) *Definitions.*--In this section:

(1) **RECIPIENT.**--The term ``recipient''--

(A) means any entity that receives recovery funds directly from the Federal Government (including recovery funds received through grant, loan, or contract) other than an individual; and

(B) includes a State that receives recovery funds.

(2) **RECOVERY FUNDS.**--The term ``recovery funds'' means any funds that are made available from appropriations made under this Act.

(c) *Recipient Reports.*--Not later than 10 days after the end of each calendar quarter, each recipient that received recovery funds from a Federal agency shall submit a report to that agency that contains--

(1) the total amount of recovery funds received from that agency;

(2) the amount of recovery funds received that were expended or obligated to projects or activities; and

(3) a detailed list of all projects or activities for which recovery funds were expended or obligated, including--

(A) the name of the project or activity;

(B) a description of the project or activity;

(C) an evaluation of the completion status of the project or activity;

(D) an estimate of the number of jobs created and the number of jobs retained by the project or activity; and

(E) for infrastructure investments made by State and local governments, the purpose, total cost, and rationale of the agency for funding the infrastructure investment with funds made available under this Act, and name of the person to contact at the agency if there are concerns with the infrastructure investment.

(4) Detailed information on any subcontracts or subgrants awarded by the recipient to include the data elements required to comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-282), allowing aggregate reporting on awards below \$25,000 or to individuals, as prescribed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(d) *Agency Reports.*--Not later than 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter, each agency that made recovery funds available to any recipient shall make the information in reports submitted under subsection (c) publicly available by posting the information on a website.

(e) *Other Reports.*--The Congressional Budget Office and the Government Accountability Office shall comment on the information described in subsection (c)(3)(D) for any reports submitted under subsection (c). Such comments shall be due within 45 days after such reports are submitted.

(f) **COMPLIANCE.**--Within 180 days of enactment, as a condition of receipt of funds under this Act, Federal agencies shall require any recipient of such funds to provide the information required under subsection (c).

(g) **GUIDANCE.**--Federal agencies, in coordination with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, shall provide for user-friendly means for recipients of covered funds to meet the requirements of this section.

(h) **REGISTRATION.**--Funding recipients required to report information per subsection (c)(4) must register with the Central Contractor Registration database or complete other registration requirements as determined by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

### **SEC. 1513. REPORTS OF THE COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISERS.**

(a) *In General.*--In consultation with the Director of the Office of Management and Budget and the Secretary of the Treasury, the Chairperson of the Council of Economic Advisers shall submit quarterly reports to the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives that detail the impact of programs funded through covered funds on employment, estimated economic growth, and other key economic indicators.

(b) *Submission of Reports.*--

(1) **FIRST REPORT.**--The first report submitted under subsection (a) shall be submitted not later than 45 days after the end of the first full quarter following the date of enactment of this Act.

(2) **LAST REPORT.**--The last report required to be submitted under subsection (a) shall apply to the quarter in which the Board terminates under section 1530.

### **SEC. 1514. INSPECTOR GENERAL REVIEWS.**

(a) *Reviews.*--Any inspector general of a Federal department or executive agency shall review, as appropriate, any concerns raised by the public about specific investments using funds made available in this Act. Any findings of such reviews not related to an ongoing criminal proceeding shall be relayed immediately to the head of the department or agency concerned. In addition, the findings of such reviews, along with any audits conducted by any inspector general of funds made available in this Act, shall be posted on the inspector general's website and linked to the website established by section 1526, except that portions of reports may be redacted to the extent the portions would disclose information that is protected from public disclosure under sections 552 and 552a of title 5, United States Code.

### **SEC. 1515. ACCESS OF OFFICES OF INSPECTOR GENERAL TO CERTAIN RECORDS AND EMPLOYEES.**

(a) *Access.*--With respect to each contract or grant awarded using covered funds, any representative of an appropriate inspector general appointed under section 3 or 8G of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.), is authorized--

(1) to examine any records of the contractor or grantee, any of its subcontractors or subgrantees, or any State or local agency administering such contract, that pertain to, and involve transactions relating to, the contract, subcontract, grant, or subgrant; and

(2) to interview any officer or employee of the contractor, grantee, subgrantee, or agency regarding such transactions.

