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March 26, 2015

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Michael E. Horowitz
Inspector General
U.S. Department of Justice

Dear Inspector General Horowitz:

Yesterday, the 9/11 Review Commission released a report which found that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) must improve its intelligence gathering and analysis operations to match its criminal investigative capabilities in order to meet new threats to national security. On March 4, 2015, you were copied on a letter regarding a FBI whistleblower who made protected disclosures concerning the FBI's Mobile Surveillance Team (MST) program. That whistleblower alleged that the FBI assigns surveillance teams based on personal preference, instead of an objective assessment of where such resources are needed to support MST's intelligence operations.

Since then, three additional whistleblowers have contacted my office with corroborating allegations of nepotism, favoritism, mismanagement, and whistleblower retaliation at MST. All three of these whistleblowers claim that they filed complaints with your office regarding these abuses. One of these whistleblowers alleges that a female FBI employee who had an affair with her Unit Chief was allowed to take flying lessons on the taxpayer's dime even though her career ladder does not include positions that involve flight operation. This whistleblower also alleges that this female employee was permitted to transfer to a coveted MST position in the Richmond office while another employee who had more experience in that capacity was not. Another of these whistleblowers alleges that MST improperly funded its intelligence operations by circumventing a process that requires the Attorney General to approve of an appropriate funding exemption and by using funds reserved for criminal investigative operations instead.

Please investigate each of these allegations and provide a report to the Judiciary Committee. Also, as soon as possible, please contact Jay Lim of my Committee staff at (202) 224-5225 to arrange an interview with each of these whistleblowers. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Charles E. Grassley
Chairman