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OSC Gets Relief for Veteran whose Employment Preference Rights were Violated

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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A veteran whose employment preference rights were violated is receiving a settlement of nearly \$29,000 from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO), under a settlement reached by the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC). The agency suspended the supervisor for fourteen days, seven of them served immediately and seven held in abeyance, subject to acceptable conduct.

The employee was a "10 point veteran" under the system that awards employment preference points to veterans who are disabled or served on active duty during certain periods. Despite this status, the supervisor encouraged the veteran to withdraw his application, telling him he would be eligible for other, attractive openings if he withdrew. The supervisor then selected an acquaintance, who was not a veteran, for the job.

The PTO worked swiftly with OSC to resolve the matter. The PTO has a demonstrated commitment to employing veterans. This past fiscal year, 12.6 percent of its new hires were veterans and nearly 20 percent of current staff is comprised of veterans. The Office of Special Counsel commends the PTO for its cooperation in taking appropriate and timely action to resolve this matter.

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) is an independent federal investigative and prosecutorial agency. Our basic authorities come from four federal statutes: the Civil Service Reform Act, the Whistleblower Protection Act, the Hatch Act, and the Uniformed Services Employment & Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). OSC's primary mission is to safeguard the merit system by protecting federal employees and applicants from prohibited personnel practices, especially reprisal for whistleblowing. The Disclosure Unit serves as a safe channel for allegations of wrongdoing. For more information, please visit our website at www.osc.gov.