



U.S. OFFICE OF SPECIAL COUNSEL

1730 M Street, N.W., Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20036-4505

The Special Counsel

October 20, 2008

President George W. Bush
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

“No one likes the bearer of bad news,” wrote the Greek poet Sophocles. As the head of your executive branch watchdog organization, The Office of Special Counsel (OSC), I have often been required to be the bearer of bad news but also of good results. I write to thank you for the opportunity to serve in this important accountability role, and to announce that I will be resigning as of the end of my five-year term, January 5, 2009.

The OSC protects those who shine the light on illegality or wasteful management – whistleblowers or lamplighters of liberty. These “ordinary heroes” (as we have called them) take their jobs in their hands when they report the misconduct of officials, or disclose unsafe conditions. OSC proudly protects them when they experience reprisal.

I speak proudly of working with brave citizens like Anne Whiteman, Leroy Smith, Bobby Boutris, and Doug Peters--ordinary heroes who put their jobs and well being on the line. We gave these individuals our Public Servant of the Year award to recognize their superior service to our country at great expense to themselves and their families. And there are many other ordinary people who have made a difference with their brave disclosures, too numerous to mention here, though I have written about them to you in the last five years.

During this same time, the OSC has made unprecedented progress in eliminating case backlogs left by previous administrations, backlogs severe enough to have warranted a critical report from the General Accountability Office. Not only have we effectively processed these backlogs, but we have increased our caseload capacity, resulting in a 400 percent increase in substantiated whistleblower disclosures and stepped-up enforcement of job rights for military service members. As the proud father of a United States Marine who has served three tours of duty in Iraq, I am especially pleased that we have protected our service members from discrimination or loss of jobs and benefits simply because they were called to duty in the Reserve or Guard, and of the record twenty-five percent rate of full corrective action OSC obtained for them over the last few years.

The OSC has also recently completed investigations into the Federal Aviation Administration, resulting in much-needed oversight and changes for passenger safety and greater airline safety compliance, as well as significant oversight of our air traffic control system. Our work on defective New Orleans levee pumps prompted a new, independent investigation aimed at preventing another disaster like that of Hurricane Katrina. The OSC continues to investigate alleged violations of the Hatch Act -- the politicization of government functions -- and through our enforcement in this area government employees are more aware of their obligations to avoid bringing partisan politics into the workplace.

As you well know, doing the right thing can result in much criticism and controversy from every side. I am proud to have enforced your stated policy goal of upholding the rule of law, enforcing the law as it was written, not according to fads or special interest pressure. Most of all, I am proud of the professionals who work at OSC and who have made great strides to help government operate to the best of its ability and who continue to advocate for those who have no voice and nowhere else to turn.

It has been an honor to serve in your administration, to embrace the duties you entrusted to me and to carry out the oath I took before Justice Thomas and before God. With honesty, honor, and commitment, I have sought to execute the responsibilities of this office without regard to interest groups, partisan concerns or pressures from outside the law.

Thank you for this honor and opportunity; and I wish you and your family all the blessings of the Almighty and peace in the coming years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott J. Bloch". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "B".

Scott J. Bloch
Special Counsel