(b) *Relationship to Existing Authority.*--Nothing in this section shall be interpreted to limit or restrict in any way any existing authority of an inspector general.

## **Subtitle B--Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board**

### **SEC. 1521. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE RECOVERY ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY BOARD.**

There is established the Recovery Accountability and Transparency Board to coordinate and conduct oversight of covered funds to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

### **SEC. 1522. COMPOSITION OF BOARD.**

(a) *Chairperson.*--

(1) **DESIGNATION OR APPOINTMENT.**--The President shall--

(A) designate the Deputy Director for Management of the Office of Management and Budget to serve as Chairperson of the Board;

(B) designate another Federal officer who was appointed by the President to a position that required the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve as Chairperson of the Board; or

(C) appoint an individual as the Chairperson of the Board, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate.

(2) **COMPENSATION.**--

(A) **DESIGNATION OF FEDERAL OFFICER.**--If the President designates a Federal officer under paragraph (1)(A) or (B) to serve as Chairperson, that Federal officer may not receive additional compensation for services performed as Chairperson.

(B) **APPOINTMENT OF NON-FEDERAL OFFICER.**--If the President appoints an individual as Chairperson under paragraph (1)(C), that individual shall be compensated at the rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code.

(b) *Members.*--The members of the Board shall include--

(1) the Inspectors General of the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Justice, Transportation, Treasury, and the Treasury Inspector General for Tax Administration; and

(2) any other Inspector General as designated by the President from any agency that expends or obligates covered funds.

### **SEC. 1523. FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD.**

(a) *Functions.*--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**--The Board shall coordinate and conduct oversight of covered funds in order to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse.

(2) **SPECIFIC FUNCTIONS.**--The functions of the Board shall include--

(A) reviewing whether the reporting of contracts and grants using covered funds meets applicable standards and specifies the purpose of the contract or grant and measures of performance;

(B) reviewing whether competition requirements applicable to contracts and grants using covered funds have been satisfied;

(C) auditing or reviewing covered funds to determine whether wasteful spending, poor contract or grant management, or other abuses are occurring and referring matters it considers appropriate for investigation to the inspector general for the agency that disbursed the covered funds;

(D) reviewing whether there are sufficient qualified acquisition and grant personnel overseeing covered funds;

(E) reviewing whether personnel whose duties involve acquisitions or grants made with covered funds receive adequate training; and

(F) reviewing whether there are appropriate mechanisms for interagency collaboration relating to covered funds, including coordinating and collaborating to the extent practicable with the Inspectors General Council on Integrity and Efficiency established by the Inspector General Reform Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-409).

(b) *Reports.*--

(1) **FLASH AND OTHER REPORTS.**--The Board shall submit to the President and Congress, including the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives, reports, to be known as "flash reports", on potential management and funding problems that require immediate attention. The Board also shall submit to Congress such other reports as the Board considers appropriate on the use and benefits of funds made available in this Act.

(2) **QUARTERLY REPORTS.**--The Board shall submit quarterly reports to the President and Congress, including the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives, summarizing the findings of the Board and the findings of inspectors general of agencies. The Board may submit additional reports as appropriate.

(3) **ANNUAL REPORTS.**--The Board shall submit annual reports to the President and Congress, including the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives, consolidating applicable quarterly reports on the use of covered funds.

(4) **PUBLIC AVAILABILITY.**--

(A) **IN GENERAL.**--All reports submitted under this subsection shall be made publicly available and posted on the website established by section 1526.

(B) **REDACTIONS.**--Any portion of a report submitted under this subsection may be redacted when made publicly available, if that portion would disclose information that is not subject to disclosure under sections 552 and 552a of title 5, United States Code.

(c) *Recommendations.*--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**--The Board shall make recommendations to agencies on measures to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse relating to covered funds.

(2) **RESPONSIVE REPORTS.**--Not later than 30 days after receipt of a recommendation under paragraph (1), an agency shall submit a report to the President, the congressional committees of jurisdiction, including the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives, and the Board on--

(A) whether the agency agrees or disagrees with the recommendations; and

(B) any actions the agency will take to implement the recommendations.

