

HB 493 -- State Employee Whistleblower Disclosures

Sponsor: Bowman

This bill clarifies the whistleblower law as it applies to state employees. An employee may confidentially report alleged improper governmental action to the State Auditor and will only be disciplined for knowingly providing false information. The State Auditor will determine whether to initiate an investigation based on the assertions received and will provide written notice of the nature of the assertions including relevant facts known at the time to the subject of the investigation and the agency head when further investigation is necessary. The State Auditor may issue subpoenas, administer oaths, examine witnesses, and receive evidence. The report of the State Auditor's investigation and findings will be sent to the whistleblower within one year after the initial information was filed.

If the State Auditor determines that there is reasonable cause to believe a state employee has engaged in improper governmental action, the State Auditor will report the activities to the Attorney General or other authority as the State Auditor determines is appropriate. Once appropriate action has been taken to resolve the identified activity, the State Auditor will notify the whistleblower, the agency head, and the subject of the investigation.

The State Employee Whistlerblower Fund is created to fund the whistleblower program.

The provisions of the bill will expire six years from the effective date.