

November 14, 2017

In March, the Office of the Ombudsman celebrated its fifth anniversary of service to the Department of Energy (DOE) and its employees. We congratulate the Office on its continued commitment to assisting the Department's senior leaders, managers, supervisors, and staff in addressing workplace challenges that may distract from mission focus. Through a wide variety of tools and techniques, including conflict coaching, group support, facilitations, training, and organizational consults, the Office continues to aid the Department in its mission delivery.

The Office of the Ombudsman uniquely provides the Federal workforce with a confidential, independent, and neutral option for all DOE Federal employees to informally address *any* workplace issue. Over the last five years, more than 13,000 issues have been raised to the Office by over 2,000 individuals, and from an additional 4,300 Departmental staff during group efforts. The Office has shown itself to be an effective resource for helping individuals and organizations develop innovative resolution strategies, to include referrals to both informal and formal DOE resources. I am also proud to note that the Administrative Conference of the United States benchmarked DOE's Office of the Ombudsman as a model Ombuds office within the Federal government.

Effective employee engagement and transparent flow of information within the organization are key to meeting the challenges of the Department's mission. To achieve this, the Office has successfully worked with employees at all levels, to help raise concerns and share efficient and effective ways to change and sustain improvements to our core operations, business processes, and workplace culture.

Our Department's continued mission success is fundamentally linked to our ability to work together as a team. We must constructively embrace diverse viewpoints, leverage our differences, and handle conflicts effectively. As the Department moves forward in addressing the Nation's most critical and important issues, it is imperative that all voices are heard and that we are deliberate in our actions and decisions. The Office of the Ombudsman is here to increase Federal employee engagement and identify and help leadership resolve the systemic issues that may be preventing us from reaching the full potential of our agency. Working as an empowered and collaborative team, we are better positioned to fulfill our mission.

For more information on how the Office of the Ombudsman may be of assistance to you or your organization, please visit their webpage at <http://www.energy.gov/office-ombudsman>, or contact them at (202) 586-0500 or Ombudsman@hq.doe.gov.

When you are not sure where to take an issue, the Ombudsman is a good place to start.

Secretary Rick Perry