**SEC. 1524. POWERS OF THE BOARD.**

(a) *In General.*--The Board shall conduct audits and reviews of spending of covered funds and coordinate on such activities with the inspectors general of the relevant agency to avoid duplication and overlap of work.

(b) *Audits and Reviews.*--The Board may--

(1) conduct its own independent audits and reviews relating to covered funds; and

(2) collaborate on audits and reviews relating to covered funds with any inspector general of an agency.

(c) *Authorities.*--

(1) **AUDITS AND REVIEWS.**--In conducting audits and reviews, the Board shall have the authorities provided under section 6 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.). Additionally, the Board may issue subpoenas to compel the testimony of persons who are not Federal officers or employees and may enforce such subpoenas in the same manner as provided for inspector general subpoenas under section 6 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(2) **STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES.**--The Board shall carry out the powers under subsections (a) and (b) in accordance with section 4(b)(1) of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(d) *Public Hearings.*--The Board may hold public hearings and Board personnel may conduct necessary inquiries. The head of each agency shall make all officers and employees of that agency available to provide testimony to the Board and Board personnel. The Board may issue subpoenas to compel the testimony of persons who are not Federal officers or employees at such public hearings. Any such subpoenas may be enforced in the same manner as provided for inspector general subpoenas under section 6 of the Inspector General Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.).

(e) *Contracts.*--The Board may enter into contracts to enable the Board to discharge its duties under this subtitle, including contracts and other arrangements for audits, studies, analyses, and other services with public agencies and with private persons, and make such payments as may be necessary to carry out the duties of the Board.

(f) *Transfer of Funds.*--The Board may transfer funds appropriated to the Board for expenses to support administrative support services and audits, reviews, or other activities related to oversight by the Board of covered funds to any office of inspector general, the Office of Management and Budget, the General Services Administration, and the Panel.

## **SEC. 1525. EMPLOYMENT, PERSONNEL, AND RELATED AUTHORITIES.**

(a) *Employment and Personnel Authorities.*--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**--

(A) **AUTHORITIES.**--Subject to paragraph (2), the Board may exercise the authorities of subsections (b) through (i) of section 3161 of title 5, United States Code (without regard to subsection (a) of that section).

(B) **APPLICATION.**--For purposes of exercising the authorities described under subparagraph (A), the term "Chairperson of the Board" shall be substituted for the term "head of a temporary organization".

(C) **CONSULTATION.**--In exercising the authorities described under subparagraph (A), the Chairperson shall consult with members of the Board.

(2) **EMPLOYMENT AUTHORITIES.**--In exercising the employment authorities under subsection (b) of section 3161 of title 5, United States Code, as provided under paragraph (1) of this subsection--

(A) paragraph (2) of subsection (b) of section 3161 of that title (relating to periods of appointments) shall not apply; and

(B) no period of appointment may exceed the date on which the Board terminates under section 1530.

(b) *Information and Assistance.*--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**--Upon request of the Board for information or assistance from any agency or other entity of the Federal Government, the head of such entity shall, insofar as is practicable and not in contravention of any existing law, furnish such information or assistance to the Board, or an authorized designee.

(2) **REPORT OF REFUSALS.**--Whenever information or assistance requested by the Board is, in the judgment of the Board, unreasonably refused or not provided, the Board shall report the circumstances to the congressional committees of jurisdiction, including the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives, without delay.

(c) *Administrative Support.*--The General Services Administration shall provide the Board with administrative support services, including the provision of office space and facilities.

## **SEC. 1526. BOARD WEBSITE.**

(a) *Establishment.*--The Board shall establish and maintain, no later than 30 days after enactment of this Act, a user-friendly, public-facing website to foster greater accountability and transparency in the use of covered funds.

(b) *Purpose.*--The website established and maintained under subsection (a) shall be a portal or gateway to key information relating to this Act and provide connections to other Government websites with related information.

(c) *Content and Function.*--In establishing the website established and maintained under subsection (a), the Board shall ensure the following:

(1) The website shall provide materials explaining what this Act means for citizens. The materials shall be easy to understand and regularly updated.



(2) The website shall provide accountability information, including findings from audits, inspectors general, and the Government Accountability Office.

(3) The website shall provide data on relevant economic, financial, grant, and contract information in user-friendly visual presentations to enhance public awareness of the use of covered funds.

