



March 6, 2025

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
200 Independence Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

As members of the Democratic Women's Caucus, we are deeply concerned about the impacts that the recent firings of federal employees at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) will have on women and families. Valuable early childhood education and child care programs are housed within HHS under the Administration of Children and Families (ACF). We demand you immediately reinstate any ACF federal employees whom HHS fired and not remove any others.

We understand that HHS fired approximately 5,200 probationary employees.<sup>1</sup> Within the ACF, we have heard that the Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care lost 20 and 25 percent of their respective staff. These actions will devastate the over 778,420 children and their families in every corner of the country who rely on Head Start for child care and education.<sup>2</sup> While Elon Musk believes that women and families who benefit from these programs are parasites, we know that these programs provide hard working families with crucial services.<sup>3</sup> Further, it is the dedicated federal workers who allow these essential services to support families across the nation.

Thousands of families will feel the ripple effects of these firings across the country. By significantly reducing ACF staff, programs could experience delays in receiving grants and technical assistance to access their funds. If they are not able to access funds, this could result in layoffs of local staff, a decrease in services, and delays or difficulties in addressing facility issues that may lead to potential closures. Additionally, the data shows that without sufficient child care both families and the economy will suffer. The federal workers who serve in the Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care are integral to making sure families can access affordable, high-quality care and education.

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1 Stobbe, M., & Johnson, C. K. (2025, February 15). HHS is losing thousands of workers under Trump administration probationary job cuts. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/trump-job-cuts-health-cdc-0d002fd6f528a7b91ced79628bf68196>

2 Head Start. (2025, February 24). *Head start program facts: Fiscal Year 2023*. HeadStart.gov. <https://headstart.gov/program-data/article/head-start-program-facts-fiscal-year-2023>

3 Musk, Elon (2025, February 13). Archived X post. Archive Today. <https://archive.ph/eu8P8>

We demand you reinstate the federal employees who worked within the Administration of Children and Families and not remove any others. Women and families deserve your urgent and immediate action. We look forward to seeing you fix this dangerous situation for children and families.

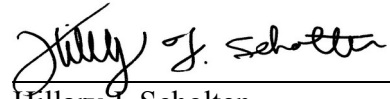
Sincerely,



Teresa Leger Fernández  
Chair  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Emilia Strong Sykes  
Vice Chair  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Hillary J. Scholten  
Vice Chair  
Democratic Women's Caucus



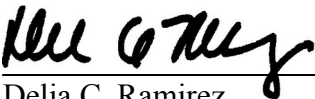
Deborah K. Ross  
Co-Chair  
Policy Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Co-Chair  
Policy Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



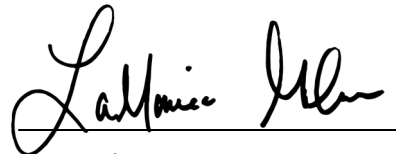
Nikema Williams  
Chief Whip  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



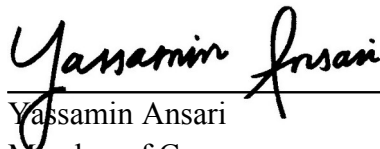
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



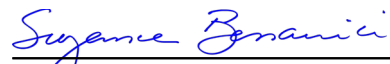
LaMonica McIver  
New Member Liaison  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

*Nanette Diaz Barragan*

Nanette Diaz Barragan  
Member of Congress

*Andrea Salinas*

Andrea Salinas  
Congressional Hispanic  
Caucus Liaison  
Democratic Women's Caucus

*Sara Jacobs*

Sara Jacobs  
Co-Chair  
Member Services Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus

*Shontel M. Brown*

Shontel M. Brown  
Co-Chair  
Communications Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus

*Julia Brownley*

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress

*Becca Balint*

Becca Balint  
Member of Congress

*JM Tokuda*

JM Tokuda  
Progressive Caucus Liaison  
Democratic Women's Caucus

*Lori Trahan*

Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress

*Linda T. Sanchez*

Linda T. Sanchez  
Member of Congress

*Judy Chu*

Judy Chu  
Co-Chair & Liaison  
Reproductive Health Care  
Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus

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Brittany Petterson  
Member of Congress

*Jan Schakowsky*

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

*Yvette D. Clarke*

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

*Jennifer L. McClellan*

Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress

*April McClain Delaney*

April McClain Delaney  
Member of Congress

*Gwen S. Moore*

Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress

*Sarah Elfreth*

Sarah Elfreth  
Member of Congress

*Mikie Sherrill*

Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan  
Chair  
Servicewomen Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



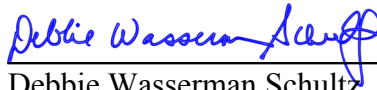
Norma J. Torres  
New Democrat Coalition  
Liaison  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty  
National Leaders &  
Advocacy Organizations  
Liaison  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



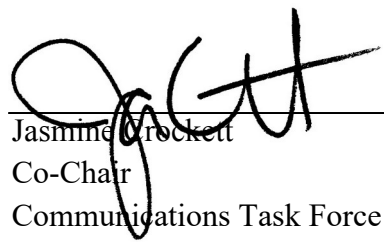
Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Chair  
Global Women's Issues Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Jasmine Crockett  
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Whip  
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Melanie Stansbury  
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Pramila Jayapal  
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American Caucus Liaison  
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