



2016/2224(INI)

18.5.2017

DRAFT OPINION

of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety

for the Committee on Legal Affairs

on legitimate measures to protect whistle-blowers acting in the public interest when disclosing the confidential information of companies and public bodies (2016/2224(INI))

Rapporteur: Luke Ming Flanagan

SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety calls on the Committee on Legal Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions into its motion for a resolution:

1. Believes that the lack of adequate whistleblower protection may have a negative impact on the implementation of EU policy on environmental protection, public health and food safety;
2. Is convinced that whistleblowers play a key role in reducing risks to public health, the environment and food safety, and that whistleblower protection will encourage the disclosure of dangers to public health and the environment and improve food safety;
3. Stresses that proper legislation in this area will also help to rebuild trust in scientific expertise;
4. Deplores the fact that too few Member States have put protection for whistleblowers in place and insists that protection is required at EU level to ensure that whistleblowers are afforded equal legal protection in all Member States;
5. Urges the Commission to put forward a proposal for a whistleblower protection directive or any other EU instrument to the same effect;
6. Stresses that environmental crimes, which may result in health and food issues, should fall within the scope of any EU instrument protecting whistleblowers;
7. Highlights the fact that EU whistleblower protection legislation must be comprehensive and fast-acting and must protect the whistleblower and his or her colleagues and relatives from any kind of retaliatory action;
8. Stresses that the definition of a whistleblower should not be narrow or restricted to certain fields, and that whistleblowers in the public and private sectors should be afforded equal protection;
9. Points out that EU legislation should establish a clear procedure for handling disclosures from start to finish to ensure proper follow-through on the actions taken by whistleblowers, from report submission and processing to ensuring whistleblower protection.