(4) The website shall provide detailed data on contracts awarded by the Federal Government that expend covered funds, including information about the competitiveness of the contracting process, information about the process that was used for the award of contracts, and for contracts over \$500,000 a summary of the contract.

(5) The website shall include printable reports on covered funds obligated by month to each State and congressional district.

(6) The website shall provide a means for the public to give feedback on the performance of contracts that expend covered funds.

(7) The website shall include detailed information on Federal Government contracts and grants that expend covered funds, to include the data elements required to comply with the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006 (Public Law 109-282), allowing aggregate reporting on awards below \$25,000 or to individuals, as prescribed by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

(8) The website shall provide a link to estimates of the jobs sustained or created by the Act.

(9) The website shall provide a link to information about announcements of grant competitions and solicitations for contracts to be awarded.

(10) The website shall include appropriate links to other government websites with information concerning covered funds, including Federal agency and State websites.

(11) The website shall include a plan from each Federal agency for using funds made available in this Act to the agency.

(12) The website shall provide information on Federal allocations of formula grants and awards of competitive grants using covered funds.

(13) The website shall provide information on Federal allocations of mandatory and other entitlement programs by State, county, or other appropriate geographical unit.

(14) To the extent practical, the website shall provide, organized by the location of the job opportunities involved, links to and information about how to access job opportunities, including, if possible, links to or information about local employment agencies, job banks operated by State workforce agencies, the Department of Labor's CareerOneStop website, State, local and other public agencies receiving Federal funding, and private firms contracted to perform work with Federal funding, in order to direct job seekers to job opportunities created by this Act.

(15) The website shall be enhanced and updated as necessary to carry out the purposes of this subtitle.

(d) *Waiver.*--The Board may exclude posting contractual or other information on the website on a case-by-case basis when necessary to protect national security or to protect information that is not subject to disclosure under sections 552 and 552a of title 5, United States Code.

## **SEC. 1527. INDEPENDENCE OF INSPECTORS GENERAL.**

(a) *Independent Authority.*--Nothing in this subtitle shall affect the independent authority of an inspector general to determine whether to conduct an audit or investigation of covered funds.

(b) *Requests by Board.*--If the Board requests that an inspector general conduct or refrain from conducting an audit or investigation and the inspector general rejects the request in whole or in part, the inspector general shall, not later than 30 days after rejecting the request, submit a report to the Board, the head of the applicable agency, and the congressional committees of jurisdiction, including the Committees on Appropriations of the Senate and House of Representatives. The report shall state the reasons that the inspector general has rejected the request in whole or in part. The inspector general's decision shall be final.

## **SEC. 1528. COORDINATION WITH THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL AND STATE AUDITORS.**

The Board shall coordinate its oversight activities with the Comptroller General of the United States and State auditors.

## **SEC. 1529. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as necessary to carry out this subtitle.

## **SEC. 1530. TERMINATION OF THE BOARD.**

The Board shall terminate on September 30, 2013.

### **Subtitle C--Recovery Independent Advisory Panel**

## **SEC. 1541. ESTABLISHMENT OF RECOVERY INDEPENDENT ADVISORY PANEL.**

(a) *Establishment.*--There is established the Recovery Independent Advisory Panel.

(b) *Membership.*--The Panel shall be composed of 5 members who shall be appointed by the President.

(c) *Qualifications.*--Members shall be appointed on the basis of expertise in economics, public finance, contracting, accounting, or any other relevant field.

(d) *Initial Meeting.*--Not later than 30 days after the date on which all members of the Panel have been appointed, the Panel shall hold its first meeting.

(e) *Meetings.*--The Panel shall meet at the call of the Chairperson of the Panel.

(f) *Quorum.*--A majority of the members of the Panel shall constitute a quorum, but a lesser number of members may hold hearings.

(g) *Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.*--The Panel shall select a Chairperson and Vice Chairperson from among its members.

## **SEC. 1542. DUTIES OF THE PANEL.**

The Panel shall make recommendations to the Board on actions the Board could take to prevent fraud, waste, and abuse relating to covered funds.

### **SEC. 1543. POWERS OF THE PANEL.**

(a) *Hearings.*--The Panel may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Panel considers advisable to carry out this subtitle.

