

# Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

September 6, 2018

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II  
Secretary  
Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

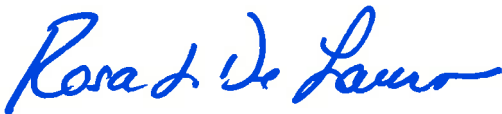
We are writing today to urge you to return to good faith bargaining negotiations with the National Treasury Employees Union, which represents Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) employees at the FDA, ACF, SAMSHA, HRSA and other parts of your agency.

As members of Congress whose responsibilities focus on HHS programs and who represent constituents who rely on the work of HHS employees to protect their health and well-being, we understand the need for your Department to have a committed, qualified workforce. We believe that federal workers at HHS and elsewhere in the Administration deserve to be treated with respect and to have full access to the workplace rights that Congress has provided through statute. Those rights include the ability for good faith bargaining around workplace issues.

We are concerned about reports that, despite notifying NTEU in May that HHS wanted to begin term bargaining in mid-June, no serious bargaining sessions have been held. Instead, HHS appears to be insisting on a long-term contract that would eliminate many workplace benefits and restrict the ability of union representatives to meet the needs of their members. We believe that those proposals and the decision of HHS to file for assistance from the Federal Services Impasse Panel (FSIP) without a serious effort at negotiation violates the legal rights of federal workers to good faith bargaining. The August 24 ruling of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson of the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia, which overturned significant portions of the May 25<sup>th</sup> executive orders, further strengthens the arguments to re-start bargaining.

For those reasons, we urge you to rescind the request for impasse assistance and to return to the bargaining table for good faith negotiation as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Rosa L. DeLauro  
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress