



PROJECT ON GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT

UNCOVER SOMETHING BIG



ABOUT POGO

The Project On Government Oversight is a nonpartisan independent watchdog that champions good government reforms. POGO's investigations into corruption, misconduct, and conflicts of interest achieve a more effective, accountable, open, and ethical federal government.

POGO has earned a solid reputation for uncovering deep-rooted systemic problems which threaten the integrity of the federal government. By working effectively with whistleblowers and other expert insiders, and conducting in-depth investigations, POGO is able to provide accurate and reliable information, findings, and recommendations that are trusted by policymakers, the media, and the public. In fact, policymakers frequently adopt and implement our recommendations to fix the systemic problems originally investigated by POGO. We are further able to advance public policy improvements because we have developed

solid bi-partisan relationships with congressional allies and senior agency officials, and have built strong, active grassroots support around our issues.

In POGO's continuous drive to create positive systemic reform, we not only focus on problems in government policies but also on problems with how government conducts oversight and ensures accountability. If those areas can be strengthened and improved, it is far more likely that the integrity of the government can be ensured. From offering such programs as monthly training sessions for congressional staff in the art of conducting investigations, to working to strengthen both the independence and accountability of the Inspectors General system, POGO is tirelessly working toward a better federal government that works in the interest of the American public.

HOW POGO IS HELPING TO MAKE GOVERNMENT WORK

The task of making the government work better takes more than issuing reports, meeting with policymakers, and working with the media. It also takes building a community of advocates, journalists, partners, and policymakers who care about good government. POGO is helping to build that community through a variety of initiatives. On the Hill, POGO works directly with lawmakers of all stripes to put more accountability into legislation, and helps to develop a broader network of congressional allies through briefings and events. POGO's Congressional Oversight Training Series continues to hone the investigative skills of staffers and to spark discussions about the best way to conduct effective oversight throughout the legislative branch.

Off the Hill, POGO works with policymakers at the federal agencies as well as at the White House to educate them

about our findings and encourage good government reforms. POGO also serves on the steering committees for the Make It Safe Coalition and OpenTheGovernment.org, and on the Congressional Transparency Caucus Advisory Committee. Meanwhile, our Muckrakers' Happy Hours have become a popular gathering spot for good-government wonks of all kinds. Last but not least, POGO continues to cultivate a burgeoning community of online advocates. Through Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and a host of other social networks, POGO has spread the "provoke accountability" message far and wide. We'd love for you to get involved.





PROJECT ON GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT
ANNUAL REPORT 2012



CDI AT POGO:

Straus Military Reform Project Joins the Family

For over thirty years, the Project On Government Oversight has fought to make the government more effective, accountable, open, and ethical. We started out focusing on outrageously out-of-control military spending and eventually expanded to covering systemic fraud, waste, and other corruption in all federal agencies. But we never lost sight of our roots in the defense world, and in 2012 we expanded our capability to hold the Department of Defense accountable.

In May 2012, POGO was proud to welcome Winslow Wheeler and the Straus Military Reform Project at the Center for Defense Information into our family.

CDI and POGO have always shared a passion for exposing hypocrisy and challenging nonsense in the Pentagon, White House, and Congress. Now we will be doing it together, and we couldn't be more pleased!

In 1971, CDI was founded by a truly independent group of retired military officers to analyze military matters, inform decision-makers and the public, and influence policy. CDI became an alternative voice to what founders Admiral Gene LaRocque and Admiral Eugene Carroll believed was a Pentagon that was pushing self-serving data and analysis at decision-makers.

Like POGO, CDI took no money from defense contractors or the government, and they published fact-based research and policy advice that put basic national security needs front and center. What set the organization apart from typical DC think tanks was that it was led by conscientious military officers—retired generals, admirals, colonels, majors, captains—who were *challenging* ill-informed conventional wisdom and self-interested defense contractor disinformation rather than promoting it.

For over four decades, CDI has evolved, as all healthy organizations do. In 2005, the Straus Military Reform Project was created to expand CDI's work in advancing military reform in the Pentagon and

Congress. The Project seeks to achieve the elusive goal of meaningful Pentagon reform by fostering a better-informed public on issues such as the size and nature of the defense budget, a Congress more inclined to perform real oversight, and affordable, effective weapons that service the needs of the men and women in our armed forces rather than those of corporations and a dysfunctional political system. The Project was made possible by a matching grant from Philip A. Straus, Jr., whose family has long supported activities at CDI and who remains a major supporter of the Project's activities.

