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August 4, 2025

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Kennedy:

I write regarding the July 14, 2025, announcement of further staff terminations at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS or the Department).¹ I also am following up on my April 8, 2025, letter to you about the previous termination notices issued to 10,000 HHS employees.² I have yet to receive a response to my initial letter, and meanwhile, HHS is continuing its efforts to hollow out the Department and undermine its core functions. As a result of these actions, operations of vital programs are in jeopardy—threatening to deprive individuals and families in the most vulnerable communities of invaluable services.

On the afternoon of July 14, 2025, thousands of dedicated public servants at HHS received termination emails.³ The email messages stated that the July 8, 2025, Supreme Court ruling regarding the Trump Administration's federal workforce cuts permitted the Department to "move forward with a portion of its [reduction in force (RIF)]."⁴ More than a week after the latest RIF notices, Members of Congress were provided only basic information on impacted divisions,⁵ without any specificity on rationale for terminations or the services and functions that will no longer be provided. Among the thousands laid off on July 14 are employees with consistently outstanding performance ratings as well as disabled veterans.⁶ The Department is

¹ Rene Marsh, Meg Tirrell, and Taml Luhby, *HHS carries out mass firings across health agencies after Supreme Court decision*, CNN (Jul. 14, 2025, 10:02 PM), <https://www.cnn.com/2025/07/14/health/hhs-layoffs-supreme-court>.

² Letter to Secretary Kennedy from Committee on Education & Workforce Ranking Member Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (Apr. 8, 2025), https://democrats-edworkforce.house.gov/imo/media/doc/rm_scott_letter_to_hhs_re_restructuring_reduction_in_force.pdf.

³ *Supra* note 1.

⁴ *Supra* note 1.

⁵ HHS Reduction in Force FAQs, U.S. Dep't of Health & Hum. Servs., (transmitted Jul. 26, 2025).

⁶ Jory Heckman, *HHS finalizes 'portion' of employee layoffs following Supreme Court ruling*, Federal News Network (Jul. 14, 2025, 7:30 PM), <https://federalnewsnetwork.com/workforce/2025/07/hhs-finalizes-portion-of-employee-layoffs-following-supreme-court-ruling/>.

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undertaking these efforts without providing comprehensive information to Congress about its activities to downsize the Department, while also failing to respond to specific requests for information from Members of Congress.

As detailed in my previous letter, workforce cuts proposed in the March 27, 2025, Directive (the Directive) and reorganization plan⁷ undermine core HHS services and propose eliminating wholesale divisions within HHS, such as the Administration for Community Living (ACL). In *New York v. Kennedy*, Judge Melissa Dubose issued a court order halting some of the layoffs announced in accordance with the Directive.⁸ Given that HHS has once again pursued RIFs, I seek clarity on all the positions and divisions that have been affected to date and assurance that the Department is complying with the court order. I request your responses by no later than August 18, 2025, to the following questions, **in addition to those presented in my previous letter:**

1. Explain the decision-making process and rationale for the July 14, 2025, HHS staff terminations, including how the roles being eliminated were decided.
2. Provide detailed analysis on how HHS will continue to operate in accordance with its statutory duties amid mass layoffs.
3. Provide the number of HHS staff who were terminated on July 14, 2025.
 - a. Provide an Excel spreadsheet with the following information for each HHS staff member terminated:
 - i. Division;
 - ii. Program, subdivision, or, where there is no relevant formal subdivision, any identifiable functional area;
 - iii. Job title;
 - iv. Classification on the General Schedule pay scale;
 - v. Number of years of federal service; and
 - vi. Purported justification for termination.

Please send all official correspondence and information related to these requests to the Committee's Democratic staff at EWDOversight@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Ranking Member

cc: The Honorable Tim Walberg, Chairman, Committee on Education and Workforce

⁷ HHS Announces Transformation to Make America Healthy Again, U.S. Dep't of Health & Hum. Servs. (Mar. 27, 2025), <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/hhs-restructuring-doge.html>.

⁸ *HHS layoffs were likely unlawful and must be halted, US judge says*, AP News, <https://apnews.com/article/trump-hhs-layoffs-restructuring-maha-rfk-7adbc357bf25b2c92b94e012ba3d8316> (last visited July 15, 2025).