

CHARLES E. GRASSLEY, IOWA, CHAIRMAN

ORRIN G. HATCH, UTAH
LINDSEY O. GRAHAM, SOUTH CAROLINA
JOHN CORNYN, TEXAS
MICHAEL S. LEE, UTAH
TED CRUZ, TEXAS
BEN SASSE, NEBRASKA
JEFF FLAKE, ARIZONA
MIKE CRAPO, IDAHO
THOM TILLIS, NORTH CAROLINA
JOHN KENNEDY, LOUISIANA

DIANNE FEINSTEIN, CALIFORNIA
PATRICK J. LEAHY, VERMONT
RICHARD J. DURBIN, ILLINOIS
SHELDON WHITEHOUSE, RHODE ISLAND
AMY KLOBUCHAR, MINNESOTA
AL FRANKEN, MINNESOTA
CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, DELAWARE
RICHARD BLUMENTHAL, CONNECTICUT
MAZIE K. HIRONO, HAWAII

United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6275

KOLAN L. DAVIS, *Chief Counsel and Staff Director*
JENNIFER DUCK, *Democratic Staff Director*

February 8, 2017

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

You have said numerous times during your campaign that you want to “drain the swamp” here in Washington. Whistleblowers can help you accomplish that goal. In fact, they’re the ones who have been trying to do just that since our nation’s founding.

Whistleblowers are brave, patriotic people who tell the truth about what is going on in our government. They help us identify waste, fraud, and abuse in the vast and unwieldy federal bureaucracy. When others fight tooth and nail to protect wasteful pet projects, avoid transparency and accountability, and put their own interests ahead of the American people, whistleblowers do exactly the opposite. Whistleblowers speak up about violations of law, rule, and regulation, and about gross mismanagement, abuses of authority, and threats to public health and safety. They often do so at the peril of their own careers, reputations, and even health. They put Americans first.

After eight years under the leadership of what even the press has described as “the least transparent administration in history” that prosecuted more whistleblowers than any other previous administration, the time is ripe to finally recognize the immeasurable value that whistleblowers bring to our democracy. I have asked every president since Ronald Reagan to hold a Rose Garden ceremony honoring whistleblowers. No president has yet done so. I hope you will be the first.

A Rose Garden ceremony honoring whistleblowers, with the President of the United States praising the courage and sacrifice of individuals who have put so much on the line to make sure the taxpayers have a better, more responsible government, would epitomize your call for a new way of doing business in Washington. It would send a loud and clear signal from the very top of government through the very bowels of the unelected bureaucracy that your administration will not tolerate waste, fraud and abuse. It would give confidence to those with knowledge of serious problems to step up and help you make change.

In the Senate, I have worked hard to protect whistleblowers from retaliation through legislation, and I have worked with them to support their efforts to shine a light on wrongdoing. I have witnessed them stand up and do the right thing, when all they received in return was being treated like skunks at a picnic. I hope you will take the opportunity to do things differently, and hold a Rose Garden ceremony honoring these brave and patriotic public servants.

I look forward to working with you to better protect whistleblowers and make sure our government is transparent and accountable to the American people.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chuck Grassley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "C" at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Charles E. Grassley
Chairman