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TERESA CHAMBERS RESTORED AS CHIEF OF THE U.S. PARK POLICE — Resounding Legal Victory Appears to Finally Resolve 7-Year Whistleblower Case

Washington, DC — A federal appeals board today issued a definitive ruling restoring Teresa Chambers as Chief of the U.S. Park Police by the end of the month, according to the decision released today by Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), who has represented Chief Chambers. The decision ended a multi-year legal drama that revolved around whether federal civil servants could be fired for telling the truth.

The Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), which hears civil service appeals, found that the evidence against Chief Chambers was weak and the motive of political appointees to retaliate was high. The MSPB ruled that no further proceedings were necessary and issued the following directive:

“Accordingly, we ORDER the agency to cancel the appellant’s December 5, 2003 placement on administrative leave, cancel the appellants July 10, 2004 removal, and restore her effective July 10, 2004....The agency must complete this action no later than 20 days after the date of this decision.”

While it is possible that the Interior Department may appeal this MSPB ruling, that appears unlikely because 1) Chief Chambers has won two consecutive appeals before the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, which would hear any further challenge; and 2) the MSPB rulings on the failure of Interior to meet basic evidentiary burdens would be very difficult to overturn.

“This is a wonderful ruling, not only for Chief Chambers but for thousands who believe that honesty is part of public service,” stated PEER Senior Counsel Paula Dinerstein, who argued the appeals for Chief Chambers. “The wheels of justice turn slowly but eventually they do turn.”

Chief Chambers was put on administrative leave and stripped of her badge and gun in the wake of an interview she gave to the Washington Post in late 2003 concerning how reduced force levels and higher patrol demands were affecting the security mission of the U.S. Park Police, the oldest uniformed constabulary in federal service, established by President Washington. Bush political appointees in the National Park Service and its parent agency, the Interior Department, cooked up a series of administrative charges against Chief Chambers. After leaving her on

administrative leave for several months under orders not to speak to the media, Interior finally decided to terminate Chief Chambers in July 2004.

One by one the charges against her have been dismissed for lack of evidence, with the final four charges being tossed today by the three-member MSPB, with two Obama-appointed members, including the chair. However, the last two years of litigation occurred under the Obama administration which, to the surprise of many, showed no interest in resolving Chief Chambers' or other holdover whistleblower cases.

“We would expect the Interior Department to welcome Chief Chambers back with open arms,” said PEER Executive Director Jeff Ruch. “We hope this case opens the path for other whistleblowers to return to public service.”

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[Read the Chambers decision](#)

[Trace the history of the Chambers case](#)