(b) *Information From Federal Agencies.*--The Panel may secure directly from any agency such information as the Panel considers necessary to carry out this subtitle. Upon request of the Chairperson of the Panel, the head of such agency shall furnish such information to the Panel.

(c) *Postal Services.*--The Panel may use the United States mails in the same manner and under the same conditions as agencies of the Federal Government.

(d) *Gifts.*--The Panel may accept, use, and dispose of gifts or donations of services or property.

### **SEC. 1544. PANEL PERSONNEL MATTERS.**

(a) *Compensation of Members.*--Each member of the Panel who is not an officer or employee of the Federal Government shall be compensated at a rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5, United States Code, for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Panel. All members of the Panel who are officers or employees of the United States shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for their services as officers or employees of the United States.

(b) *Travel Expenses.*--The members of the Panel shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, United States Code, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of services for the Panel.

(c) *Staff.*--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**--The Chairperson of the Panel may, without regard to the civil service laws and regulations, appoint and terminate an executive director and such other additional personnel as may be necessary to enable the Panel to perform its duties. The employment of an executive director shall be subject to confirmation by the Panel.

(2) **COMPENSATION.**--The Chairperson of the Panel may fix the compensation of the executive director and other personnel without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of title 5, United States Code, relating to classification of positions and General Schedule pay rates, except that the rate of pay for the executive director and other personnel may not exceed the rate payable for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(3) **PERSONNEL AS FEDERAL EMPLOYEES.**--

(A) **IN GENERAL.**--The executive director and any personnel of the Panel who are employees shall be employees under section 2105 of title 5, United States Code, for purposes of chapters 63, 81, 83, 84, 85, 87, 89, 89A, 89B, and 90 of that title.

(B) **MEMBERS OF PANEL.**--Subparagraph (A) shall not be construed to apply to members of the Panel.

(d) *Detail of Government Employees.*--Any Federal Government employee may be detailed to the Panel without reimbursement, and such detail shall be without interruption or loss of civil service status or privilege.

(e) *Procurement of Temporary and Intermittent Services.*--The Chairperson of the Panel may procure temporary and intermittent services under section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, at rates for individuals which do not exceed the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level V of the Executive Schedule under section 5316 of such title.

(f) *Administrative Support.*--The General Services Administration shall provide the Panel with administrative support services, including the provision of office space and facilities.

#### **SEC. 1545. TERMINATION OF THE PANEL.**

The Panel shall terminate on September 30, 2013.

#### **SEC. 1546. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

There are authorized to be appropriated such sums as necessary to carry out this subtitle.

### **Subtitle D--Additional Accountability and Transparency Requirements**

#### **SEC. 1551. AUTHORITY TO ESTABLISH SEPARATE FUNDING ACCOUNTS.**

Although this Act provides supplemental appropriations for programs, projects, and activities in existing Treasury accounts, to facilitate tracking these funds through Treasury and agency accounting systems, the Secretary of the Treasury shall ensure that all funds appropriated in this Act shall be established in separate Treasury accounts, unless a waiver from this provision is approved by the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

#### **SEC. 1552. SET-ASIDE FOR STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT REPORTING AND RECORDKEEPING.**

Federal agencies receiving funds under this Act, may, after following the notice and comment rulemaking requirements under the Administrative Procedures Act (5 U.S.C. 500), reasonably adjust applicable limits on administrative expenditures for Federal awards to help award recipients defray the costs of data collection requirements initiated pursuant to this Act.

#### **SEC. 1553. PROTECTING STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CONTRACTOR WHISTLEBLOWERS.**

(a) *Prohibition of Reprisals.*--An employee of any non-Federal employer receiving covered funds may not be discharged, demoted, or otherwise discriminated against as a reprisal for disclosing, including a disclosure made in the ordinary course of an employee's duties, to the Board, an inspector general, the Comptroller General, a member of Congress, a State or Federal regulatory or law enforcement agency, a person with supervisory authority over the employee (or such other person working for the employer who has the authority to investigate, discover, or terminate misconduct), a court or grand jury, the head of a Federal agency, or their representatives, information that the employee reasonably believes is evidence of--

(1) gross mismanagement of an agency contract or grant relating to covered funds;

(2) a gross waste of covered funds;

(3) a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety related to the implementation or use of covered funds;

(4) an abuse of authority related to the implementation or use of covered funds; or

(5) a violation of law, rule, or regulation related to an agency contract (including the competition for or negotiation of a contract) or grant, awarded or issued relating to covered funds.