"I am thrilled that the Straus Military Reform Project has found a new home at POGO. With POGO's long history of fighting for accurate and accessible data in the Pentagon and elsewhere, it's a great fit," said Straus. "Winslow Wheeler and his colleagues are getting the people, technical, and moral support they need from POGO. POGO is a great place to continue the fight for a military that defends our country without tearing it down with immoral and fiscally irresponsible choices," he added.

Look for CDI's and the Straus Military Reform Project's work on a new section of POGO.org and in the continued publication of CDI's periodical, *The Defense Monitor*, as we carry on that important legacy and expand POGO's capability to hold the national security complex accountable.



SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2012

TOXIC WATER AT CAMP LEJEUNE

A Navy and Marine Corps cover-up hid more than three decades of devastating water contamination at Marine Corps base Camp Lejeune in North Carolina—a toxic secret that affected as many as one million Marines, civilians, and family members stationed there. Master Sgt. Jerry Ensminger, a retired Marine who served as a drill sergeant at the base, doggedly worked to uncover the details of this contamination after his nine-year-old daughter died of leukemia. POGO was honored to help Master Sgt. Ensminger, breast-cancer survivor Mike Partain, and the other victims in their quest for truth in this disaster that spanned 1953-1987. We worked with filmmakers to bring attention to the documentary on Camp Lejeune, *Semper Fi: Always Faithful*, and also with bipartisan Members of Congress to pursue documentation of the contamination kept secret by the Navy and Marine Corps. Thousands of pages of documents were finally made public with the help of Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and other allies. That disclosure was followed by another milestone in the fight, as President Obama signed into law legislation, which POGO advocated for, that delivers long-overdue health care to the victims. Yet, unbelievably, the whole truth is still not known and information is still being withheld. We will continue to work to ensure the Department of Veterans Affairs properly implements the new law, to expose the whole truth about what happened at Camp Lejeune, and to hold those responsible accountable.

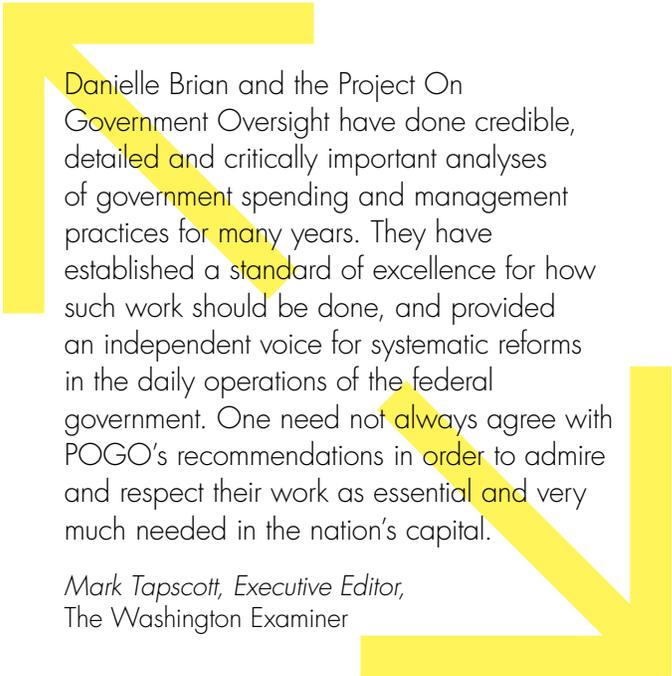
AMERICA'S SHAME: THE CRISIS OF MODERN SLAVERY

Modern slavery is a worldwide crisis, and one that our taxpayer dollars fuel. Billions of dollars in Pentagon and State Department contracts end up in the hands of federal contractors and subcontractors with deplorable labor practices. Foreign nationals, most of whom live in poverty back home, are lured to Iraq or Afghanistan by recruiters who promise a good paycheck and a better life for the workers and their families. Once in country, though, they find a life of forced labor, working for a small fraction of the pay they were promised, living in squalid conditions, being made to pay excessive fees to the recruiter, and being forced to stay

because their travel documents were confiscated to prevent them from leaving the worksite. Those scenarios paint a picture of slavery and exploitation rather than of democracy and freedom.

