

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

Washington, D.C. 20515

February 24, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Acting Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development

The Honorable Howard Lutnick
Secretary
U.S. Department of Commerce

Ms. Denise Carter
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Education

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

The Honorable Scott Turner
Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

The Honorable Pam Bondi
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
U.S. Department of State

The Honorable Scott Bessent
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Treasury

The Honorable Lee Zeldin
Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Ms. Janet Petro
Acting Administrator
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

The Honorable Brooke Rollins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture

The Honorable Peter Hegseth
Secretary
U.S. Department of Defense

The Honorable Wright
Secretary
U.S. Department of Energy

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior

Mr. Vince Micone
Acting Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation

The Honorable Douglas A. Collins
Secretary
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Mr. Stephen Ehikian
Acting Administrator
U.S. General Services
Administration

Dr. Sethuraman Panchanathan
Director
National Science Foundation

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The Honorable David A. Wright
Chairman
Nuclear Regulatory Commission

Mr. Charles Ezell
Acting Director
U.S. Office of Personnel
Management

The Honorable Kelly Loeffler
Administrator
U.S. Small Business Administration

Mr. Leland C. Dudek
Acting Commissioner
Social Security Administration

Dear Agency and Department Heads,

We write regarding the email that the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) transmitted to federal employees on the evening of Saturday, February 22, 2025, and its apparent direct relationship to Elon Musk’s public threat to dismiss any employees who do not respond. Mr. Musk’s threat is reckless, cruel, unlawful, and unenforceable.¹ You must take immediate action to clarify that the federal employees at your agency are not obligated to respond to this ill-conceived email stunt and that nonresponse cannot constitute resignation.

On February 22, 2025, Elon Musk tweeted that “all federal employees will shortly receive an email requesting to understand what they got done last week. Failure to respond will be taken as a resignation.”² Just hours later, OPM sent an email instructing federal employees all across the government to “please reply to this email with approx. 5 bullets of what [they] accomplished last week and cc [their] manager.”³

Whether Mr. Musk understands it or not, America is a nation of laws, our government is a system of checks and balances, and federal agencies will not be reorganized by social media post. This stunt is yet another example of the cruel and arbitrary chaos Mr. Musk inflicts on the American people by carelessly ‘taking a chainsaw’ to the people’s government and the dedicated public servants who keep it running. Mr. Musk’s consistent refusal to take any amount of care before disrupting operations across the federal government imposes far greater costs than it will legitimately save.

The nature of Mr. Musk’s employment is opaque, likely unlawful, and has been cloaked in secrecy since day one of this Administration. What is clear and reflected in the cruel dismissal-threat tweet and ham-handed OPM email that followed, is that Mr. Musk lacks a basic understanding of how the federal government works. For example, the OPM email was sent to individuals who do not even work in the Executive Branch—including sitting federal judges.⁴

¹ At least some of the Administration’s leaders recognize this and have already instructed their employees to disregard the Musk directive [cite kash patel memo].

² Elon Musk (@elonmusk), X (Feb. 22, 2025) (online at <https://x.com/elonmusk/status/1893386883444437415>).

³ *Borrowing from a Tactic at X, Elon Musk Tells Government Workers to Detail Their Workweek or Face Termination*, New York Times (Feb. 22, 2025) (online at www.nytimes.com/2025/02/22/us/politics/elon-musk-email-federal-employees.html)

⁴ *Judiciary Tells Judges, Staff to ignore Email to Explain Work*, Bloomberg Law (Feb. 23, 2025) (online at

Neither Musk’s tweet nor the email account for the fact that many federal workers will not be receiving this email in time to respond by the deadline as they may be away from their secure workstation, on medical leave, or away from their email for completely justifiable reasons. He also, disturbingly, appears to be unaware that many federal employees are locked out of their systems due to DOGE’s ongoing intrusion into federal information technology infrastructure. Finally, neither Musk nor OPM has explained to the public how OPM and the agencies would even review and process potentially two million responses from across the government—which are duplicative of existing performance management procedures—without diverting resources and costing the American people money and services.

