



HHS and FDA Employees:

As you know, after only two days of bargaining, HHS asked the federal agency charged with resolving bargaining impasses to impose its proposals to gut our contract, including eliminating rights and benefits like telework, AWS, and leave provisions. NTEU opposed HHS' request, because there had been no bargaining at all, on HHS' part, much less legitimate reasons offered for eliminating these important rights. Meanwhile, HHS and FDA employees across the country have expressed their opposition to HHS' proposals in many ways.

The FSIP has now directed NTEU and HHS to return to the bargaining table with a federal mediator "during a period not to exceed 30 calendar days." The federal mediator assigned to this matter indicated that he would not be available until Nov. 26, transforming 30 days into a mere two weeks to negotiate over more than 25 articles. The negotiated ground rules called for an 18-week bargaining schedule.

Once this severely abbreviated bargaining session ends, NTEU and HHS must submit their final offers to the FSIP.

NTEU is very skeptical about this process, which seems to heavily favor HHS and not allow for meaningful bargaining. Nonetheless, NTEU is preparing for mediation next week and will do everything in our power to negotiate a contract that protects your rights and benefits.

What Can You Do?

We need to continue fighting along multiple fronts to protect your rights and benefits. This is a critical stage in the process, and we need employees to continue to show their opposition to HHS' proposals and support our fight to save important rights and benefits including telework, AWS, transit subsidies and awards. Here is how you can send your message to management:

- Show your support on social media by posting a photo with a ["Shame on HHS" sign](#) and use the hashtag #ShameOnHHS.
- [Sign the petition](#) demanding that HHS return to the bargaining table.
- Wear black clothing every Wednesday.
- Wear a Shame on HHS sticker.
- [Tweet Secretary Azar](#) at @SecAzar ([Get sample tweets](#)).

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