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February 27, 2025

Vince Micone
Acting Secretary of Labor
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Acting Secretary Micone:

We write seeking documents and information about reductions in the capacity of the Department of Labor (Labor Department) to protect workers' lives and livelihoods.

The Labor Department protects American workers from exploitation, ensures equal employment opportunity for workers on federal contracts, creates pathways to meaningful employment, supports people who experience unemployment or injuries that prevent them from continuing to work, and generates data relied upon by policymakers and employers alike. As news reports circulate about staffing cuts and the withholding of contract and grant payments throughout the federal government, we are vigilant about the possibility that such initiatives could, if applied to the Labor Department, put American workers at risk of economic dislocation, disabling illness and injury, and even premature death.

In recent days, we have received messages about Labor Department staff terminations and contract rescissions, which are now beginning to appear in the news media as well. Reportedly, at least six Labor Department agencies have fired employees.¹

We are particularly alarmed by the report that one agency suffering the abrupt loss of staff is the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).² Weakening MSHA will imperil miners' lives. For example, one of the lessons of the Upper Big Branch Mine disaster, according to MSHA's own internal investigation, is that staffing disruptions at the managerial level resulted in MSHA's inspectors failing to adequately address smaller-scale methane explosions in the months leading up

¹ Rebecca Rainey, *Trump's Federal Workforce Cuts Hit Labor Department Enforcement*, BLOOMBERG (Feb. 24, 2025), <https://news.bloomberglaw.com/daily-labor-report/trumps-federal-workforce-cuts-hit-labor-department-enforcement>.

² *Id.*

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the massive explosion that killed 29 miners.³ As we approach the fifteenth anniversary of that tragedy, we fear that the Trump Administration will undercut MSHA's capacity at the cost of miners' lives. The consequences could be long-term, given that the training for new inspectors is so intensive that it takes two years before inspectors are released into the field unaccompanied.⁴ We urge you to reverse the terminations of any MSHA personnel immediately.

We are also deeply troubled by recently announced plans for the Office of Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) to drastically reduce its workforce and operations. The Office of Federal Contract Compliance was established in 1965 to administer and enforce Executive Order 11,246 prohibiting discrimination by federal contractors on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.⁵ The role of OFCCP was expanded in 1975 to encompass Section 503 of the *Rehabilitation Act* and the *Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act* (VEVRAA), which respectively prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability and veteran's status and require affirmative action with respect to hiring these individuals.⁶ When President Trump rescinded Executive Order 11,246 in January, OFCCP's role narrowed to Section 503 and VEVRAA.⁷ According to the attached Labor Department memorandum we obtained, OFCCP has been instructed by the Acting Secretary of Labor to develop a plan to reduce its workforce by 90 percent. Currently, OFCCP has 479 employees, including 110 national office employees and 369 employees in regional and field offices. A plan proposed by OFCCP would cut the number of employees down to 50, with 14 remaining in the D.C. office and the rest divided between four regional offices. Such a drastic reduction will detrimentally affect OFCCP's work to meet its statutory obligations under Section 503 and VEVRAA and ensure taxpayer funded federal contracts remain a source of equal opportunity for workers.

We are also receiving reports of the rescission of previously authorized spending at the Labor Department. For example, we have heard that the Labor Department's Office of Administrative Law Judges (OALJ) has been commanded, at the behest of the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE), to terminate its contracts for mediation services, leaving OALJ with less capacity to resolve disputes on a wide range of matters, from employment benefit obligations to black lung benefits.

We need a focused accounting of any staffing reductions and spending rescissions so that we can assess the consequences for the Labor Department's capacity to get things done for American workers. Accordingly, we request your responses by no later than March 14, 2025, to the following:

³ MINE SAFETY & HEALTH ADMIN., U.S. DEP'T OF LAB., INTERNAL REVIEW OF MSHA'S ACTIONS AT THE UPPER BIG BRANCH MINE-SOUTH PERFORMANCE COAL COMPANY, MONTCOAL, RALEIGH COUNTY, WEST VIRGINIA 179-181 (2012), <https://arlweb.msha.gov/performancecoal/UBBInternalReview/UBBInternalReviewReportNoappx.pdf> (noting role of lack of continuity in District Manager and field office supervisor positions).

⁴ MINE SAFETY & HEALTH ADMIN., FY 2019 CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET JUSTIFICATION 13(2019), <https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/general/budget/2019/CBJ-2019-V2-13.pdf>.

⁵ Exec. Order No. 11,246, 30 Fed. Reg. 12,319 (Sept. 28, 1965).

⁶ Off. of Fed. Contract Compliance Progs., *History of the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs*, INTERNET ARCHIVE WAYBACK MACHINE, <https://web.archive.org/web/20250114185400/https://www.dol.gov/agencies/ofccp/about/history> (archiving page from Department of Labor website from January 14, 2025).

⁷ Exec. Order No. 14,173, 90 Fed. Reg. 8633 (Jan. 21, 2025).

1. How many Labor Department staff have been terminated since January 20, 2025?
2. For each Labor Department staff terminated in that time, please provide an Excel spreadsheet with the following:
 - a. Agency;
 - b. Directorate, program, or, where there is no relevant formal subdivision, any identifiable functional area;
 - c. Job title;
 - d. Classification on the General Schedule payscale;
 - e. Number of years of federal service; and
 - f. Justification for termination.
3. For every Labor Department grant, contract, contract indefinite delivery vehicle, direct payment, loan, or other approved spending (collectively, spending decisions) terminated or paused since January 20, 2025, please provide an Excel spreadsheet with the following:
 - a. Award ID;
 - b. URL for link to award on USASpending.gov;
 - c. Recipient name;
 - d. Total obligation;
 - e. Amount of total obligation that has been paused or terminated;
 - f. Description of award; and
 - g. Justification for pause or termination of the award.
4. Provide the names of the following and, for each person, the salary:
 - a. Labor Department DOGE Team Lead; and
 - b. Other members of the Labor Department DOGE Team.
5. Provide all documents and communications, including downloads, copies, or screenshots of any messages on any digital communications platform, since January 20, 2025, identifying personnel to be terminated, criteria for terminations, goals or quotas for terminations, meetings or consultations about terminations, or any other matter related to implementation of the DOGE Workforce Optimization Initiative or Executive Order 14,210 within the Labor Department.⁸
6. Provide all documents and communications, including downloads, copies, or screenshots of any messages on any digital communications platform since January 20, 2025, about the termination or pausing of Labor Department spending decisions, including the following:
 - a. Documents and communications establishing targets or quotas for terminating or pausing spending decisions, criteria for terminating or pausing spending decisions, or identifying specific spending decisions to be terminated or paused;
 - b. Documents and communications about any consultations, inside or outside the Labor Department, about Labor Department spending decisions to be terminated or paused; and
 - c. Documents and communications about any meetings regarding the termination or pausing of Labor Department spending decisions.

Please send all official correspondence and information related to these requests to the Committee's Democratic staff at Eleazar.Padilla@mail.house.gov. Should you have any questions about this

⁸ Exec. Order No. 14,210, 90 Fed. Reg. 9,669 (Feb.14, 2025).

Acting Secretary Vince Micone

February 27, 2025

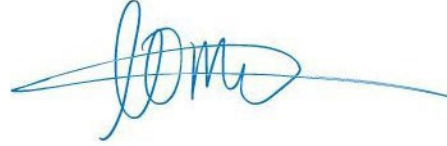
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request, please contact Bob Shull with the Democratic staff of the House Committee on Education and Workforce at Robert.Shull@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,



ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Ranking Member



ILHAN OMAR
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections