



**SPECIAL INSPECTOR GENERAL
FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT ACT**

Quotes from Endorsing Organizations

"At the current time, when failures of leadership are blocking even the most basic common-sense and reasonable good governance reforms, despite tremendous American and global sentiment expressed in unprecedentedly widespread and diverse public protests, the cornerstone of accountability through enhanced law enforcement whistleblower protections could not be more urgent. The fierce urgency of now is here!"

- *Chip Pitts, Advocacy for Principled Action in Government*

"We need ironclad commitment to the rule of law. When police are lawless, what chance do we have? Only when the police are committed to equal justice can our nation long endure. Don't defund the police. Support, train and enforce better police. Build the Police Back Better"

- *James Murtagh, International Association of Whistleblowers (IAW)*

"Whistleblowers are knights in shining armor! They have exposed all manner of malfeasance, official misconduct and fraud as well as helped us as a society evade potential harms to justice, health and our environment. Those who step up to expose violations of the public trust, often at great personal risk, deserve robust protections, safe reporting channels and legal indemnification because of their crucial role in protecting the public.

- *Linda Sherry, Consumer Action*

"RootsAction.org heartily endorses this proposal for a Special Inspector General to probe police abuse on behalf of the public. For decades, experts -- including former law enforcement officials -- have argued that independent oversight is often the only way to pierce 'the Blue Wall of Silence.'"

- *Jeff Cohen, RootsAction*

"Protecting whistleblowers is one of the most important duties for a member of Congress. The Taxpayers Protection Alliance is proud to support Rep. Gerald Connolly's legislation, the Special Inspector General for Law Enforcement Act. We urge all members of Congress, regardless of political party, to support this legislation because whistleblowers are on the front lines of identifying waste, fraud, and abuse. We are very thankful that Rep. Connolly understands and appreciates the importance of whistleblowers."

- *David Williams, Taxpayers Protection Alliance*

"Corporate misconduct takes place behind closed doors. The only way violations of laws meant to protect public safety come to light is when insiders tell the truth. This will happen only when



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whistleblowers know they protected against retaliation. Currently, they know that they are not protected. We must strengthen our whistleblower protection laws to protect the public.”

- *Lewis Malby, National Workrights Institute*

“First responders are also the First Relators protecting the public from harm. Citizens know when they have been robbed or assaulted but that might not be as aware of what to do when their rights have been violated. For more officers to safely come forward from behind the Blue Wall of Silence, we need law enforcement anti-retaliation laws because everyone deserves a safe place to work.”

– *Jacqueline Garrick, Whistleblowers of America*

“In our society and at this time in history, Whistleblowers who have worked inside of intelligence and law enforcement represent a critical means for our population to know what is being done in our name and with our money. Whistleblowers must be appreciated, protected, and thanked for their principled courage.”

-*Louis Wolf, CovertAction Magazine*

“The nation’s law enforcement is facing a crisis in accountability and legitimacy. As the misconduct of police officers makes daily news, law enforcement whistleblowers are subjected to retaliation, and certain gun related crimes are on the rise, the need for independent and credible oversight is essential. Police cannot play their role in helping to create public safety without the trust of the community. The proposed Special Inspector General for Law Enforcement will fill this critical gap. The Special Inspector General will be free from local influences and political pressure. It represents a critical reform to ensure uniform respect for the civil rights of all people.

- *Jonathan M. Smith, Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs*

“Having been actively involved in Federal, State, and Municipal law enforcement dragnets in a leadership roll and having blown-the-whistle on internal racism and misconduct with dangerous retribution by corrupt partners, this bill is an essential first step to protect good law officers everywhere who will expose bad cops anywhere and “Bigots with Badges.”