(b) *Investigation of Complaints.*--

(1) **IN GENERAL.**--A person who believes that the person has been subjected to a reprisal prohibited by subsection (a) may submit a complaint regarding the reprisal to the appropriate inspector general. Except as provided under paragraph (3), unless the inspector general determines that the complaint is frivolous, does not relate to covered funds, or another Federal or State judicial or administrative proceeding has previously been invoked to resolve such complaint, the inspector general shall investigate the complaint and, upon completion of such investigation, submit a report of the findings of the investigation to the person, the person's employer, the head of the appropriate agency, and the Board.

(2) **TIME LIMITATIONS FOR ACTIONS.**--

(A) **IN GENERAL.**--Except as provided under subparagraph (B), the inspector general shall, not later than 180 days after receiving a complaint under paragraph (1)--

(i) make a determination that the complaint is frivolous, does not relate to covered funds, or another Federal or State judicial or administrative proceeding has previously been invoked to resolve such complaint; or

(ii) submit a report under paragraph (1).

(B) **EXTENSIONS.**--

(i) **VOLUNTARY EXTENSION AGREED TO BETWEEN INSPECTOR GENERAL AND COMPLAINANT.**--If the inspector general is unable to complete an investigation under this section in time to submit a report within the 180-day period specified under subparagraph (A) and the person submitting the complaint agrees to an extension of time, the inspector general shall submit a report under paragraph (1) within such additional period of time as shall be agreed upon between the inspector general and the person submitting the complaint.

(ii) **EXTENSION GRANTED BY INSPECTOR GENERAL.**--If the inspector general is unable to complete an investigation under this section in time to submit a report within the 180-day period specified under subparagraph (A), the inspector general may extend the period for not more than 180 days without agreeing with the person submitting the complaint to such extension, provided that the inspector general provides a written explanation (subject to the authority to exclude information under paragraph (4)(C)) for the decision, which shall be provided to both the person submitting the complaint and the non-Federal employer.

(iii) **SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT ON EXTENSIONS.**--The inspector general shall include in semi-annual reports to Congress a list of those investigations for which the inspector general received an extension.

(3) **DISCRETION NOT TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS.**--

(A) **IN GENERAL.**--The inspector general may decide not to conduct or continue an investigation under this section upon providing to the person submitting the complaint and the non-Federal employer a written explanation (subject to the authority to exclude information under paragraph (4)(C)) for such decision.

(B) **ASSUMPTION OF RIGHTS TO CIVIL REMEDY.**--Upon receipt of an explanation of a decision not to conduct or continue an investigation under subparagraph (A), the person submitting a complaint shall immediately assume the right to a civil remedy under subsection (c)(3) as if the 210-day period specified under such subsection has already passed.

(C) **SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT.**--The inspector general shall include in semi-annual reports to Congress a list of those investigations the inspector general decided not to conduct or continue under this paragraph.

**(4) ACCESS TO INVESTIGATIVE FILE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL.--**

(A) **IN GENERAL.**--The person alleging a reprisal under this section shall have access to the investigation file of the appropriate inspector general in accordance with section 552a of title 5, United States Code (commonly referred to as the "Privacy Act"). The investigation of the inspector general shall be deemed closed for purposes of disclosure under such section when an employee files an appeal to an agency head or a court of competent jurisdiction.

(B) **CIVIL ACTION.**--In the event the person alleging the reprisal brings suit under subsection (c)(3), the person alleging the reprisal and the non-Federal employer shall have access to the investigative file of the inspector general in accordance with the Privacy Act.

(C) **EXCEPTION.**--The inspector general may exclude from disclosure--

(i) information protected from disclosure by a provision of law; and

(ii) any additional information the inspector general determines disclosure of which would impede a continuing investigation, provided that such information is disclosed once such disclosure would no longer impede such investigation, unless the inspector general determines that disclosure of law enforcement techniques, procedures, or information could reasonably be expected to risk circumvention of the law or disclose the identity of a confidential source.

