

Fighting Fraud, Protecting Taxpayers

Written by Grassley Press
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Leahy, Grassley Roll Out New Anti-Fraud Legislation

Fighting Fraud to Protect Taxpayers Act Will Improve Fraud Enforcement At No Added Cost To Taxpayers

WASHINGTON (Thursday, May 5, 2011) – Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Ranking Member Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) introduced legislation Thursday to bolster law enforcement’s ability to investigate and prosecute fraud. The Fighting Fraud to Protect Taxpayers Act builds on successful efforts by Leahy and Grassley in the last Congress to enact legislation to help the Department of Justice and other agencies fight fraud.

The Fighting Fraud to Protect Taxpayers Act will enhance existing efforts to investigate fraud, including the scourge of mortgage, foreclosure, financial and health care fraud that has victimized thousands of unsuspecting Americans. The legislation will fill key statutory gaps to account for modern types of fraud, strengthening computer fraud and identity theft. The bill also gives the Secret Service the needed authority to more effectively investigate fraud. The Fighting Fraud to Protect Taxpayers Act also increases accountability by requiring the Justice Department to better manage and account for key spending.

“Combating fraud is a vital issue on which Senator Grassley and I have a long track record of working together, and with great success,” **said Leahy**. “In these trying economic times,

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cracking down on the fraud which has harmed so many hardworking Americans is more important than ever. Americans are worried about their budgets at home. We need to protect their investment in their government. Fighting fraud and protecting taxpayer dollars are issues Democrats and Republicans have worked together to address in the past, and in these difficult economic times, we need to continue in that spirit of bipartisanship.”

“Fighting fraud and protecting taxpayer dollars transcends politics and Senator Leahy and I have worked together on this matter for years. One of the most important parts of this new legislation is the transparency and accountability it brings to the Justice Department. Without transparency and accountability the fight to combat fraud often falls short. To ensure that the funds and manpower are being used most effectively, and False Claims Act lawsuits aren’t being settled for pennies on the dollar, the transparency provisions included in this bill are an important way to hold the department accountable for its actions,” **Grassley said.**

The Fighting Fraud to Protect Taxpayers Act will direct a small portion of funds collected by the government in fines and penalties to investigating, prosecuting, and litigating fraud cases. In the last fiscal year alone, the Department of Justice recovered well over \$6 billion through fines and penalties. The Leahy-Grassley legislation calls for approximately \$15 million a year to be reinvested in anti-fraud efforts. After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, some law enforcement resources to investigate and prosecute fraud were redirected to anti-terrorism efforts. The Fighting Fraud to Protect Taxpayers Act will help restore some of these resources.

In 2009, Leahy and Grassley authored the Fraud Enforcement and Recovery Act, which strengthened tools and increased resources available to federal prosecutors to find, prosecute and jail those who commit financial fraud. The bill was among the first signed into law by President Obama in 2009. Leahy and Grassley also worked on key anti-fraud provisions that were included in other reform legislation last year.

The Senate Judiciary Committee dedicated its first hearing of the 112th Congress to examining ways to improve fraud enforcement.

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