



Court Made Right Decision for Well-Managed Workplaces

Publication

6.19.06

Some advocacy groups contend that the recent 5-4 decision of the Supreme Court in *Garcetti v. Ceballos* means that dishonest politicians may now rest easy, confident in the belief that they can intimidate, discipline or fire any employee who dares to challenge them, even in matters involving public corruption. That is not the correct lesson to be learned from this case. Government employees who speak out as citizens on matters of public concern are still protected under the First Amendment. Whistleblower protections that are not based upon the First Amendment remain in place, and First Amendment challenges are no less available to government employees who speak out in their capacity as citizens rather than just as a part of their official duties. The vast majority of the nation's government professionals care deeply about getting the public's business done efficiently and effectively, and they should be grateful that the court has not made their jobs more difficult.

This article appeared in the June 19, 2006 issue of the *Federal Times*.