The OPM email and Mr. Musk’s social media post unleashed chaos throughout the federal government leaving millions of public servants unclear how to respond and agency leaders scrambling to determine how to proceed. Various federal agencies, including the Department of State and National Security Agency, have already appropriately informed federal employees not to respond to the email.⁵ Even Kash Patel, the Administration’s new Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) clarified that OPM and Mr. Musk do not control agency staff, including in a message sent to FBI employees that, “the FBI, through the Office of the Director, is in charge of all of our review processes and will conduct reviews in accordance with FBI procedures.”⁶

Saturday’s actions are a clear attempt by the Trump Administration to force the departure of dedicated civil servants who resoundingly refused to take the bait on Mr. Musk’s scam “deferred resignation” offer. It won’t work. Federal workers are committed to serving the American people. Indiscriminate online bullying will not advance any serious effort to ensure that the federal workforce is efficient, well-qualified, motivated, and deployed to maximize the effectiveness of government for the American people.

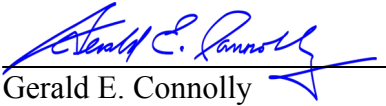
To this day, despite repeated inquiries from Congress, we do not know Mr. Musk’s official status in government, we do not know what his financial conflicts of interest may be, and we do not know what—if any—control President Trump actually has over his actions. The capricious dismissal threatened in Mr. Musk’s post would be illegal and cannot be tolerated. We urge you to immediately inform federal workers at your agency that his missives do not constitute official orders and that federal employees should not interrupt their service to the public to respond to OPM’s mass email. You must also make clear that Mr. Musk’s threat of dismissal due to nonresponse to OPM’s email is invalid.

<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/us-law-week/judiciary-tells-judges-staff-to-ignore-email-to-explain-work>). (This is a mistake Mr. Musk’s reckless team made weeks ago when the first “fork” memo was distributed and have apparently failed to correct).

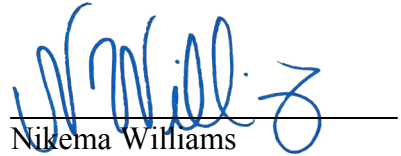
⁵ *Government Agencies Give Conflicting Guidance on Musk Email*, Washington Post (Feb. 23, 2025) (online at https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2025/02/23/musk-email-government-agencies/?utm_campaign=wp_post_most&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&carta-url=https%3A%2F%2Fs2.washingtonpost.com%2Fcar-ln-tr%2F4147d48%2F67bb4bcefe9d672c2a35f390%2F596a963dae7e8a0ef3402af9%2F11%2F52%2F67bb4bcefe9d672c2a35f390).

⁶ *Id.*

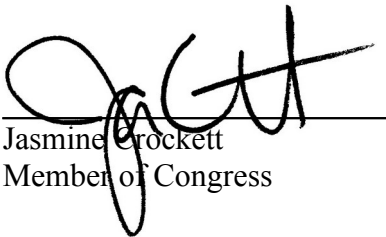
Sincerely,



Gerald E. Connolly
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform



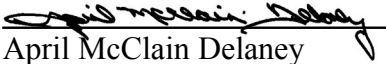
Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



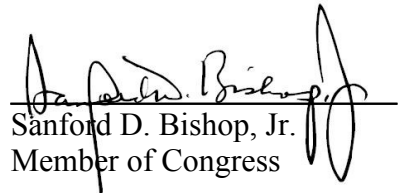
Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



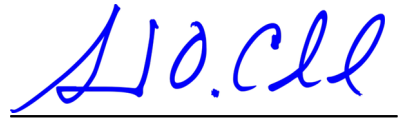
April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



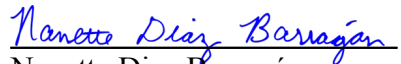
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



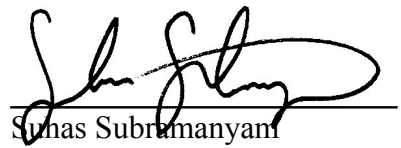
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



