



**To:** Members of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform

**From:** Andrew Lautz, Director of Federal Policy, National Taxpayers Union

**Date:** June 28, 2021

**Subject:** Taxpayer Considerations for H.R. 2988, the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act; H.R. 1224, the Merit System Protection Board Empowerment Act; and H.R. 2043, the PLUM Act

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## **I. Introduction and Key Taxpayer Considerations**

On behalf of National Taxpayers Union (NTU), the nation's oldest taxpayer advocacy organization, I write to thank the Committee for its consideration of several good-government bills at its June 29 markup, and to offer NTU's positions and views on these bills up for votes at the Committee level.

NTU recommends that Members of the Committee **SUPPORT** H.R. 2988, the Whistleblower Protection Improvement Act (WPIA). In a June 28 [coalition letter](#), NTU and four other taxpayer advocacy or good-government organizations urged Republican Members of Congress to [join Rep. Nancy Mace \(R-SC\)](#) in either supporting WPIA or supporting substantially similar reforms in some alternative piece of legislation. These organizations recognize that whistleblower protections are a cornerstone of government efforts to reduce waste, fraud, misuse, and abuse of taxpayer dollars, and that whistleblowers require more support than ever given the extraordinary scale and scope of federal spending over the past year-plus. Beyond their good service to taxpayers, whistleblowers often call out bureaucrats and politically powerful individuals who have breached the public trust or abused their power. NTU further urges Committee members of both parties to set aside any previous disagreements and focus on the urgent need to clarify, expand, and strengthen whistleblower protections under law. We must pass additional whistleblower protections into law this Congress, whether through WPIA or some similar legislative vehicle.

NTU recommends that Members of the Committee **SUPPORT** H.R. 1224, the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) Empowerment Act. In addition to reauthorizing the MSPB, which has [operated without a quorum](#) for more than four years leading to a severe backlog in whistleblower cases before the Board, this legislation would require MSPB administrative judges to receive training in the Whistleblower Protection Act of 1989. As the Government Accountability Project (GAP) [said](#) of this provision when it was first introduced last year, "judicial training has made a major difference for whistleblower laws to work as intended in other countries." This bill should strengthen whistleblower protections and better enable courageous individuals to step forward in defense of taxpayer dollars.

NTU recommends that Members of the Committee **SUPPORT** H.R. 2043, the Periodically Listing Updates to Management (PLUM) Act. This good-government bill would close key gaps in public information on political appointees throughout the sprawling federal government, enabling individuals and watchdog organizations to know who is making key decisions on behalf of the President that affect taxpayer dollars.

## **II. Contact Information**

Should you have any questions about the recommendations in this memo, please do not hesitate to reach out to Andrew Lautz at [alautz@ntu.org](mailto:alautz@ntu.org).