



MAY 08 2013  
United States Department of State  
Washington, D.C. 20520

MAY - 7 2013

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letters of April 26 and May 6 regarding, among other matters, the protections afforded to Department of State employees who choose to come forward and provide information to Congress.

The Department is committed to ensuring that all Department of State employees are aware of, and understand, their rights under federal law and Department regulations to be free from prohibited personnel practices, including retaliation for engaging in protected whistleblower activity. The Department regularly sends notices to all employees advising them of their rights under federal whistleblower laws. The most recent notice was sent on April 24, advising employees that the Department's information non-disclosure policies are to be read consistently with employee rights concerning communications with Congress and other whistleblower protections, consistent with the Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act of 2012. Prior Department-wide notices, sent on May 10, 2012, and April 11, 2011, remind employees of the prohibition against whistleblower retaliation. In addition, information about federal whistleblower protections is posted electronically on the Department's Intranet, and in hard copy in locations throughout the building.

In 2008, the Department also developed an on-line course to fulfill the No FEAR Act requirement that agencies train their employees regarding their rights and remedies under Federal antidiscrimination and whistleblower protection laws. This training is mandatory for U.S. citizen Department of State employees, irrespective of geographic location of assignment. The Department has taken these steps pursuant to its legal obligations and its unwavering commitment to protecting its employees.

The Honorable  
Darrell Issa, Chairman,  
Committee on Oversight  
And Government Affairs,  
House of Representatives.

Finally, the Department of State's Spokesperson has repeatedly affirmed in recent days that the Department does not tolerate or sanction retaliation against whistleblowers.

We hope this information is useful. Please do not hesitate to contact us should you have further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas B. Gibbons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Thomas B. Gibbons  
Acting Assistant Secretary  
Legislative Affairs