POGO has been working to end this shameful practice. Last September, we finally saw government action towards a true zero-tolerance policy on such human trafficking: President Obama issued an Executive Order that orders contractors to stop misleading or fraudulent recruiting practices, charging recruiting fees, seizing or destroying employee identification documents, and failing to pay employees' return transportation costs. Congress then passed a law that put the President's order into statute and gave the enforcement some additional teeth. POGO worked with bipartisan congressional champions such as Senators Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Rob Portman (R-OH), and Representatives James Lankford (R-OK) and Gerry Connolly (D-VA) to advance the legislation. POGO also drew much-needed attention to the issue by testifying and reporting on abuses.

POGO is now working to ensure the agencies and contractors properly implement and enforce these tough new anti-trafficking laws. ([continued p. 6](#))



Danielle Brian and the Project On Government Oversight have done credible, detailed and critically important analyses of government spending and management practices for many years. They have established a standard of excellence for how such work should be done, and provided an independent voice for systematic reforms in the daily operations of the federal government. One need not always agree with POGO's recommendations in order to admire and respect their work as essential and very much needed in the nation's capital.

*Mark Tapscott, Executive Editor,
The Washington Examiner*

MORE SELECTED ACCOMPLISHMENTS

I love POGO! As everyone knows, or is learning, if you want to know what's going on in government, you have to follow the money! POGO gives great insights as to where your tax dollars are going, and if they are legitimate expenditures. They really dig out information "we the people" need to know.

Karen Olsen

CHANGING THE PENTAGON SPENDING DEBATE

Since its founding, POGO has fought to reduce wasteful spending at the Pentagon. This past year was no different, and POGO played a pivotal role in changing the debate over the Pentagon's enormous budget. Through our efforts, and those of other like-minded groups and individuals, the previously sacrosanct Pentagon budget was kept on the table of areas that should be considered for cuts. We not only argued that wasteful spending should be curtailed, but also that there were specific cuts that could be made without adversely impacting national security.

Along with our partners at Taxpayers for Common Sense, we released recommendations for saving nearly \$700 billion in taxpayer dollars at the Pentagon. And POGO's investigations into the F-35, Littoral Combat Ship, top-heavy military officer

corps, and high cost of service contracting helped change the national debate about Pentagon spending.

POGO also helped lead a coordinated campaign bringing together groups as diverse as Americans for Taxpayer Reform and Campaign for America's Future—many of which have never joined together publicly before—urging President Obama and Congress to "Spend Less, and Spend Smarter at the Pentagon."

Most importantly, all of this work helped pave the way for victories such as a vote in the House to freeze Pentagon spending and then, as a result of sequestration, the reduction of Pentagon spending by roughly \$500 billion over the next ten years.

POGO will continue to work with our partners to more effectively and accountably meet national security needs and twenty-first century realities.

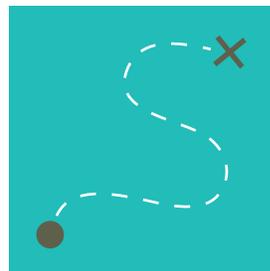
Scores of our members in the working media have investigated government waste, fraud, and abuse with the help of whistleblowers who first turned to POGO. What IRE members like best about POGO is that its *only* agenda is to expose corruption regardless of ideological slant or party affiliation.

James V. Grimaldi, Pulitzer Prize Recipient and Member of the Board of Directors, Investigative Reporters and Editors

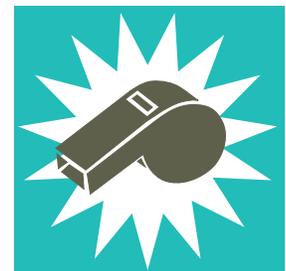
HOW POGO WORKS



Identifies systemic corruption, undue influence, or other misconduct impacting the federal government



Launches independent **investigations** into cases that meet POGO guidelines



Conducts research and works with whistleblowers and other insiders to **investigate tips** and **document findings**

IN 2012 (continued)

IMPROVING PROTECTIONS FOR WHISTLEBLOWERS

Last year we achieved several hard-won victories for whistleblowers and taxpayers. After more than a decade of campaigning for enhanced whistleblower protections for the brave federal workers who safeguard our health, safety, security, and taxpayer dollars, they have finally been enacted. On November 27, 2012, President Obama signed the long-beleaguered Whistleblower Protection Enhancement Act (WPEA) into law. The WPEA closes many loopholes and upgrades protections for federal workers who blow the whistle on waste, fraud, abuse, and illegality. POGO helped lead an unprecedented coalition of supporters from across the ideological spectrum which, along with the efforts of the committed co-sponsors of this legislation and their dedicated staff, made its passage possible.

