



November 7, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
House Appropriations Committee
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
House Appropriations Committee
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chair Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We write today to urge you to restore funding for the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau in the House Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24) Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) Appropriations Bill. The Women's Bureau has been creating access to better and safer jobs for women for the past century. However, the proposed House budget would eliminate the Women's Bureau completely, which would have a devastating impact on women and families across the country.

The Women's Bureau is the only federal agency mandated with representing and promoting the interests of the more than 77 million women in the U.S. labor force today. The Bureau's priorities include creating opportunities for women to enter and stay in high-paying, good-quality jobs, expanding access to paid leave and affordable child and elder care, and eliminating pay discrimination in the workplace. The Women's Bureau furthers these goals by providing state, local, and federal agencies with technical assistance, grants, education, and outreach. The Bureau collects and shares best practices, quantitative research, and evidence-based policy analysis. For example, the Women's Bureau created the National Database of Childcare Prices (NDCP), the only federal database to provide county-by-county economic and demographic comparisons.

As investments in recent landmark pieces of legislation continue, we must ensure that women's participation is front and center. The Women's Bureau has been deeply engaged in providing technical assistance to federal agencies funded through the *Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act* and the *CHIPS and Science Act*. As these laws ramp up federal investment in construction, advanced manufacturing, and clean energy – all industries in which women and women of color are vastly underrepresented – the Women's Bureau has been supporting other federal agencies to structure their investments with the greatest potential for increasing participation among women.

For FY24, the President's Budget Request included \$32.4 million for the Women's Bureau, including nearly \$10 million in grant funding through the Women in Apprenticeship and Nontraditional Occupations (WANTO) and the Fostering Access, Rights, and Equity (FARE)

grant programs. WANTO grants help expand pathways for women to enter and lead in all industries, including those in which they have historically been underrepresented.

The Women's Bureau issues FARE grants awards to non-profits who prevent and respond to gender-based violence and harassment. Anywhere from 25 to 85 percent of women have experienced sexual harassment in the workplace, yet most cases are never formally reported. FARE grants have reached over six million women. We must continue growing investments in these programs, and we cannot afford to erase their progress.

There is no justification to eliminate the Women's Bureau. The termination of the Women's Bureau would strip the federal government of the only agency mandated by Congress to represent the needs and interests of working women. We urge you to reconsider this cut and restore funding for the Women's Bureau as the FY24 LHHS bill moves forward.

Sincerely,



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Diversity & Inclusion Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus



Lois Frankel
Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus



Nikema Williams
Vice Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus



Teresa Leger Fernández
Vice Chair
Democratic Women's Caucus