(5) **PRIVACY OF INFORMATION.**--An inspector general investigating an alleged reprisal under this section may not respond to any inquiry or disclose any information from or about any person alleging such reprisal, except in accordance with the provisions of section 552a of title 5, United States Code, or as required by any other applicable Federal law.

(c) *Remedy and Enforcement Authority.*--

(1) **BURDEN OF PROOF.**--

(A) **DISCLOSURE AS CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN REPRISAL.**--

(i) **IN GENERAL.**--A person alleging a reprisal under this section shall be deemed to have affirmatively established the occurrence of the reprisal if the person demonstrates that a disclosure described in subsection (a) was a contributing factor in the reprisal.

(ii) **USE OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.**--A disclosure may be demonstrated as a contributing factor in a reprisal for purposes of this paragraph by circumstantial evidence, including--

(I) evidence that the official undertaking the reprisal knew of the disclosure; or

(II) evidence that the reprisal occurred within a period of time after the disclosure such that a reasonable person could conclude that the disclosure was a contributing factor in the reprisal.

**(B) OPPORTUNITY FOR REBUTTAL.**--The head of an agency may not find the occurrence of a reprisal with respect to a reprisal that is affirmatively established under subparagraph (A) if the non-Federal employer demonstrates by clear and convincing evidence that the non-Federal employer would have taken the action constituting the reprisal in the absence of the disclosure.

(2) **AGENCY ACTION.**--Not later than 30 days after receiving an inspector general report under subsection (b), the head of the agency concerned shall determine whether there is sufficient basis to conclude that the non-Federal employer has subjected the complainant to a reprisal prohibited by subsection (a) and shall either issue an order denying relief in whole or in part or shall take 1 or more of the following actions:

(A) Order the employer to take affirmative action to abate the reprisal.

(B) Order the employer to reinstate the person to the position that the person held before the reprisal, together with the compensation (including back pay), compensatory damages, employment benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment that would apply to the person in that position if the reprisal had not been taken.

(C) Order the employer to pay the complainant an amount equal to the aggregate amount of all costs and expenses (including attorneys' fees and expert witnesses' fees) that were reasonably incurred by the complainant for, or in connection with, bringing the complaint regarding the reprisal, as determined by the head of the agency or a court of competent jurisdiction.

(3) **CIVIL ACTION.**--If the head of an agency issues an order denying relief in whole or in part under paragraph (1), has not issued an order within 210 days after the submission of a complaint under subsection (b), or in the case of an extension of time under subsection (b)(2)(B)(i), within 30 days after the expiration of the extension of time, or decides under subsection (b)(3) not to investigate or to discontinue an investigation, and there is no showing that such delay or decision is due to the bad faith of the complainant, the complainant shall be deemed to have exhausted all administrative remedies with respect to the complaint, and the complainant may bring a de novo action at law or equity against the employer to seek compensatory damages and other relief available under this section in the appropriate district court of the United States, which shall have jurisdiction over such an action without regard to the amount in controversy. Such an action shall, at the request of either party to the action, be tried by the court with a jury.

(4) **JUDICIAL ENFORCEMENT OF ORDER.**--Whenever a person fails to comply with an order issued under paragraph (2), the head of the agency shall file an action for enforcement of such order in the United States district court for a district in which the reprisal was found to have occurred. In any action brought under this paragraph, the court may grant appropriate relief, including injunctive relief, compensatory and exemplary damages, and attorneys fees and costs.

(5) **JUDICIAL REVIEW.**--Any person adversely affected or aggrieved by an order issued under paragraph (2) may obtain review of the order's conformance with this subsection, and any regulations issued to carry out this section, in the United States court of appeals for a circuit in which the reprisal is alleged in the order to have occurred. No petition seeking such review may be filed more than 60 days after issuance of the order by the head of the agency. Review shall conform to chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code.

*(d) Nonenforceability of Certain Provisions Waiving Rights and Remedies or Requiring Arbitration of Disputes.*--

(1) **WAIVER OF RIGHTS AND REMEDIES.**--Except as provided under paragraph (3), the rights and remedies provided for in this section may not be waived by any agreement, policy, form, or condition of employment, including by any predispute arbitration agreement.