Then, the President did what Congress did not in the WPEA and gave many national security and intelligence community whistleblowers protections for the first time. Though it doesn't provide sufficient independence, due process, or enforcement, there finally is a framework for free-speech rights and some remedies for these whistleblowers.

POGO also helped get expanded whistleblower protections for federal contractors and grantees. Modeled on the excellent Recovery Act, Senator Claire McCaskill (D-MO) championed strong enhancements to defense contractor

protections and a four-year pilot program for government-wide protections enacted in the defense authorization bill.

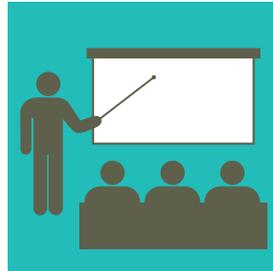
But, while these are remarkable advances for whistleblowers and taxpayers, there also have been many threats initiated by the Obama Administration and some in Congress. We will be vigilant in addressing these, and ensuring the progress made in law this year is properly put into practice.

The Project On Government Oversight is one of those rare organizations that is truly non-partisan. I know that their reports on government waste, fraud and/or abuse will always be fully vetted, factually correct, and developed in the spirit of their mission: to improve the workings of our government. POGO has become not only my go-to source for research and information, but has become a real champion for everyone who wants and needs accurate and informative data.

Kimberly Dalferes, Public Policy Consultant



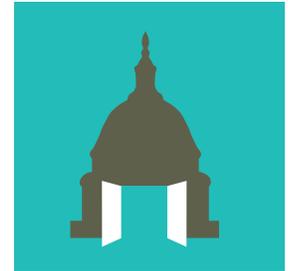
Recommends **common-sense solutions** for positive change



Educates media and the public of findings and **empowers constituents to act**



Works with government officials to **implement systemic policy improvements**



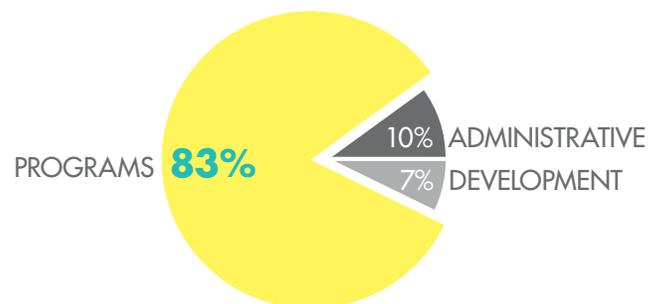
Strives for a more **effective, accountable, open, and ethical** federal government

FOUNDATIONS

In order to preserve our independence, POGO does not accept contributions from the government, unions, corporations, or anyone with a financial stake in the outcomes of our investigations. POGO accepts limited contributions from law firms, capping each at less than 1% of POGO's operating budget. POGO also accepts employee-directed contributions and donor-matching funds from companies.

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- » The Philip & Lynn Straus Foundation, Inc.
- » Wolf Run Foundation, Inc.
- » Anonymous (3)

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES*



REVENUE

Grants	\$ 529,845
Contributions	\$ 351,545
Investment Income	\$ 162,573
Volunteer Services	\$ 42,450
Publications and Other Income	\$ 1,371
Total Revenue	\$ 1,087,784

PROGRAM SERVICES

Government Accountability	\$ 474,941
Defense & National Security Investigations	\$ 306,775
Contract Oversight	\$ 282,186
Nuclear Weapons Security Investigations	\$ 252,621
Straus Military Reform Project	\$ 155,044
Whistleblower Protections	\$ 119,502
Emerging Programs	\$ 103,923
Financial Sector Oversight	\$ 95,644
Public Health Investigations	\$ 78,987
Energy & Natural Resources Investigations	\$ 70,111
Direct & Grassroots Lobbying	\$ 53,748
Inspector General Investigations	\$ 44,447
Congressional Oversight Training	\$ 26,388
Total Program Services	\$ 2,064,317

SUPPORTING SERVICES

Development	\$ 234,255
Administrative	\$ 166,008
Total Supporting Services	\$ 400,263
Total Expenses	\$ 2,464,580
Change in Net Assets	\$ (1,376,796)
Net Assets at Beginning of Year	\$ 3,586,583
Net Assets at End of Year	\$ 2,209,787

*January 1, 2012 – December 31, 2012 / Audited

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- » Anonymous (5)

POGO also extends thanks to the many contributors who gave between \$1 and \$149 in 2012—we deeply appreciate all of our generous supporters. You are truly the foundation of our organization.

