



U.S. Office of Special Counsel
1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 218
Washington, D.C. 20036-4505

Special Counsel Lauds Passage of Stronger Whistleblower Protections

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Adam Miles, (202) 254-3607; amiles@osc.gov

WASHINGTON, D.C. / November 13, 2012 –

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) applauds the U.S. Congress for passing landmark legislation to strengthen protections for federal employees who blow the whistle on waste, fraud, and abuse in government operations. The Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act (WPEA) (S. 743) passed the U.S. Senate earlier this evening, and will be presented to the President for his signature. The House of Representatives passed identical legislation in September. OSC commends the bill's sponsors for their leadership in promoting government accountability.

The WPEA's reforms will provide OSC additional tools to protect federal employees from unlawful retaliation. This legislation will:

- Overturn legal precedents that narrowed protections for government whistleblowers;
- Give whistleblower protections to employees who are not currently covered, including Transportation Security Administration officers;
- Restore the Office of Special Counsel's ability to seek disciplinary actions against supervisors who retaliate;
- Hold agencies accountable for retaliatory investigations, among other improvements.

"Chairman Akaka and the other sponsors of this legislation deserve gratitude for their tireless efforts to pass this good government legislation," said Special Counsel Carolyn Lerner. "OSC stands ready to implement these long-overdue reforms, which will better ensure that no employee is retaliated against for speaking out against government waste or misconduct."

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) is an independent federal investigative and prosecutorial agency. Our basic authorities come from four federal statutes: the Civil Service Reform Act, the Whistleblower Protection Act, the Hatch Act, and the Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). OSC's primary mission is to safeguard the merit system by protecting federal employees and applicants from prohibited personnel practices, especially reprisal for whistleblowing. For more information, please visit our website at www.osc.gov.