(2) **PREDISPUTE ARBITRATION AGREEMENTS.**--Except as provided under paragraph (3), no predispute arbitration agreement shall be valid or enforceable if it requires arbitration of a dispute arising under this section.

(3) **EXCEPTION FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS.**--Notwithstanding paragraphs (1) and (2), an arbitration provision in a collective bargaining agreement shall be enforceable as to disputes arising under the collective bargaining agreement.

(e) *Requirement to Post Notice of Rights and Remedies.*--Any employer receiving covered funds shall post notice of the rights and remedies provided under this section.

(f) *Rules of Construction.*--

(1) **NO IMPLIED AUTHORITY TO RETALIATE FOR NON-PROTECTED DISCLOSURES.**--Nothing in this section may be construed to authorize the discharge of, demotion of, or discrimination against an employee for a disclosure other than a disclosure protected by subsection (a) or to modify or derogate from a right or remedy otherwise available to the employee.

(2) **RELATIONSHIP TO STATE LAWS.**--Nothing may be construed to preempt, preclude, or limit the protections provided for public or private employees under State whistleblower laws.

(g) *Definitions.*--In this section:

(1) **ABUSE OF AUTHORITY.**--The term "abuse of authority" means an arbitrary and capricious exercise of authority by a contracting official or employee that adversely affects the rights of any person, or that results in personal gain or advantage to the official or employee or to preferred other persons.

(2) **COVERED FUNDS.**--The term "covered funds" means any contract, grant, or other payment received by any non-Federal employer if--

(A) the Federal Government provides any portion of the money or property that is provided, requested, or demanded; and

(B) at least some of the funds are appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act.

(3) **EMPLOYEE.**--The term "employee"--

(A) except as provided under subparagraph (B), means an individual performing services on behalf of an employer; and

(B) does not include any Federal employee or member of the uniformed services (as that term is defined in section 101(a)(5) of title 10, United States Code).

(4) **NON-FEDERAL EMPLOYER.**--The term "non-Federal employer"--

(A) means any employer--



(i) with respect to covered funds--

(I) the contractor, subcontractor, grantee, or recipient, as the case may be, if the contractor, subcontractor, grantee, or recipient is an employer; and

(II) any professional membership organization, certification or other professional body, any agent or licensee of the Federal government, or any person acting directly or indirectly in the interest of an employer receiving covered funds; or

(ii) with respect to covered funds received by a State or local government, the State or local government receiving the funds and any contractor or subcontractor of the State or local government; and

(B) does not mean any department, agency, or other entity of the Federal Government.

(5) **STATE OR LOCAL GOVERNMENT.**--The term "State or local government" means--

(A) the government of each of the several States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or any other territory or possession of the United States; or

(B) the government of any political subdivision of a government listed in subparagraph (A).

**SEC. 1554. SPECIAL CONTRACTING PROVISIONS.**

To the maximum extent possible, contracts funded under this Act shall be awarded as fixed-price contracts through the use of competitive procedures. A summary of any contract awarded with such funds that is not fixed-price and not awarded using competitive procedures shall be posted in a special section of the website established in section 1526.

**TITLE XVI--GENERAL PROVISIONS--THIS ACT**

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**SEC. 1610.** (a) None of the funds appropriated or otherwise made available by this Act, for projects initiated after the effective date of this Act, may be used by an executive agency to enter into any Federal contract unless such contract is entered into in accordance with the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act (41 U.S.C. 253) or chapter 137 of title 10, United States Code, and the Federal Acquisition Regulation, unless such contract is otherwise authorized by statute to be entered into without regard to the above referenced statutes.

(b) All projects to be conducted under the authority of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, the Tribally-Controlled Schools Act, the Sanitation and Facilities Act, the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Assistance Act and the Buy-Indian Act shall be identified by the appropriate Secretary and the appropriate Secretary shall incorporate provisions to ensure that the agreement conforms with the provisions of this Act regarding the timing for use of funds and transparency, oversight, reporting, and accountability, including review by the Inspectors General, the Accountability and Transparency Board, and Government Accountability Office, consistent with the objectives of this Act.