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# OSC Obtains Stay in Department of Interior Case

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Today, the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) obtained a 45-day stay from the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) that blocks the termination of an employee of the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) while OSC investigates his claim of whistleblower retaliation. The employee is Jeffrey Missal, a Regional Environmental Officer in Anchorage, Alaska. Mr. Missal filed a retaliation complaint with OSC alleging that he was investigated and ultimately terminated because he disclosed internally and to the DOI Inspector General his belief that DOI violated environmental regulations in the review process for an Arctic oil drilling lease.

OSC may request a stay from the MSPB when OSC has a reasonable belief that the personnel action taken or to be taken is the result of a prohibited personnel practice. Such a request by OSC shall be granted unless, under the facts and circumstances, such a stay would not be appropriate. A grant of a stay request is not a finding on the merits of the claim.

The MSPB's stay order, which contains further details, can be found [here](#).

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*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 and Reemployment Rights Act. OSC's primary mission is to safeguard the merit system by protecting federal employees and applicants from prohibited personnel practices, especially whistleblower retaliation, and to serve as a safe channel for allegations of wrongdoing. For more information, please visit our website at [www.osc.gov](http://www.osc.gov).*