* Monthly Donor
† Gave to POGO's Beth Daley Impact Fund

‡ Gave to POGO's Center for Defense Information



SPOTLIGHT ON DONORS

Meet Jim Wagstaffe, a San Francisco lawyer who has been a fan of POGO's for years. He recently decided not only to increase his support but also to include POGO in his will. Here is why Jim gives:

When did you first hear of POGO?

I heard of POGO 14 years ago when I helped with a legal matter and in the course of that engagement fell in love with the POGO mission.

What's your favorite part about POGO's mission?

Ah, like asking me my favorite flavor of ice cream. Pressed, I'd say Cookies and Cream. Oops—as to POGO, it'd be the utter, resolute commitment to transparency in government. As they say, light is a disinfectant.

Why do you give to POGO?

I admire so many aspects of POGO's mission. Yet, the money is because of the people. I contribute to organizations where the people have passion. It's overflowing there from Danielle across the whole group.

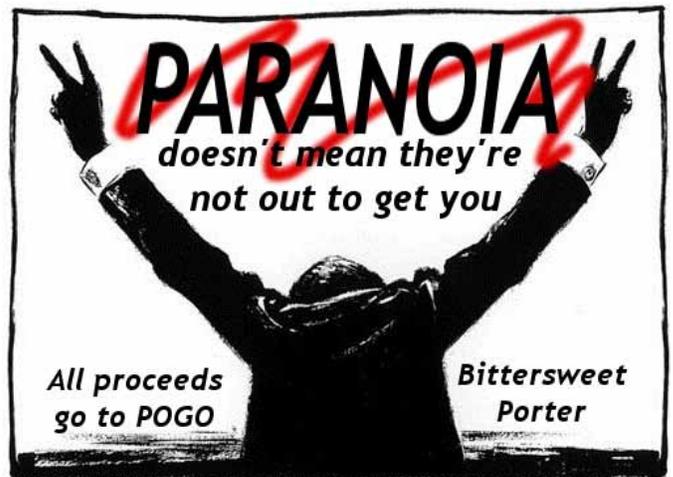
What made you include POGO in your estate plan?

Legacy giving is well named—such a gift can honor integrity and transparency in government for years after I am gone.

A bequest offers a practical way to provide substantial support to an institution that has meant so much to you. For more information, contact Chris Pabon at (202) 347-1122.

MOVIE NIGHT

Chicago-based Laura Lanford and Tom Rammer came up with a fun way of supporting various nonprofits. Each week during the summer of 2012, they hosted a rooftop movie screening, pairing each movie with a different beer. They also matched each movie with a nonprofit they selected from Charity Navigator, the nation's premiere charity evaluator. There's no charge to attend the movies, but sometimes the attendees feel moved to donate to the charities highlighted. In July, POGO was lucky enough to be selected! And the movie Laura and Tom chose to show was right up POGO's alley: *All the President's Men* (along with a small-batch, bitter-sweet porter). What a unique way to give!



Let us know if you have fundraised in a creative way for POGO, and we may feature you in next year's annual report!

POGO PEOPLE

CURRENT STAFF

- » Danielle Brian, Executive Director
- » Scott Amey, General Counsel
- » Christine Anderson, Public Policy Fellow
- » Angela Canterbury, Director of Public Policy
- » Paul Chassy, Ph.D., J.D., Investigator
- » John Crewdson, Senior Investigator
- » Lydia Dennett, Researcher
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- » Mia Steinle, Investigator
- » Peter Stockton, Senior Investigator
- » Winslow T. Wheeler, Director of Center for Defense Information's Straus Military Reform Project
- » Adam Zagorin, Journalist-in-Residence

THANK YOU!

Former staff members Bryan Rahija, Nick Schwellenbach, and Jake Wiens; fellows Suzie Dershowitz and Dana Liebelson; volunteer Pat Bahn; and interns Andrea Acosta, Kemari Alston, Caroline Chevat, Jared Dura, Melanie Joy Kaufman, Anna Meier, Asha Merz, John Parker, Jr., Mary Peng, Jacob Washkurak, and Andrew Wyner.



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- » Morton Mintz
- » Nithi Vivatrat
- » Anne Zill



★★★★
CHARITY NAVIGATOR
 Four Star Charity

The Project On Government Oversight has earned a sixth consecutive 4-star rating from Charity Navigator for its ability to efficiently manage and grow its finances. Only 3% of the charities reviewed by Charity Navigator have received this top rating.

POGO also meets all 20 Charitable Accountability Standards set by the Better Business Bureau, and was rated by GreatNonprofits.org as one of the Top-Rated Non-Profits in 2012.

MISSION STATEMENT

Founded in 1981, the Project On Government Oversight is a nonpartisan independent watchdog that champions good government reforms. POGO's investigations into corruption, misconduct, and conflicts of interest achieve a more effective, accountable, open, and ethical federal government.

POGO

PROJECT ON GOVERNMENT OVERSIGHT

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WHAT PEOPLE ARE
 SAYING ABOUT POGO
 ON GREATNONPROFITS.ORG

... comprehensive oversight of wasteful federal spending, especially huge Defense Department boondoggles. They keep track of the revolving door between defense and government with a detail unmatched by other NGOs. ● POGO makes exhaustive efforts to research and monitor government programs, disseminate their findings to the public in responsible ways, and serve the public as advocates, giving testimony at times in Congress, and serving well, efficiently, and articulately to demonstrate when federal governmental organizations are indeed not meeting their charters. POGO, in a time when journalism, our much-reduced, much-needed fourth estate has been so badly diminished to such horrible effect, serves us in inestimable ways. ●

When an issue arrives that needs action POGO notifies the community and we have an opportunity to assess and make our voices heard. I have received responses from federal politicians and personal in a way uncommon to this type of advocacy. This tells me that the right people take POGO seriously and so do I. ●

Concerned, active and informed citizens are the cornerstone of our democracy. Without the efforts of POGO, we Americans could not pressure Congress and the administration to enact meaningful reforms, such as recent legislation to protect whistleblowers and crack down on human traffickers. They work hard for all of us. ●

I appreciate their diverse investigative reporting as well as their follow through in making sure the government works to our benefit like it is supposed to. ●

POGO focuses a spotlight on government projects that are questionable or just plain foolish. Transparency is essential for an informed electorate and for maintaining democracy. POGO is an essential ingredient in the fabric of American life. I heartily endorse POGO and recommend POGO to and for all Americans. ●

I strongly support POGO because few non-profit organizations are helping to tackle the important issues that POGO bravely tackles. ●

POGO is a lean, mean, exposing machine, respected by democrats and republicans alike for its objectivity and effectiveness. In addition to exposing problems, they develop solutions and follow up to try to correct the problems. I've been a devoted follower since 1998 and am constantly amazed at the quantity and quality of the work they produce with a small staff and budget. POGO has been a strong advocate for whistleblower protections and has helped many whistleblowers, including myself, to develop strategies for dealing with abuses at their workplaces. I don't know how they do it all, but they do it extremely well. We're all fortunate that POGO exists, and is working hard for us every day. It's too bad that more people don't know about POGO and its accomplishments. ●

My first billet in the US Navy was in intelligence, so I am more than familiar with the issues dealt with by POGO and I regard them as among the VERY best investigative journalism groups anywhere. The information they provide is invariably accurate, detailed, cogent, well organized and logically presented. I frequently interact with my Senators and Member of Congress and the command of fact and policy given to me by studying what information POGO provides is invaluable. What I say and write to them gets a serious audience, simply because POGO gives me a command of fact and background. ●

POGO serves as a shining example for all grassroots organizations. ●

POGO provides reliable, sourced information for citizens like me to know what their government is doing or not doing in their name, and with the resources entrusted to government through taxes. We need more organizations with the dedication to accuracy and truth that POGO has shown over the years. ●

POGO is by far the most effective non-profit organization in its arena, in addition to its arena being one of the most important and fundamental to the American spirit of democracy and government accountability. Without a well-organized group such as POGO, the government would be ...

