

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 22, 1999

The Honorable George Pataki
Executive Chamber
State Capital
Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Pataki:

As you may know, in 1986 I sponsored, and President Ronald Reagan signed into law, legislation that reinvigorated the federal False Claims Act. As a result, the False Claims Act has become the Government's most successful tool for fighting fraud in taxpayer-funded programs, returning more than \$4 billion to the Treasury. And estimates predict that those recoveries will increase to \$24 billion by 2006.

The Act is so successful because it employs bedrock principles of fiscal conservatism. Most important, it joins private resources with government resources to expose and halt increasingly sophisticated and complex fraud schemes. This successful public-private partnership is not a new idea, but instead stems back to Abraham Lincoln. In his wisdom, President Lincoln knew that Government works best when it is in partnership with the people it serves.

I am writing to let you know that there is a growing effort among several states to pattern state laws after the federal False Claims Act so that similar successes can be achieved at the state level. It is my understanding that the New York State Bar Association has already endorsed legislation that closely tracks the federal law. This is legislation that, if enacted, sends a strong message to those who are tempted to defraud and abuse the programs funded by New York taxpayers. And it would undoubtedly return significant amounts of taxpayer dollars that would otherwise be lost to such fraud and abuse.

We as Republicans can be proud of our leadership in the fight against fraud, waste and abuse. Our efforts to make sure that precious tax dollars are spent both wisely and honestly are welcomed by citizens who are often skeptical about how well the Government stewards their hard-earned tax dollars. Of course, fighting fraud is as important in the context of state and local programs as it is in federal programs. That is why I am urging you to consider enacting a law in New York that would produce the kind of success that the federal False Claims Act has.

Because the False Claims Act has proven so effective in both deterring and remedying

fraud in taxpayer-funded programs, I personally regard it as one of my greatest legislative achievements. If I or my staff can assist you with efforts to pass a similar law in New York, please feel free to call on me. Or, you can contact Mr. Kris Kolesnik of my staff at (202)224-0454.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chuck".

Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator