

Statement of Daniel K. Akaka
S. 743, Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act
October 19, 2011

I am pleased to join my good friends Senators Collins, Grassley, Lieberman, and numerous others in this bill to strengthen protections for federal employee whistleblowers.

I have been fighting for whistleblower rights and protections since 2000, along with many of my colleagues. Last Congress, my bill passed both the Senate and the House, but we did not have time to resolve the differences before Congress adjourned. I am committed to getting this done.

This bill is first and foremost a good government measure. If federal whistleblowers are not protected from reprisal for reporting waste, fraud, abuse, and illegal activity, many will not take the risk, and we fail to protect taxpayers, public health, and national security.

Congress strengthened the Whistleblower Protection Act in 1994, but the Merit Systems Protection Board and the Federal Circuit repeatedly interpreted the law in a way that is inconsistent with congressional intent. Since 1994, federal whistleblowers have prevailed on the merits of their claims in the Federal Circuit just three times in hundreds of cases. That is why this bill is necessary.