

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 9, 2018

The Honorable Trey Gowdy  
Chairman  
House Oversight and Government Reform Committee  
2157 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

We are writing to request that the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform convene a hearing to examine the troubling record of President Donald Trump and his Administration in virtually abandoning the goals of diversity and inclusiveness in the federal workforce.

**Trump Administration's Record on Diversity and Inclusiveness**

Since President Trump assumed office, he and his top officials have compiled a record that appears to shun the principles of diversity and inclusiveness, along with their corresponding benefits to the American people.

On March 28, 2018, the *Atlantic* issued a detailed report analyzing 2,475 Trump Administration political appointees. The report found:

The White House has named twice as many men as women to administration positions. This gender skew is both broad and deep: In no department do female appointees outnumber male appointees, and in some cases men outnumber women four or five to one. Moreover, men significantly outnumber women in low-level positions as well as in high-level ones, with Trump's Cabinet currently composed of 19 men and five women. Overall 33 percent of Trump's appointees are women, compared to 47 percent of the national workforce and 43 percent of the 2 million workers across the executive branch.<sup>1</sup>

The *Atlantic* concluded: "by some measures the White House has assembled the most preponderantly male team since the Reagan administration."<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, on February 14, 2018, *USA Today* issued a detailed report analyzing President Trump's 87 nominees for federal judges. The report found that 92% of the President's nominees are white, with just one African-American nominee and one Hispanic nominee. *USA Today*

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<sup>1</sup> *The Very Male Trump Administration*, The Atlantic (Mar. 28, 2018) (online at [www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/03/the-very-male-trump-administration/556568/](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/03/the-very-male-trump-administration/556568/)).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

concluded, “President Trump has nominated more white federal judges than any other President since Ronald Reagan.”<sup>3</sup>

In another report, on December 15, 2017, the *Washington Post* reported that policy analysts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention were told not to use a list of seven words or phrases, including “diversity” and “transgender” in documents prepared for the fiscal year 2019 budget. The *Post* also noted that several agencies changed their policies regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. For example, the Department of Health and Human Services removed information about LGBT individuals from its website and dropped questions about sexual orientation from two surveys it conducted of elderly Americans. In addition, the Administration for Children and Families stripped a webpage that detailed services available for LGBT individuals and their families.<sup>4</sup>

In addition, Dr. Jeffrey Pon, President Trump’s Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), asserted after his nomination hearing:

It is my understanding, based on the last data OPM posted to its website, that minorities as a whole are no longer underrepresented across the Federal workforce although their representation lags somewhat in SES positions.<sup>5</sup>

In fact, on April 2, 2018, OPM issued a report finding that the percentage of African-Americans in the Senior Executive Service fell from 11.4% in fiscal year 2015 to 11% in fiscal year 2016. The report also found that the percentage of women in the federal workforce declined from 44.2% in fiscal year 2009 to 43.2% in fiscal year 2016.<sup>6</sup>

Although OPM’s Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2014 to 2018 had listed diversity as the first internal and external goals for OPM, Dr. Pon struck diversity entirely from the list of Strategic Goals in the Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2018 to 2022.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Trump’s 87 Picks to be Federal Judges are 92% White with Just One Black and One Hispanic Nominee*, USA Today (Feb. 14, 2018) (online at [www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/02/13/trumps-87-picks-federal-judges-92-white-just-one-black-and-one-hispanic-nominee/333088002/](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/02/13/trumps-87-picks-federal-judges-92-white-just-one-black-and-one-hispanic-nominee/333088002/)).

<sup>4</sup> *CDC Gets List of Forbidden Words: Fetus, Transgender, Diversity*, Washington Post (Dec. 15, 2017) (online at [www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/cdc-gets-list-of-forbidden-words-fetus-transgender-diversity/2017/12/15/f503837a-e1cf-11e7-89e8-edec16379010\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.727d1e8a1bef](http://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/cdc-gets-list-of-forbidden-words-fetus-transgender-diversity/2017/12/15/f503837a-e1cf-11e7-89e8-edec16379010_story.html?utm_term=.727d1e8a1bef)).

