



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.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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>

<sup>2</sup> 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>

<sup>3</sup> 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.

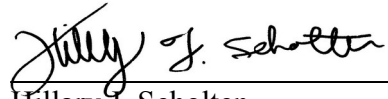
Sincerely,



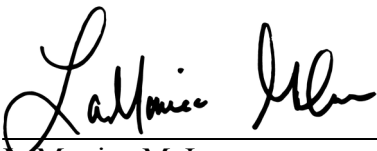
Teresa Leger Fernández  
Chair  
Democratic Women's Caucus



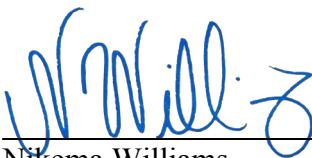
Emilia Strong Sykes  
Vice Chair  
Democratic Women's Caucus



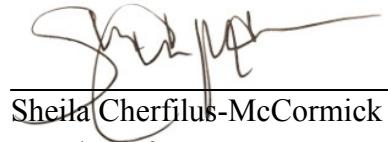
Hillary J. Scholten  
Vice Chair  
Democratic Women's Caucus



LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams  
Chief Whip  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



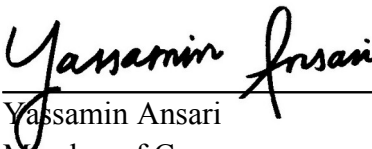
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



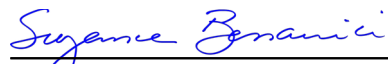
Deborah K. Ross  
Co-Chair  
Policy Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



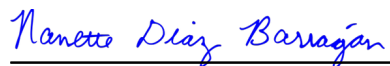
Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



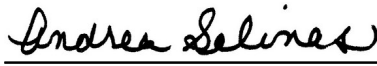
Yassamin Ansari  
Member of Congress



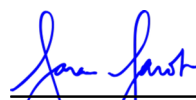
Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



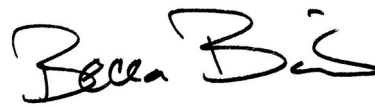
Sara Jacobs  
Co-Chair  
Member Services Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



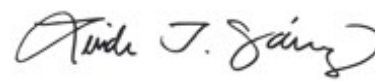
Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



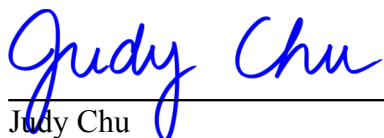
JM Tokuda  
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



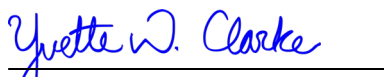
Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



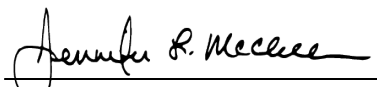
Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



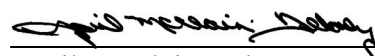
Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



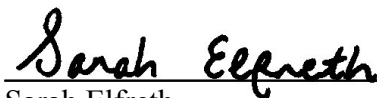
Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress



April McClain Delaney  
Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth  
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



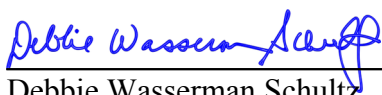
Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress



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



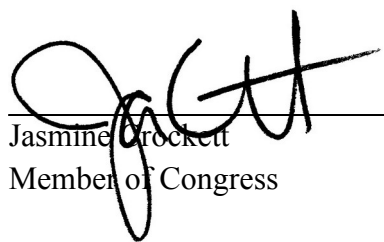
Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



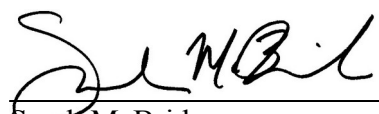
Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress  
Policy Co-Chair, Democratic  
Women's Caucus



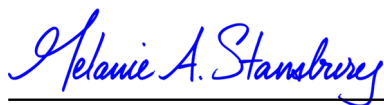
Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride  
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury  
Co-Chair  
Member Services Task Force  
Democratic Women's Caucus



Pramila Jayapal  
Congressional Asian Pacific  
American Caucus Liaison  
Democratic Women's Caucus