-*Matthew Fogg, Congress Against Racism and Corruption in Law Enforcement*

“There has never been a more necessary time for law enforcement officers who reveal misconduct to be protected. By rising to uphold our Nation's values, ethical law enforcement officers choose a conflict for which no education, experience, or training can prepare them. They discover their communities breached and their opponent already beyond their gates. They



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confront criminals, intimidators, and tyrants that disguise themselves wearing the same badge they hold so dear. They advance against others who would otherwise seek to abuse the public, control the narrative, investigate themselves or obscure the truth beneath a facade of pursuing the greater good. Afterward, they often find themselves cast out, lost, and silenced permanently from their profession for doing nothing more than what we asked of them: **Policing.**”

-- *Austin S. Handle, Apollo AI*

“This bill will thrust open a safe passage for the "good cop" to hold their peers accountable when reporting misconduct. In doing so, it may very well usher in a new era of policing that can turn the tide against our past mistakes. This legislation has the chance to circumvent and overcome deep-rooted, generational police misconduct by creating a safe distance where good cops can succeed without fear of retaliation.”

- *Austin S. Handle, Lamplighter Project*

“The liberty of doing wrong creates the necessity of doing right. We need to protect the people willing to risk telling the truth and doing the right thing by creating a mandatory mechanism to support their actions. This bill could save lives, block or reduce corruption, abuses and could increase the usefulness of an institution and the citizen's faith in it.”

-*Florin Badita, Corruption Kills*

“Each day, brave and often underpaid and under-resourced men and women are met with hostility and aggression simply because they work in policing. This shared experience cultivates a tightknit and admirable culture of solidarity within the law enforcement community. One unfortunate effect of this culture is that its members are unlikely to report on those who abuse and exploit the system – either by misusing their power over vulnerable, impoverished and often non-white citizens who may be blackmailed, unjustly policed, investigated, prosecuted or unfairly taken to trial, or by mistreating gender, religious or ethnic minorities within their own ranks. Only insiders, notably whistleblowers, can expose the rot. But they won’t do this so long as they cannot make protected disclosures in a protected environment. Being known to have “snitched” on fellow agents or officers entails grave danger, not only for oneself but also for one’s partner and friends within the force. No system can police itself, not even the police. This is why a task force of independent external investigators with full powers to access all evidence it deems pertinent (body cams, dash cams, case files, etc.) must be instituted, if corruption and discrimination within the law enforcement community are ever to be fully and adequately analyzed and addressed. Failing that, police misconduct will continue to have a major corrosive effect on our society, multiplying criminality and allowing crooked officers to rise faster through the ranks.”

-*Thomas Pogge, Academics Stand Against Poverty*



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“Whistleblowers must be enabled to directly report misconduct to an external and wholly independent agency that responds to them quickly, protects their identity, and keeps them informed of progress. They should be protected from civil and criminal suits during the investigation – and also thereafter, to ensure they are not penalized for disclosure. The whistleblower's professional employment must not be affected during or after the investigation. Second quote: As the President of the Affiliation of Christian Engineers and longtime federal agency whistleblower, I know the criminality and other law-breaking that corporate or government agency employers of engineers too frequently expect and rely upon their engineer employees' bystanding, out of fear for their jobs (if not lives in some parts of world). My organization supports the abolition of the Death Penalty in America for reasons including it is barbaric - outlawed by international treaty in many Counties - and because corruption and dysfunction in our law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, offices, and judicial entities result in many false – or forced – convictions and the execution of innocent people by the State. Last month, I participated in a rally on Capitol Hill in DC, led by Abe Bonowitz of Death Penalty Action, calling for the Congress and the President to “abolish and demolish” – abolish the federal death penalty and demolish the “death house” at the federal penitentiary in Indiana. Strengthening whistleblower protection – and the accompanying “mandated reporter” expectation of law enforcement officials to “blow whistles” on wrongdoing they witness in their agencies – advances rule of law in America and should advance abolition of the death penalty in America too.”

-Joseph (Joe) Carson, PE, Affiliation of Christian Engineers

“Whistleblower protections for law enforcement officials, witnesses and victims who report police abuse are absolutely essential if we are ever able to achieve meaningful reform of police practices. NOW firmly believes that if unjust systems are going to change, we must be able to speak truth to power. And those willing to make their voices heard, particularly marginalized women and transwomen who more likely to be victimized by both their assailants as well as the police, must be provided protection under the law.”

– Christian F. Nunes, National Organization for Women

“This important legislation makes it clear that federal law enforcement will be held accountable for their actions through a dedicated inspector general. Empowering this office to investigate allegations of abuse-is critical for the public to begin to trust law enforcement. We applaud Representative Connolly's leadership on this issue and strongly support his legislation.”

- Lisa Rosenberg, Open The Government



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“Strategies for Justice (SFJ) endorsement of vital legal protections for whistleblowers, witnesses, and victims who report police abuses is crucial to the transparency and accountability for our criminal justice system. We have encountered brave men and women who have served and protected their community with honor who lost their livelihood only because they did what was right and courageous. We must encourage our law enforcement professionals to interrupt acts and practices of police misconduct (either through speaking out, whistleblowing, or directly intervening), and as lawmakers and citizens, we must do everything to protect them.”

- *Terry Watson, Strategies for Justice*

“Justice requires holding power accountable. As part of their duty to protect and serve, brave individuals within law enforcement, as well as witnesses and victims of abuse, must be able to speak out in order to highlight harms to the communities and people living in them. Silence only empowers those who want the abuses to be perpetrated. Allowing people to speak out in the public interest will increase trust in law enforcement and ultimately make communities safer.”

- *Delphine Halgand-Mishra, The Signals Network*

“Woodhull advocates for human rights generally, and supports legal protection for whistleblowers who disclose police abuse or civil rights violations.”

- *Ricci Levy, Woodhull Freedom Foundation*

“There cannot be justice if the truth is concealed by fear. Having a legally safe channel for the truth can make the difference for Chauvin verdicts to be the rule rather than the exception.”

- *Reverend Frederick Shaw, President of NAACP Inglewood Branch and former LA County Sheriff*

“This bill is the weathervane whether Congress is serious about enforcing the laws already on the books against police abuse. It also would be a breakthrough for freedom of speech, because its shield is not limited to law enforcement officers. The bill is a breakthrough, because it extends best practice rights against any retaliation to all who blow the whistle against police illegality, including citizen witnesses, victims, NGO’s, corporations or any source of evidence against police illegality.”

- *Tom Devine, Government Accountability Project Legal Director*

“As the former Executive Director of an innocence organization (the Illinois Innocence Project), I write to offer my complete support of the "Special Inspector General for Law Enforcement Act", otherwise known as the Connolly Act. I have been proud to work with many outstanding police officers and officials toward educating young recruits in the area of "Wrongful Conviction



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Avoidance". At the same time, however, innocence casework demonstrates all too well that this type of oversight is absolutely essential to fair, effective, and transparent police work, and the minimizing of convictions of the innocent. Of particular note are the portions of the bill that offer "whistleblower" protections, as it often so difficult to pierce obstacles to full and accurate information in this area. Many thanks to the proponents and supporters of this bill. It is the necessary, and right, thing to do."

- John J. Hanlon, former Executive Director, Illinois Innocence Project

"Whenever a law enforcement whistleblower comes forward to report internal misconduct, they face retaliation by the very people they report, and ultimately pay the unjust price for upholding their oath. This has been going on for far too long. It's time for our leaders to do their part."

-Lieutenant Kamil Warraich, Muslim American Law Enforcement Association (MALEA)

"There is no courage or humility behind the 'Blue Wall of Silence,' created by officers to shield their actions from accountability or oversight," said Lt. Diane Goldstein (Ret.), current executive director of the [Law Enforcement Action Partnership \(LEAP\)](#). "Today, as public perception of policing is rebounding from historic lows, law enforcement should be striving to be held accountable to rebuild relationships with the public and the communities that we serve. Critical to rebuilding this trust is constructing vital legal protections for whistleblowers, witnesses, and victims who report police abuses."

