

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 19, 2018

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

As Members of Congress representing tens of thousands of constituents who are federal workers, we write to encourage the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to engage in good faith negotiations with its employees' union.


It is our understanding that, despite the fact that no serious bargaining sessions have been held between HHS and its employees' union, HHS has declared that negotiations are at an "impasse" and has requested impasse assistance from the Federal Services Impasse Panel (FSIP). We are troubled that HHS has only attempted one day of negotiations before declaring an impasse and requesting impasse assistance from FSIP. We do not believe that one day of negotiations constitutes a serious effort to engage in good faith negotiations. Before seeking impasse assistance, we hope HHS first comes back to the bargaining table and begins negotiation efforts immediately.

The mission of HHS is to enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans. HHS employees safeguard our medicines, provide invaluable health care assistance to families and children, and help people fight the horrors of addiction. These workers perform some of the most important work our government does to serve its people.

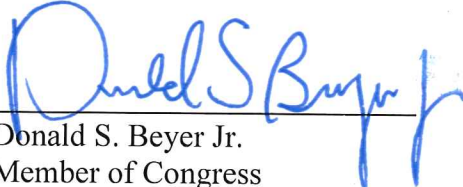
It is essential that the people who serve the public be treated fairly and equitably. This includes the right to good faith bargaining for workplace rights. HHS is required by federal law to attempt good faith negotiations with its employees. We urge you to return to the bargaining table and begin serious good faith negotiations as soon as possible.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and we look forward to hearing from you.

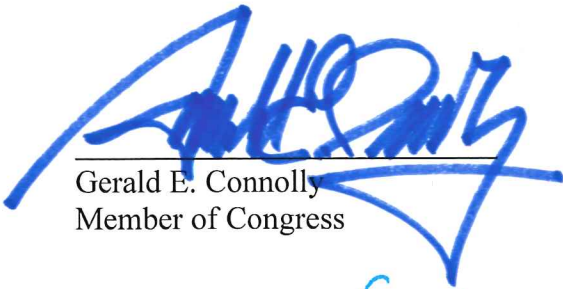
Sincerely,



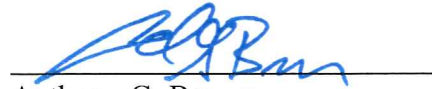
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



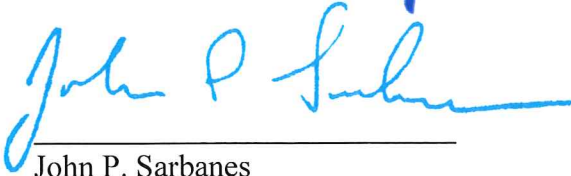
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



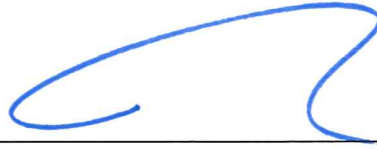
Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



John K. Delaney
Member of Congress