

Statement of Michael Zimmer

More than nine years ago, I reported prosecutorial misconduct favoring a sexual predator district attorney to a federal judge. The FBI retaliated against me by suspending and revoking my security clearance, even though my disclosures had nothing to do with classified information or national security. By taking my clearance, the FBI was able to suspend me and fire me from the FBI. Now, I have officially retired from the FBI and received back pay and benefits that I would have earned if I hadn't blown the whistle. That would never have happened if it hadn't been for Empower Oversight, particularly its founder, Jason Foster, and president, Tristan Leavitt, and U.S. Senator Charles Grassley and his staff, who uncompromisingly fight for whistleblowers. Furthermore, this is a direct result of the Trump Administration Department of Justice and FBI's willingness to review my case and other Empower Oversight clients' cases. Without Attorney General Bondi, Deputy Attorney General Blanche, FBI Director Patel, Associate Deputy Attorney General Colin McDonald and their staffs, particularly Senior Counsel Vance Day, Assistant Director Marshall Yates, and Section Chief Monica Hansen, I would still be mired in litigation where the deck is stacked against whistleblowers, especially FBI employees and security clearance holders. Thank you to all of the people I have named who have relieved me of a nine-year burden seeking justice from the FBI. Their efforts do not affect me alone. Exactly thirteen years ago today, a brave young woman named Danelle Keim McGovern died. She had worked with me for a year to bring a sexual predator district attorney to justice. While remembering her today, her mother and sister were able to celebrate my retirement, because, in a sense, it provides some measure of vindication to Danelle. Thank you all.