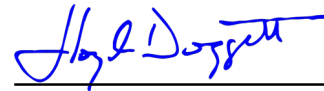
Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



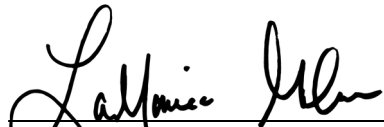
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



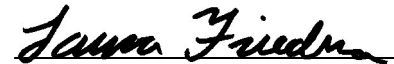
Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



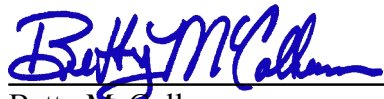
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



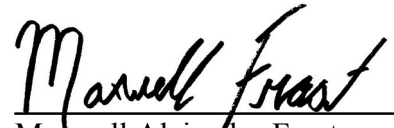
LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress



Laura Friedman
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



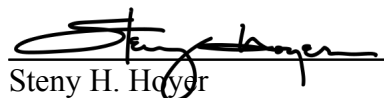
Maxwell Alejandro Frost
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress




Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress

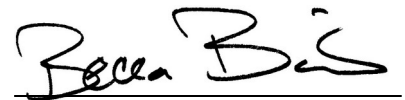


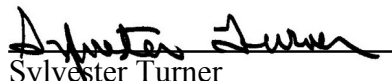
John B. Larson
Member of Congress

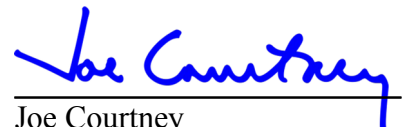

Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress

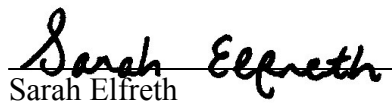

Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress

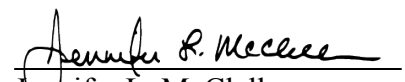

Ed Case
Member of Congress



Becca Balint
Member of Congress

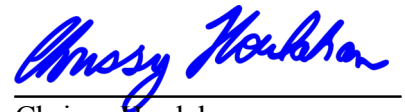

Sylvester Turner
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Sarah Elfreth
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
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Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress


Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress


Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress


Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress


Val Hoyle
Member of Congress


Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



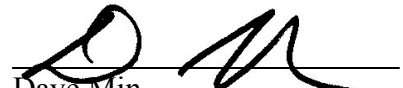
Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



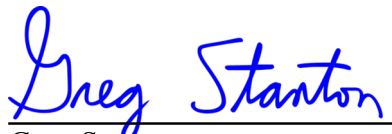
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Dave Min
Member of Congress



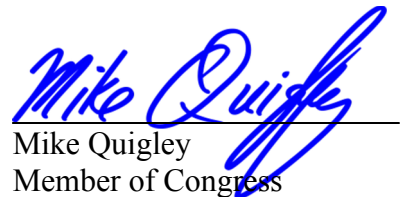
Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



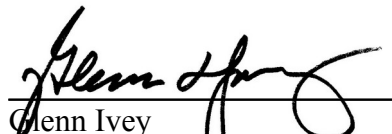
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



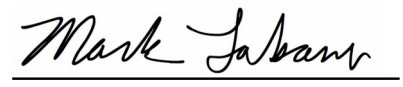
Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



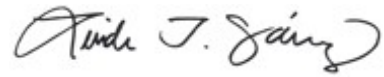
Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress



MARK TAKANO
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



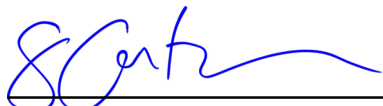
Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



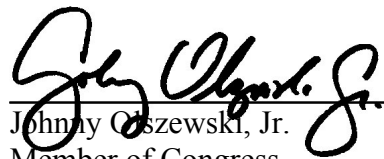
Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



