Banking and Finance Law Daily Wrap Up, BANK SECRECY ACT—Senators ask Treasury, FinCEN to finalize whistleblower rules, (Feb. 4, 2026)

Banking and Finance Law Daily Wrap Up

Click to open document in a browser

By Colleen M. Svelnis, J.D.

Congress created the whistleblower program over five years ago. Yet, FinCEN has not finalized regulations that will make the program fully operational.

Senators Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and John Fetterman (D-Pa.) have sent a letter to Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent and Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCEN) Director Andrea Gacki, urging them to implement the Grassley-authored Anti-Money Laundering Whistleblower Improvement Act. The legislators write that although Congress created the whistleblower program over five years ago, FinCEN has not finalized regulations that will make the program fully operational or even created a dedicated webpage for whistleblowers to learn about the program or submit tips.

In the letter the lawmakers urge the agency heads to finalize rules implementing the whistleblower program under the Anti-Money Laundering Whistleblower Improvement Act, writing that they agree with Director Gacki's May 2024 statement that the whistleblower program "holds tremendous potential as an enforcement force-multiplier" and is a vital tool to "increase enforcement."

Congress created the whistleblower program on a bipartisan basis in 2020 and strengthened it in 2022. The Senators stress that an effective FinCEN whistleblower program "is a critical tool for America's on-going fight against terrorists, drug-traffickers, and sanctioned state actors who are threats to our national security." The legislators state that FinCEN has not yet finalized regulations even though FinCEN's whistleblower program has already received hundreds of tips that have helped law enforcement.

Anti-Money Laundering Whistleblower Improvement Act. The law creates FinCEN's whistleblower program to fight money laundering, terror-financing and sanctions evasion. "An effective FinCEN whistleblower program is a critical tool for America's on-going fight against terrorists, drug-traffickers, and sanctioned state actors who are threats to our national security.

Because the program's rules have yet to be finalized, FinCEN has not paid out any awards to whistleblowers. Grassley and Fetterman are urging swift implementation of final regulations and prompt payment of awards to make the whistleblower program effective.

Whistleblowers are apparently unable to receive awards until the program rules have been finalized even though FinCEN has publicly acknowledged it already established its Financial Integrity Fund to pay out awards. "It is imperative that FinCEN finalize its rules and expeditiously pay out awards to incentivize future whistleblowers who put their livelihoods and often lives on the line to help law enforcement find and stop the flow of illicit funds to criminal cartels, terrorists, and sanctioned state actors," the Senators write.

The Senators point out that America's enemies continue to find new and innovative ways to skirt the laws to launder money, fund terrorism, and evade sanctions.

Art Market Integrity Act. In 2025, Grassley and Fetterman also introduced the Art Market Integrity Act, which requires art dealers and auction houses to comply with existing anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing regulations. That bill would close a loophole that allows illicit funds to flow through the over $25 billion domestic art market.

LegislativeActivity: BankSecrecyAct CrimesOffenses OversightInvestigations

© 2026 CCH Incorporated and its affiliates and licensors.
All rights reserved.