

July 27, 2023

Dear Representative:

The National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) is proud to represent the employees of the Food & Drug Administration (FDA), the Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) as well as the employees of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) at the Food & Nutrition Service and the Farm Service Administration. On behalf of these federal employees, we strongly oppose Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2024 (H.R. 4368) as reported by the Appropriations Committee. **Due to the extreme flaws in this bill and the danger it presents to national health and safety, NTEU asks that you vote NO on the bill.**

NTEU supports the Administration's request of a 10% increase (\$372 million above the FY23 enacted level) for the FDA. The FDA workload is constantly growing as the private sector continues to grow and the FDA must grow to keep up. Cutting FDA funding would only hinder private sector the innovations, which would be detrimental to the health and safety of the American public.

One example of how FDA's funding and staffing shortfalls threaten consumer health and safety is the FDA's foreign inspection program where Consumer Affairs Officers often need translators to carry out overseas inspections, many of which are in China. NTEU has requested that FDA have an increase in funding so that FDA's staff might have their own translators when performing these inspections rather than translators provided by Chinese firms or the government of China. The bill rejects our request for such funding and instead cuts the appropriation for FDA, meaning FDA must cut back on spending rather than fund translators and other important positions.

NTEU is proud to also represent the employees at CFTC. Every day, the work the CFTC does to protect consumers in the marketplace grows more complex. Having a vigorous free market requires that the CFTC have the resources necessary to police the ever-growing marketplace and the advancing technological developments that enable both market expansion and market fraud.

For the CFTC, NTEU strongly supports the Administration's modest request of \$411 million. As you may know, in FY 2022, the CFTC obtained orders imposing over \$2.5 billion in restitution, disgorgement and civil monetary penalties. This amount is more than five times over the budget request. By shortchanging funds for this important agency, the market is left open to

fraud and deceit. NTEU also supports the user fee and deficit reduction provisions the Administration has proposed, which was also proposed by the previous Administration.

At USDA, the bill makes cuts that could result in reductions in force (RIFs) or furloughs of NTEU represented employees and restricts hiring in the National Capital Region, including at the Alexandria office of the Food & Nutrition Service.

Further, NTEU strongly opposes the provision to defund diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at USDA, FDA and CFTC. Our Union has zero tolerance for workplace discrimination, exclusion and inequity. These initiatives have made these agencies a better place to work and better able to serve the American public.

Thank you for your consideration of our views. [REDACTED]

Sincerely,

Anthony M. Reardon
National President