



Andy Thorburn's Plan to Protect Whistleblowers: The Harassment Hotline Act

In Congress, Andy Thorburn will push for legislation that protects whistleblowers by providing an outside, independent entity where they can anonymously report company wrongdoing

This law would:

- Mandate that any publicly traded corporation, company or organization with 50 or more employees have a whistleblower hotline for employees so they can call anonymously about financial misbehavior, sexual harassment, or other company wrongdoing.
- An outside and independent entity would then investigate the misconduct, giving employees a safe and anonymous option for reporting company wrongdoing outside of HR departments, which frequently have conflicts of interest.
- The existence of the hotline, its anonymity and the fact that it run by an outside 3rd party firm must be widely circulated to the employees of the organization on a regular basis.

Background:

Since the United Kingdom Parliament passed the Public Interest Disclosure Act in 1998, employees are required to have the ability to contact an anonymous whistleblower hotline so they can report sexual harassment, financial misbehaviors, or other company wrongdoings. The outside entity then can investigate the alleged misconduct, greatly lessening the fear of retaliation for whistleblowing.

Before this legislation, whistleblowers in the United Kingdom had no protection against being dismissed by their employer. Now, Brits can take a case to an employment tribunal if they've been treated unfairly because they've blown the whistle.

Andy has seen the impact of this law firsthand, as his company, Global Benefits Group, is a public company in the UK and had to revise their whistleblower procedure in order to go public. He's seen how effective these types of independent mechanisms can be for whistleblowers, and wants to apply it nationwide in the US.