



U.S. Office of Special Counsel
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OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL FILES COMPLAINT FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS DOCTOR FOR HATCH ACT VIOLATIONS

**OSC ALLEGES VA DOCTOR VIOLATED THREE OF THE HATCH ACT'S
PROHIBITIONS – USING ONE'S OFFICIAL AUTHORITY OR INFLUENCE TO
AFFECT THE RESULT OF AN ELECTION; SOLICITING, ACCEPTING OR
RECEIVING POLITICAL CONTRIBUTIONS; AND ENGAGING IN
POLITICAL ACTIVITY WHILE ON DUTY AND/OR IN A FEDERAL BUILDING**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON/July 6, 2009 – On June 29, 2009, the United States Office of Special Counsel (OSC) filed a complaint with the Merit Systems Protection Board requesting that a doctor with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) be removed from his employment for engaging in political activity prohibited by the Hatch Act. An investigation recently conducted by OSC found evidence that the doctor, who works at a VA medical center in Arizona, used his authority and influence as a supervisor for political purposes and solicited political contributions from subordinates and coworkers, all while on duty and in the VA workplace.

OSC's initial investigation into the doctor's activities found evidence that the doctor invited subordinate employees and coworkers to attend a campaign fundraiser for then-Presidential candidate John McCain. The doctor sent a fundraiser invitation to numerous colleagues and subordinates via e-mail while on duty and in the federal workplace. The invitation stated that the cost to attend the McCain campaign fundraiser was a fifty dollar suggested contribution.

During OSC's investigation, of which the doctor was aware, he again engaged in activity that allegedly violated the Hatch Act. This time, the doctor forwarded an e-mail from a current candidate for Arizona State Treasurer to a colleague, requesting political contributions for the candidate's campaign.

Thus, OSC's investigation found evidence that the VA doctor violated three of the Hatch Act's prohibitions -- the prohibition against using one's official authority or influence to affect the result of an election, the prohibition against soliciting, accepting or receiving political contributions, and the prohibition against engaging in political activity while on duty and/or in a federal building. In order to fulfill its mission to safeguard the merit system by protecting federal employees from political coercion, OSC has filed the

complaint with the Merit Systems Protection Board, seeking the doctor's removal from employment for knowingly violating the Hatch Act.

OSC is an independent investigative and prosecutorial agency with jurisdiction to enforce the Hatch Act. OSC is authorized to provide advisory opinions on the Hatch Act, and enforces the provisions of the Act by investigating allegations of violations and filing petitions for disciplinary action such as those described above. For more information please visit our web site at www.osc.gov or call 1-800-872-9855.