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## **Whistleblower Protections**

**Legislation in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress:** The *Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2009* ([H.R. 1507](#)) would reform the *Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989* (P.L. 101-12) to expand protections for federal government employees who speak out against government abuses of power help to protect against waste and fraud.

Similar legislation has been introduced in the Senate ([S. 372](#)), but the Senate version lacks several important provisions included in the House bill, such as jury trials and coverage of national security employees.

**Committees:** [House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform](#); [House Committee on Homeland Security](#); [Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia](#)

**Current Status:** H.R. 1507 was introduced on March 12, 2009 and referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and House Committee on Homeland Security. During a [hearing](#) on H.R. 1507, an Administration official expressed support for expanding whistleblower protections, but stopped short of supporting H.R. 1507.

On the Senate side, S. 372 was introduced on February 3, 2009 and referred to Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia. The Subcommittee held a [hearing](#) on S. 372, during which Subcommittee members seemed receptive to adding several key provisions to S. 372 that are included in the House bill.

### **The Senate Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2009 (S. 372)**

**Original Sponsors of S. 372:** Sen. Daniel K. Akaka (D-HI)

**Additional Co-Sponsors:**

Sen. Roland Burris (D-IL)

Sen. Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)

Sen. Thomas R. Carper (D-DE)

Sen. Susan M. Collins (R-ME)

Sen. Chuck Grassley (R-IA)

Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-MA)

Sen. Patrick J. Leahy (D-VT)

Sen. Carl Levin (D-MI)

Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman (ID-CT)

Sen. Barbara A Mikulski (D-MD)

Sen. Mark L Pryor (D-AR)

Sen. George V. Voinovich (R-OH)

***If your senator is a co-sponsor of the S. 372:***

- Thank him or her for co-sponsoring the *Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2009*.
- Ask him or her to support first class due process rights, enforced by access to a jury trial (Section 9. Alternative Recourse provision) and full coverage of national security employees (Section 10. National Security Whistleblower Rights), as included in the House bill (H.R. 1507).

***If your senator is a member of the Subcommittee on Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce, and the District of Columbia:***

- Ask him or her to support first class due process rights, enforced by access to a jury trial (Section 9. Alternative Recourse provision) and full coverage of national security employees (Section 10. National Security Whistleblower Rights) as included in the House companion bill (H.R. 1507).

**The House Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2009 (H.R. 1507)**

**Original Sponsors of H.R. 1507:** Representatives Chris Van Hollen (D-MD-8) and Todd Platts (R-PA-19)

**Co-Sponsors:**

Rep. Bruce Braley (D-IA-1)

Rep. Edolphus Towns (D-NY-10)

Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD-7)

Rep. Henry Waxman (D-CA-30)

Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY-14)

***If your House representative is a co-sponsor of the H.R. 1507:***

- Thank him or her for co-sponsoring the *Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2009*.
- Ask what you can do to help support this important piece of legislation.

***If your House representative is a member of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform:***

- Explain that AALL supports the *Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2009* ([H.R. 1507](#)), which would expand protections for government whistleblowers. We support increased protections for government whistleblowers because whistleblowers protect the public's right to know.

**Background:**

By speaking out against waste, fraud, and abuse, whistleblowers help to ensure government accountability and effectiveness. Over the years, whistleblowers have alerted us to problems at their agencies that could severely affect the public's right to know.

Over the past two decades, a series of court decisions in the Federal Circuit Court of Appeals has severely weakened protections for whistleblowers. AALL strongly supports the House version of the *Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2009* (H.R. 1507) to ensure adequate protections for government whistleblowers.