

For Immediate Release
Oct 20, 2005

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Justice Department Rejects FBI Proposal to Dismiss FBI Whistleblower Special Agent Robert G. Wright, Jr.

Judicial Watch Client Targeted for Dismissal After Exposing the FBI's
Mishandling of Terrorism Investigations

(Washington, DC) Judicial Watch, the public interest group that investigates and prosecutes government corruption, announced today that the FBI's proposal to fire Special Agent Robert G. Wright, Jr. has been rejected by the Justice Department. Judicial Watch represented Special Agent Wright in his efforts to reverse the FBI's decision to dismiss him in apparent retaliation for his criticism of the FBI's handling of terror investigations. On October 12, 2005, Associate Deputy Attorney General David Margolis decided that Special Agent Wright can continue his career as an FBI agent, rejecting the FBI's proposal to terminate him. The FBI targeted Special Agent Wright for dismissal after he publicly criticized FBI counterterrorism investigations during a press conference held on June 2, 2003.

#2 The Justice Department's decision follows a two-year legal campaign initiated by Judicial Watch on Special Agent Wright's behalf. Judicial Watch filed two lawsuits against the FBI, both of which are still pending. When the FBI threatened Special Agent Wright with disciplinary action and dismissal, Judicial Watch actively represented Wright through the appeals process, ultimately securing an impartial review of the case by the Justice Department.

Special Agent Wright also received assistance from Senator Charles Grassley (R-IA) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) in the matter. The Senators called on former Attorney General John Ashcroft and FBI Director Robert Mueller to investigate the "continued targeting" of Special Agent Wright following his public criticisms. Judicial Watch commends Senator Grassley and Senator Leahy for their efforts on behalf of Special Agent Wright and his whistleblowing activities.

#4 Special Agent Wright is the only FBI agent prior to September 11, 2001 to have seized funds (over \$1.4 million) from U.S. based terrorists using federal civil forfeiture statutes. During his career, he has consistently received excellent job performance evaluations despite his outspoken criticism of the FBI's counter-terrorism efforts. Moreover, Special Agent Wright's motive for speaking out about his concerns over the FBI's handling of terrorism investigations was patriotic and he never profited monetarily or otherwise from voicing his criticism. These considerations played a significant role in the Justice Department's decision to reject the FBI's proposal to dismiss him.

"The FBI retaliated against Special Agent Wright because he had the courage to

speak out about his concerns over the FBI's handling of terrorism investigations. We are pleased that Special Agent Wright can continue doing what he does best to protect all Americans," said JW President Tom Fitton. "And Judicial Watch and Special Agent Wright are grateful to Senators Grassley and Leahy for helping Judicial Watch save Special Agent Wright's 15-year career."

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