



# SPEAKING TRUTH TO POWER

We believe the American people have a right to know how their government works. The Trump administration has strapped a muzzle on federal agencies and attacked legitimate whistleblowers. Should you wish to break that silence, we want this to be a resource for the safe and responsible disclosure of information.

**REP. TED LIEU**

**REP. DON BEYER**

## Know your rights:

**FIRST AMENDMENT** provides qualified protection of federal employees' rights to speak as private citizens on matters of public concern. Be aware that this right is balanced against the government's interest as your employer. If the government is able to prove that your speech disrupts the workings of government or the agency's ability to function, you may find yourself on the losing side of a First Amendment retaliation suit. While cases will be decided individually on their own merits, you may be more likely to win if you speak outside the course of your employment--i.e., as a private citizen on your own time.

**WHISTLEBLOWER PROTECTION ENHANCEMENT ACT** protects you from workplace retaliation for disclosing: (1) a violation of a law, rule, or regulation; (2) gross mismanagement; (3) gross waste of funds; (4) an abuse of authority; or (5) a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. Classified materials are not covered under WPEA, nor is information irrelevant to the above categories of malfeasance.

**INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY WHISTLEBLOWER ACT** covers employees or contractors who work in any of the 17 elements of the intelligence community who reasonably believe there has been (1) a violation of law, rule or regulation; (2) gross mismanagement; (3) gross waste of funds; (4) an abuse of authority; or (5) a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety. Members of the intelligence community can safeguard classified information by making protected disclosures to the Intelligence Community Inspector General.

## Know your options:



**Inspector General**

Each federal agency houses an independent Inspector General that is able to legally receive information about fraud, waste, and abuse. Visit [www.ignet.gov](http://www.ignet.gov) for more information about each Agency's IG.



**Press**

Federal agencies have their own policies about whether and how employees can engage with press. Numerous media outlets have their own systems for accepting information, sometimes through encrypted or anonymous means.

For more on federal employee protections:

**[www.oversight.gov/whistleblowers](http://www.oversight.gov/whistleblowers)**