-Denis McLaughlin, [Law Enforcement Action Partnership \(LEAP\)](#)

"Creating a federal inspector general for law enforcement with broad powers—including the power to investigate allegations of systemic racial profiling—is a needed first step to address discriminatory police practices that have targeted the Latinx community in Maricopa County, Suffolk County, and elsewhere. The strong whistleblower protections in this bill will encourage those who see wrongdoing to report it." - Andrew Case, Senior Counsel, LatinoJustice"

-Andrew Case, LatinoJustice PRLDEF

"The provisions in this bill supporting whistleblower protections are an important component of the proposed law, granting protection to courageous people in law enforcement who come forward to expose wrongdoing or corruption. These are protections for those coming forward. But the whistleblower provisions also provide a mechanism to facilitate the free flow of information that enables the public to be able see and hear truthful, unvarnished information and hold people accountable in significant public controversies or tragedies.

-Roy S. Gutterman, Tully Center for Free Speech



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“As the former chair of ACORN in Washington, DC and Northern Virginia and a longtime national grassroots activist I support the Special Inspector General for Law Enforcement Act. This bill supports accountability by protecting whistleblowers in the police departments who report misconduct as well as civilian whistleblowers who report abuse. It helps to ensure safer communities because it helps to foster the belief, especially in our underserved communities that police can be trusted because they will be held accountable for their actions. Fair and transparent justice is good not only for law enforcement but for our nation writ large.

- Marcel Reid, former chair of ACORN8

“Protection for whistleblowers at all levels is a vital safeguard in a fair and just civil society. Democracy 21 supports strong whistleblower protection laws. Democracy 21 also supports the creation of a federal level Special Inspector General to investigate federal, state, or local law enforcement cases of wrongdoing, misconduct, or civil rights abuses. This is needed to stop the conflicts of interest that currently exist when police departments investigate themselves and to ensure that whistleblowers, witnesses, and victims who report law enforcement abuses and misconduct are legally protected.”

-Fred Wertheimer, President, Democracy 21

“The National Employment Lawyers Association supports strong whistleblower protections from retaliation and harassment in any and every form. All workers, in all workplaces, who raise their voices about wrongdoing in the workplace deserve these protections. In the context of law enforcement, robust whistleblower protections serve to protect the officers who dare to speak out when a fellow officer engages in misconduct. Law enforcement officers and the communities they serve deserve safe workplaces and safe streets, free of all forms of bias, threat, and violence. Because of the power wielded by and the trust placed in law enforcement officers, every officer must have the explicit right to refuse to violate the law, be protected from retaliation, and defended against civil and criminal liability. Without these standards, officers cannot effectively maintain their deep commitment to real public safety. Equally important, the enforcement of these standards will protect Black and Brown communities and all communities that have historically been subject to ongoing abuse and misconduct by law enforcement. The oath of “the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth” must be the foundation for legitimate reform in police accountability to protect law enforcement officers and community members who seek justice.”

- Laura Flegel Legislative and Public Policy Director, National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA)



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"In light of the consistent threat that many face in particular people of color by the hands of corrupt police, having an Inspector General in place to vigorously address issues that may arise is a start to dealing with a continuous problem."

- Terra Renee, AAWIC President, Filmmaker & NYC Activist

"It is imperative that we find effective solutions that will address issues within law enforcement. I am in full agreement of appointing the Special Inspector General for Law Enforcement that will oversee any conduct that constitutes misconduct under this ACT and to carry out duties that will provide procedures of reporting for addressing deficiencies, integrity issues and any criminal activity that taints state and local governments of law enforcement."

- Deirdre Gilbert, National Director of the National Medical Malpractice Advocacy Association and a candidate for Governor of Texas