

**Irvin McCullough, Deputy Director of Legislation Government  
Accountability Project**

Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the Legislative Branch Appropriations subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about creating a resource vital to Congress' oversight responsibilities: A Whistleblowing Resource Center for the United States Senate.

Representatives from civil society have previously testified before this committee about the need to establish an office to support House staff who work with whistleblowers. We were all glad when the House agreed to establish such an Office. I am here now to implore you to help your colleagues across the street, in the United States Senate.

Whistleblowers are Congress' lifeline to information about federal waste, fraud, abuse, and malfeasance. Before the False Claims Act gave whistleblowers the right to challenge fraud in federal contracts, for example, the Department of Justice recovered less than \$10 million in fraud each year. The Department now recovers an average of \$3-5 billion annually through whistleblowers' use of the False Claims Act alone. From spotlighting ill-equipped armored vehicles overseas to saving millions lost in mismanagement each year, whistleblowers protect our lives and our pocketbooks — but to do so they go against a giant bureaucracy, and they can lose everything in the process.

Congressional intervention provides a lifeline, in turn, for protecting whistleblowers. Through an effective partnership, congressional offices and committees can help shift the pressure from the isolated whistleblower onto a corrupt institution, while receiving information necessary to fulfilling the legislative branch's oversight responsibilities.

The creation of the House Office of the Whistleblower Ombudsman was an important starting point to ensure that whistleblowers have the necessary confidence that their claims will be handled responsibly. It's been an astounding success—members and staff from both sides of the aisle are effusive in their praise. As someone who's historically been brought in to train many committee staffers on best practices when working with whistleblowers, their work's not only given me a nice break: they've accomplished more in their specialized congressional trainings than either I or my colleagues ever could.

Now it's time to repeat this success in the Senate. Not one argument has changed: this Office is as necessary in the Senate as it was in the House. It will be as effective in the Senate as it was in the House. It will be a Godsend to whistleblowers, members, and staffers alike.

We appreciate your thoughtful consideration and look forward to working with you.