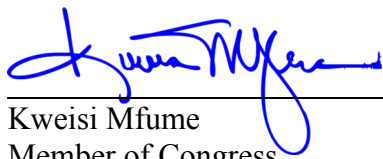
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



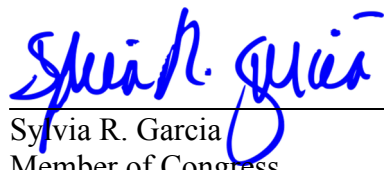
Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Johnny Oszewski, Jr.
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



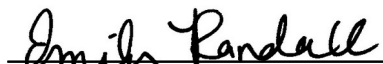
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



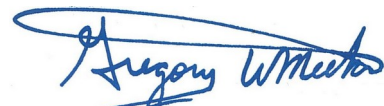
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Emily Randall
Member of Congress



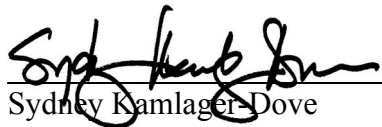
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Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



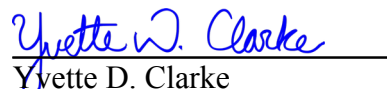
Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress



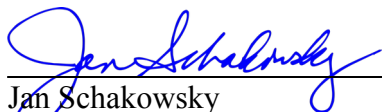
Dina Titus
Member of Congress



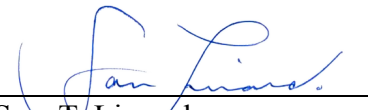
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress



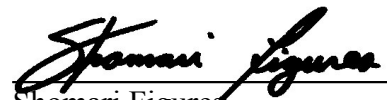
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Joe Neguse
Member of Congress



Shomari Figures
Member of Congress



Pablo José Hernández
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



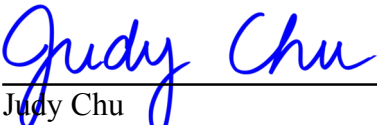
Summer L. Lee
Member of Congress



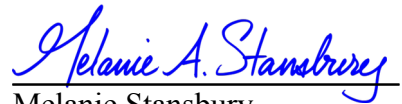
Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



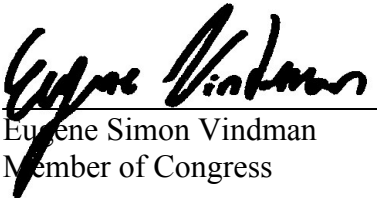
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



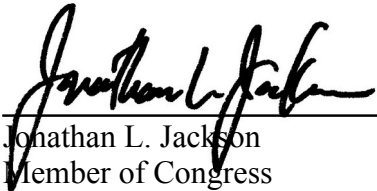
Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



Eugene Simon Vindman
Member of Congress



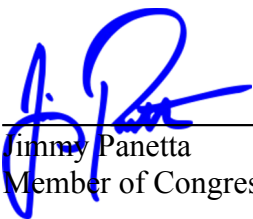
Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress



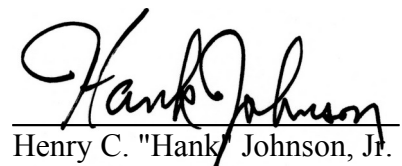
Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



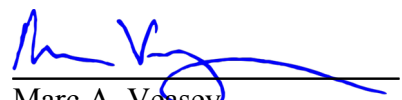
Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



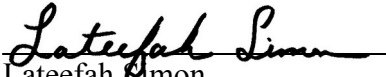
Greg Casar
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Al Green
Member of Congress



Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



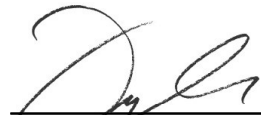
Grace Meng
Member of Congress



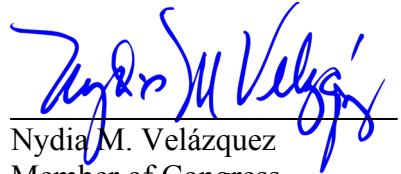
Jim Himes
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress



Froy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

cc: The Honorable James Comer, Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform