

# CANDIDATE OBAMA'S TRIBUTE TO "COURAGE AND PATRIOTISM" OF WHISTLEBLOWERS DISAPPEARS 2 DAYS AFTER FIRST SNOWDEN REVELATIONS

Sunlight Foundation discovers the Obama Administration has removed access to his 2008 campaign promises from the White House website. It suggests one of the promises Obama may want to hide has to do with his support for whistleblowers.

While front splash page for for Change.gov has linked to the main White House website for years, until recently, you could still continue on to see the materials and agenda laid out by the administration. This was a particularly helpful resource for those looking to compare Obama's performance in office against his vision for reform, laid out in detail on Change.gov.

According to the Internet Archive, the last time that content (beyond the splash page) was available was June 8th – last month.

Why the change?

Here's one possibility, from the administration's ethics agenda:

**Protect Whistleblowers:** Often the best source of information about waste, fraud, and abuse in government is an existing government employee committed to public integrity and willing to speak out. Such

acts of courage and patriotism, which can sometimes save lives and often save taxpayer dollars, should be encouraged rather than stifled. We need to empower federal employees as watchdogs of wrongdoing and partners in performance. Barack Obama will strengthen whistleblower laws to protect federal workers who expose waste, fraud, and abuse of authority in government. Obama will ensure that federal agencies expedite the process for reviewing whistleblower claims and whistleblowers have full access to courts and due process.

It may be that Obama's description of the importance of whistleblowers went from being an artifact of his campaign to a political liability.

To be fair, Obama did extend whistleblower protection beyond that of the law last year – though he did it largely in secret.

Of course, that came at the same time as Obama rolled out an Insider Threat Detection system that seems designed to discourage anyone from speaking out ... about anything.

And then there's the issue of all the whistleblower prosecutions.

But if Obama **did** hide his campaign promises specifically to hide this tribute to the "courage and patriotism" of whistleblowers, then I find the timing particularly interesting. June 8 was just two days after the first Edward Snowden release (at a time, moreover, when the Guardian had reported only issues that went to lies James Clapper and Keith Alexander had told, making Snowden's claim to be unable to go

through regular channels quite credible).

Mind you, Obama could be hiding other promises.  
I still think promises about mortgages and homes  
are his biggest failure.