

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1304**

June 2, 2025

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

Dear Secretary Kennedy,

We write with serious concern regarding the April 1, 2025, announcement by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Head Start (OHS) to close five regional offices. As detailed in a letter led by Senator Durbin and his colleagues on April 9, 2025, this decision—made without prior notice or implementation guidance—has caused widespread confusion and distress among Head Start grantees, families, and employees across Region 5. The lack of prior notice, coupled with the absence of implementation guidance for grantees, has sown confusion and distress across our communities. This decision directly impacts not only the federal employees and contractors who staff the Region 5 offices but also the families, children, and providers who depend on their support.

As you know, Region 5 encompasses Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin – home to over 2,600 Head Start centers serving nearly 125,000 children, including thousands of military families. These centers are critical pillars of support in both urban neighborhoods and rural communities. In Chicago and throughout the Midwest, Head Start programs provide culturally responsive, high-quality early childhood education and help working-class families bridge gaps in care and opportunity.

The Chicago-based regional office has been a vital link between HHS and local providers – offering training, technical assistance, and monitoring that ensures accountability and success for grantees. Abruptly eliminating this office without a transparent transition plan threatens program integrity, delays essential funding, and risks destabilizing the early learning workforce. We have already heard from grantees who are unsure how to access their funds and services. Without clear answers, some are now considering staff layoffs or program closures – consequences our communities cannot afford.

This closure comes at a time when Head Start grantees are still recovering from the federal funding disruption triggered by the January 27, 2025, memo from the Trump administration's Office of Management and Budget. For many providers, the system failure caused by that freeze forced staff furloughs and temporary closures, adding yet another burden to an already strained sector.




In light of the urgency of this issue, we respectfully request answers to the following questions by May 21, 2025:

1. Who should Region 5 grantees contact for information or support during this transition?
2. Who should Region 5 congressional staff reach out to for direct updates?
3. When and how will HHS notify Region 5 grantees of their new regional assignments?
4. Which region(s) will now be responsible for Region 5 grantees, and what is the timeline for this transition?
5. How does HHS plan to ensure uninterrupted access to training, technical assistance and funds during the transition?
6. What support will be provided to grantees facing increased administrative burdens due to closure?
7. Has HHS conducted an equity impact assessment or community consultation regarding the closure? If so, please share those findings.
8. How many staff members have been displaced or dismissed due to the office closures?
9. Will displaced Region 5 staff be given the option to remain in public service through relocation or reassignment?

This decision has far-reaching implications for the well-being of our children, families, and the workforce. We urge you to halt any further action on the Region 5 closure until meaningful consultation with stakeholders has occurred and a concrete transition plan has been publicly shared.

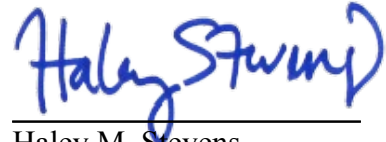
Thank you for your attention to this critical matter. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

		
Jesús G. "Chuy" García	Danny K. Davis	Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress	Member of Congress	Member of Congress



Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



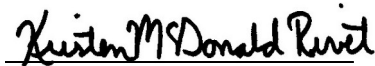
Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



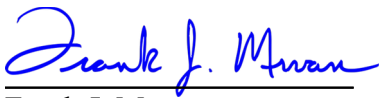
Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Kristen McDonald Rivet  
Member of Congress



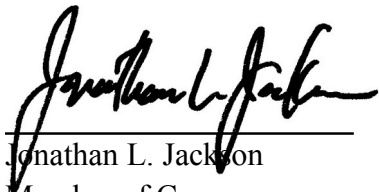
Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



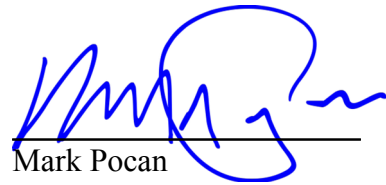
Frank J. Mrvan  
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Joyce Beatty  
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Jonathan L. Jackson  
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Mark Pocan  
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Ilhan Omar  
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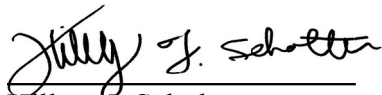
Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



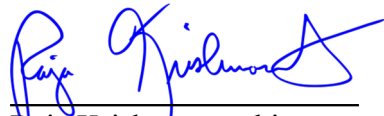
Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



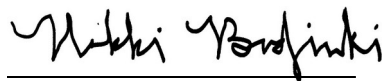
Emilia Strong Sykes  
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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
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Nikki Budzinski  
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Eric Sorensen  
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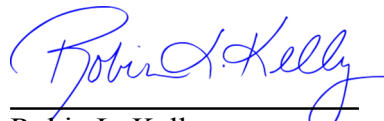
Bradley Scott Schneider  
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Angie Craig  
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