<sup>5</sup> *New OPM Chief Presses for Civil Service Overhaul, But Administration is Less Interested in Diversity*, Washington Post (May 1, 2018) (online at [www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2018/05/01/new-opm-chief-presses-for-civil-service-overhaul-but-administration-is-less-interested-in-diversity/?utm\\_term=.01ff3b17cbca](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2018/05/01/new-opm-chief-presses-for-civil-service-overhaul-but-administration-is-less-interested-in-diversity/?utm_term=.01ff3b17cbca)).

<sup>6</sup> Office of Personnel Management, *Federal Equal Opportunity Recruitment Program Report to Congress for Fiscal Year 2016* (Feb. 2018) (online at [www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/diversity-and-inclusion/reports/feorp-2016.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/diversity-and-inclusion/reports/feorp-2016.pdf)).

<sup>7</sup> Office of Personnel Management, *Strategic Plan FY2014-2018* (online at [www.opm.gov/about-us/budget-performance/strategic-plans/2014-2018-strategic-plan.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/about-us/budget-performance/strategic-plans/2014-2018-strategic-plan.pdf)); Office of Personnel Management, *OPM Strategic Plan Fiscal Years 2018-2022: Empowering Excellence in Government Through GREAT People* (Feb. 2018) (online at [www.opm.gov/about-us/budget-performance/strategic-plans/2018-2022-strategic-plan.pdf](http://www.opm.gov/about-us/budget-performance/strategic-plans/2018-2022-strategic-plan.pdf)). See also *New OPM Chief Presses for Civil Service Overhaul, But Administration is Less Interested in Diversity*, Washington Post (May 1, 2018) (online at [www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2018/05/01/new-opm-](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2018/05/01/new-opm-)

On March 27, 2018, *CNN* reported that Interior Department Secretary Ryan Zinke told employees, “I don’t care about diversity,” and “I don’t really think that’s important anymore. We don’t need to focus on that anymore.” Secretary Zinke involuntarily reassigned 33 senior executives last June without prior notice, of which more than 40% were women and minorities.<sup>8</sup>

As Vanita Gupta, the President and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, has stated, “our federal government functions best when it is equipped with qualified individuals who meaningfully reflect and represent the country they serve.” As Ms. Gupta also noted: “There is a stunning lack of diversity in the nominations Trump has put forward for judicial seats and executive branch positions. It’s clear he does not value diversity and inclusion.”<sup>9</sup>

Similarly, Bill Valdez, the President of the Senior Executives Association, has noted:

Hiring decisions that create a workforce that does not reflect the changing demographics of our nation are likely to have unintended consequences such as investment decisions that do not address the needs of women and minorities, or the perpetuation of federal policies that have contributed to underrepresentation in the federal workforce.<sup>10</sup>

### **Request for Hearing**

In your recent book with Senator Tim Scott, you personally highlighted the value of diversity and inclusiveness to our nation. You wrote: “We can be unified within our diversity. We can allow our diversity to bring wisdom, texture, and depth to our unity.”<sup>11</sup>

We wholeheartedly agree. A diverse workforce is more efficient and innovative on behalf of the American taxpayers, and it helps establish policies that allow us to better understand the challenges that all Americans face. We believe it is incumbent on Congress to determine how the federal government can take meaningful steps to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that you hold a hearing to examine and evaluate the Trump Administration’s actions relating to diversity and inclusiveness across the federal workforce. We request that the witnesses include Director Pon, Secretary Zinke, and Secretary Azar, as well as any other officials you determine appropriate.

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chief-presses-for-civil-service-overhaul-but-administration-is-less-interested-in-diversity/?utm\_term=.01ff3b17cbca).

<sup>8</sup> Sources: *Zinke Tells Employees Diversity Isn’t Important*, *CNN* (Mar. 27, 2018) (online at [www.cnn.com/2018/03/26/politics/ryan-zinke-diversity/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2018/03/26/politics/ryan-zinke-diversity/index.html)).

