

Minnesota government whistleblowers claim they were ‘electronically surveilled,’ had promotions denied

By [Shane Galvin](#)

Published Jan. 3, 2026, 1:16 p.m. ET

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Government whistleblowers who reported widespread fraud in Minnesota were retaliated against on the job by having their vacations and promotions denied — and their every keystroke at work monitored, The Post has learned.

Rep. Kristin Robbins, a Republican who chairs the state’s Fraud Prevention and State Oversight committee, told The Post that whistleblowers who have come forward to report fraud to her committee and to their agencies claimed to be “electronically surveilled” after news stories about the Somali daycare [center scams went viral](#).

“The group of whistleblowers that I interact with claim that they’ve been denied vacations, promotions, and that it’s hurt their careers,” said Robbins, who is running for governor against the incumbent [3](#) d former Democratic vice presidential candidate Tim Walz.

Fraud
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AP

“As recently as a couple of weeks ago they told me that every time [fraud] flares up [in the news] they can tell — two of them their job is in the IT world — can tell that they’re being surveilled on the computers in the department’s chat function for words like ‘fraud’ or ‘reporting’ and there’s sort of a chilling effect of knowing that they are looking for people who are talking about fraud,” Robbins said.

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These whistleblowers are reporting instances of fraud in the health services industry, including child daycares, adult daycare centers, and autism centers, according to Robbins.

The gubernatorial hopeful revealed the group of whistleblowers she interacts with goes to extreme lengths to maintain their anonymity.

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“It’s a really large group,” Robbins said. “When I meet with them it’s electronic and they’re all behind a screen and they have one person who is unidentified who then relays questions to the group.”

She added: “When they call, it’s a blocked number. I just know to pick up when it’s a blocked number now. They’re very protective of themselves.”

The group has good reason to be protective, with two high profile ³ whistleblowers previously facing repercussions for reporting fraud.

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Faye Bernstein, then a compliance officer at the Department of Human Services, claimed supervisors excluded her from meetings, told her to seek therapy, and eventually fired her after she reported fraud back in 2019, [Fox9](#) reported.

Though her career was cratered, Bernstein was able to help uncover \$29 million in unauthorized payments to two Native American tribes — the names of which were not known by DHS.

Another Minnesota DHS whistleblower, Scott Stillman, reported that daycare operations were rife with fraud and that scams were widespread back in 2018, [MPR News](#) reported.

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The internal investigator resigned his position after his warnings received pushback from bosses in the department, he claimed to the outlet.

Robbins’ Fraud Prevention and State Agency Oversight committee will hold a hearing next week to investigate the massive billion-dollar ongoing fraud scandal plaguing the Land of 10,000 Lakes.