



HHS and FDA Employees:

Another week has passed, and HHS still refuses to return to the bargaining table. But NTEU will not tire, and we will not give up our fight to protect your workplace rights.

Employees and NTEU are not alone in our outrage at HHS' behavior at the bargaining table. The latest member of Congress to urge Secretary Alex Azar to adhere to the law and bargain in good faith is Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), the ranking member of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education, with funding jurisdiction over HHS, as well as the ranking member of the Senate's principal health and labor committee.

"HHS appears to be engaging in classic 'surface' bargaining, going through the motions of what it purports to be 'bargaining,' but with no sincere resolve to reach agreement," she [wrote](#) to Secretary Azar.

Sen. Murray's letter comes days after two key House members sent a similar letter to Secretary Azar.

Four of the articles on the HHS chopping block pertain to leave: Annual Leave, Sick Leave, the Family and Medical Leave Act, and Leave Sharing. HHS claims that by cutting these articles, it will achieve "contract simplification, reduce administrative burden and decreases costs." In reality, it's just an excuse for HHS to be able to make unilateral decisions about your leave and shrug off accountability. You would lose your right to get help from a NTEU steward or file a grievance if you are treated unfairly by a manager who has, for example, denied your leave request.

We have momentum on our side, but employees must stay engaged. As a reminder, here is what you can do:

- Tomorrow is Black Wednesday. Wear black clothing to show you stand with NTEU.
- [Add your name to our petition to Secretary Azar](#). Help NTEU reach our new goal: 8,500 signatures by next Friday, Sept. 28. More than 6,200 employees have already signed our petition, but we need every bargaining unit employee to sign.
- Wear a Shame on HHS sticker. You can get one from your local chapter.
- Send a message to your members of Congress at the [Legislative Action Center](#).
- Tweet Secretary Azar at @SecAzar and demand HHS return to the table ([Get sample tweets](#)).
- [Share this one-page flier](#) with colleagues and ask them to get involved.

Last week, NTEU filed our third grievance and unfair labor practice charge against HHS for engaging in bad faith bargaining. HHS claimed that there was a bargaining impasse and requested mediation when there was never any real bargaining. After refusing to discuss the proposals, HHS put down a "last best offer" gutting 21 articles from your contract. The entire bargaining process, including the one day of mediation, was a sham orchestrated by HHS so it could rush your contract to the anti-employee, anti-union Federal Service

Impasses Panel.

HHS employees around the country and across op-divs are taking a stand, as you can see in the photo below, and so are members at other NTEU-represented agencies (watch [this video](#)). Don't let HHS take away your rights and benefits without a fight!



“...to ensure that every federal employee is treated with dignity and respect.”