

NEWS From

CONGRESSWOMAN

CONNIE MORELLA

8th District, Maryland

2228 RAYBURN HOB
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515
(202) 225-5341 www.house.gov/morella

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CONTACT: Jonathan Dean
202-225-5341

Morella Supports Whistleblowers at Paul Revere Forum

Congresswoman Connie Morella this morning joined the Government Accountability Project, the National Whistleblower Center, the Project on Government Oversight, and several congressional colleagues to address the issue of government whistleblowers. At the *Paul Revere Forum*, several individuals discussed their experiences warning the nation of security weaknesses and working with Congress to strengthen national security through better protections for whistleblowers.

"Government employees who have refused to put personal comfort and profit above public safety represent true public service and patriotism," said Congresswoman Morella. "By speaking the truth and refusing to be silenced, they have prevented the spread of sickness and disease, disastrous environmental contamination, and unknown accidents on our highways, railroads and airways. Whistleblowers have saved the American taxpayer billions of dollars, and they have literally saved countless lives."

Congresswoman Morella said, "National Security whistleblowers have recently provided warnings about potential terrorist attacks by sounding the alarm about vulnerabilities that senior managers would prefer to cover up or ignore. The warnings have covered a vast array of official activities: security officers at nuclear laboratories, weapons facilities, waste dumps, and power plants have for years warned that nuclear material is highly vulnerable to terrorist attack; FAA employees have come forward with similar concerns about the effectiveness of security technology as well as passenger screening practices; emergency management officials have exposed dramatic inadequacies of protections for our food supplies and evacuation plans; and Customs employees have pointed to weaknesses in our border security. These problems will become tragedies unless both public and private employees feel they can raise concerns without suffering retaliation."

The Congresswoman added, "Since the tragedies of September 11, blowing the whistle is no longer only about protesting abuses of power, personal corruption, or violations of regulations. Whistleblowing has a new dimension—preserving the freedom to warn."

Congresswoman Morella is the sponsor of H.R. 2588, legislation to strengthen the Whistleblower Protection Act. The congressional intent of the original Whistleblower Protection Act has been partially nullified by certain judicial decisions. H.R. 2588 closes loopholes which have made the original law useless in many circumstances.

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