

January 24, 2019

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representative  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

President Trump, Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

The National Human Services Assembly, an organization comprised of many of the largest national nonprofit human service organizations, stands with the majority of the American people, in urging you to immediately reopen the federal government. The National Human Services Assembly comprises many of the largest national nonprofit human service organizations. In aggregate, members and their affiliates collectively touch, or are touched by, nearly every household in America—as consumers, donors, or volunteers. The National Human Services Assembly's mission is to strengthen our sector to build a connected and engaged nation that promotes and supports human services so everyone can reach their potential and contribute to vibrant, thriving communities.

Over the past 33 days, human service organizations have been directly and indirectly impacted by the closure of multiple federal agencies that partner with our sector to build well-being. In 2017, more than 210,000 community-based human service organizations employed 3.2 million people and delivered approximately \$200 billion in services to individuals, families, and communities across the country.<sup>1</sup> Of that funding, approximately 20 percent comes from the federal government through individual contracts, appropriations, and public grants.

As long as funding is absent for agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, Department of Housing and Urban Development, and The Department of Justice, and more than 800,000 federal employees are unable to work, the delivery of many human services will be disrupted. Furloughed federal employees

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<sup>1</sup> A National Imperative: Joining Forces to Strengthen Human Services in America, Alliance for Strong Families and Communities (2017).

cannot issue grants or contracts to nonprofits, and agencies cannot make payments to reimburse nonprofits for work they already have performed for the government.

While temporary funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is guaranteed through February, many families are considering rationing their remaining funds to prepare for the possible interruption of benefits into March and beyond. Moreover, major sources of funding for domestic-violence shelters are at risk because they are administered by the Department of Justice, which will only continue to operate as long as sufficient salary and expense account carryover funds are available.<sup>2</sup> Further, as the shutdown continues, decreased financial stability will increasingly undermine the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of impacted individuals, families, and communities. The residual impacts of these disruptions are likely to be felt well past the day the government reopens.

On behalf of the human service sector, the National Human Services Assembly urges our nation's leaders to reopen the federal government today, and resolve any other policy differences in separate negotiations.

Sincerely,



Lee Sherman  
President & CEO  
National Human Services Assembly

Copies to all Representatives and Senators

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Justice FY 2019 Contingency Plan (Jan. 10, 2019), <https://www.justice.gov/jmd/page/file/1015676/download>