



GSA Administrator

24 March 2008

Senator Charles Grassley  
135 Hart Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Grassley,

I am writing today to keep you fully informed regarding issues at the General Services Administration (GSA) in which you have become directly involved.

Last January, after reading documents posted on an on-line article of the Washington Post, I learned that four senior attorneys assigned to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at GSA had stepped forward as whistleblowers and filed a series of allegations against the Inspector General (IG), including (misappropriation of funds, contract violations, cover-ups, harassment of employees, politically motivated hiring of friends, distortion of testimony, opening of secret files on federal employees, shredding of evidence).

Knowing the high regard you have for whistleblowers that have the courage to come forward and risk retaliation and career advancement, I wanted to bring this issue to your attention. To briefly summarize, these four attorneys working for the GSA IG have filed a complaint against the GSA IG, claiming all sorts of mismanagement, corruption and retaliation against whistleblowers who were assigned to the office of the IG. It is unfortunate that, after six (6) months, despite filing the complaint with the proper authorities, the four attorneys have not been contacted for any kind of investigation concerning their allegations of GSA IG misconduct.

Please be assured that I will continue to work to help these four, courageous whistleblowers who have come forward with documented allegations of mismanagement and potential illegalities by the GSA IG. Perhaps, too, you might recall some of your own concerns about GSA IG impropriety which you identified in your October 17, 2007 letter to the GSA IG, Brian Miller.

In particular, I would also call your attention to issues surrounding a GSA contract with Sun Microsystems. Based upon reports from the GSA IG, Brian Miller, you have been uniquely interested in this contract. As you well remember, I argued and provided testimony to Congress, that it appears that the GSA OIG had exceeded its authorities and improperly pressured contracting officers to desired outcomes. I also warned of the dangers of investigators making premature public announcements of a company's guilt in an unfair attempt to paint a false impression. The four attorneys turned whistleblowers have clearly criticized these kinds of techniques. I would hope you, too, will agree that it is unacceptable for investigators and prosecutors to abuse their broad powers in such a way.

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As I had warned, Sun Microsystems did subsequently take the unusual step of voluntarily cancelling their contract with GSA due to what the Sun Microsystems CEO described as "improper and biased efforts by the GSA IG". Moreover, two other companies (EMC and Canon) soon followed suit. As a result, as I had expected, the unintended consequences of this withdrawal from the Schedules program has now resulted in less competition for government contracts and has created the potential for higher taxpayer costs. We are working now to estimate the exact additional costs to taxpayers where vendors decided to withdraw from the Schedules program.

In the meantime, we need to ensure a hostile workplace does not exist at GSA which might prevent us from attracting and retaining qualified contracting officers. I am committed to this effort and to helping the four whistleblowers.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Lurita Doan', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Lurita Doan  
Administrator