<sup>9</sup> *Latest Federal Diversity Report from OPM Shows Little or No Progress and Some Regression*, *Washington Post* (Apr. 2, 2018) (online at [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2018/04/02/latest-federal-diversity-report-from-opm-shows-little-or-no-progress-and-some-regression/?utm\\_term=.c49af8188800](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2018/04/02/latest-federal-diversity-report-from-opm-shows-little-or-no-progress-and-some-regression/?utm_term=.c49af8188800)).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*

<sup>11</sup> Tim Scott and Trey Gowdy, *Unified: How Our Unlikely Friendship Gives Us Hope for a Divided Country* (2018).

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

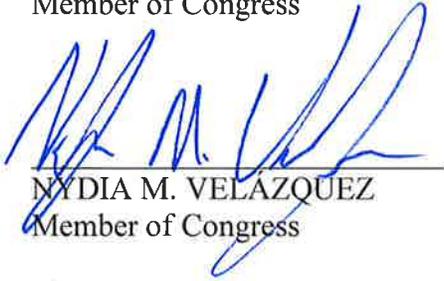
Sincerely,



ALMA S. ADAMS, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress



ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS  
Member of Congress



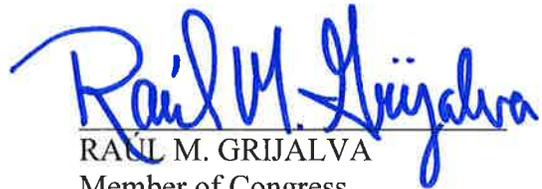
NYDIA M. VELAZQUEZ  
Member of Congress



SHEILA JACKSON LEE  
Member of Congress



EARL BLUMENAUER  
Member of Congress



RAUL M. GRIJALVA  
Member of Congress



ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON  
Member of Congress



MAXINE WATERS  
Member of Congress



ALCEE L. HASTINGS  
Member of Congress



CAROL SHEA-PORTER  
Member of Congress



FREDERICA S. WILSON  
Member of Congress



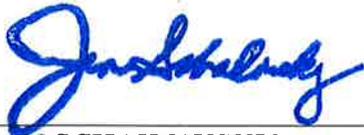
TERRI SEWELL  
Member of Congress



MARK DESAULNIER  
Member of Congress



WM. LACY CLAY  
Member of Congress



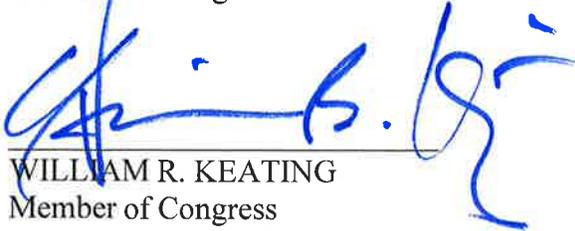
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JAN SCHAKOWSKY  
Member of Congress



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PETER WELCH  
Member of Congress



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WILLIAM R. KEATING  
Member of Congress



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MICHAEL E. CAPUANO  
Member of Congress



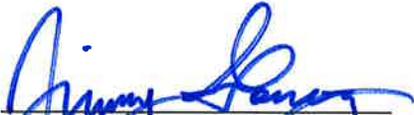
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ADAM SMITH  
Member of Congress



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BRENDA L. LAWRENCE  
Member of Congress



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JIMMY GOMEZ  
Member of Congress



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BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN  
Member of Congress



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JIM COOPER  
Member of Congress



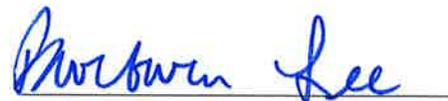
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GERARD E. CONNOLLY  
Member of Congress



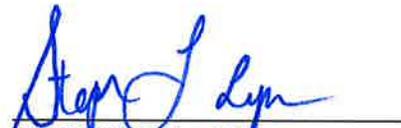
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JAMIE RASKIN  
Member of Congress



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BARBARA LEE  
Member of Congress



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STEPHEN F. LYNCH  
Member of Congress