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OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL FILES COMPLAINT FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION AGAINST DC AREA EMPLOYEE FOR HATCH ACT VIOLATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON, D.C./August 3, 2009 – On July 29, 2009, the United States Office of Special Counsel (OSC) filed a complaint with the Merit Systems Protection Board requesting that a federal employee in the Washington, D.C., area 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 Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) employee used his authority and influence as a supervisor for political purposes while he was on duty and in the federal workplace.

OSC's investigation found evidence that, prior to Election Day, during a regularly scheduled meeting with his staff, the DIA supervisor told his subordinates that he had never voted for a Democrat in his life but he was going to vote for then-Senator Barack Obama in the upcoming Presidential election. The supervisor also allegedly gave his staff reasons why he was going to vote for then-Senator Obama. The supervisor then allegedly polled his subordinates about their candidate of choice, first asking them to raise their hands if they were going to vote for then-Senator Obama and then asking them to raise their hands if they were going to vote for Senator John McCain. Lastly, the supervisor encouraged all his staff to vote.

In fulfilling its mission to safeguard the merit system by protecting federal employees from political coercion, OSC has filed a complaint with the Merit Systems Protection Board, seeking the DIA supervisor's removal from employment for knowingly violating the Hatch Act. OSC charged in its complaint that the supervisor violated the Hatch Act by using his official authority and influence for the purpose of affecting the result of the 2008 Presidential election and by engaging in political activity while on duty and in a federal room or building.

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 the one described above. For more information visit our web site at www.osc.gov or call 1 (800) 872-9855.