

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 15, 2018

Secretary Alex Azar
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar,

We write today to demand Scott Lloyd's immediate termination as the Director of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). We are deeply disturbed by the Trump Administration's constant willingness to ignore and bend the rules when it comes to women's rights and reproductive health. Throughout Mr. Lloyd's tenure at ORR, he has abused the powers and privileges of his office to intimidate young women and deny them their constitutional rights. His repeated decisions to impose his extreme ideology on women and girls in defiance of federal law makes him unfit to serve in the federal government.

The public is aware of at least four immigrant teens to whom Mr. Lloyd personally denied access to abortion services, sometimes even over the objections of other staff within ORR. One of those young women was a victim of rape. Thankfully, the federal courts found his efforts to obstruct their access to care unlawful. We fear, however, for other similarly situated women that the courts are not aware of whose bodies and decisions Mr. Lloyd is still trying to control.

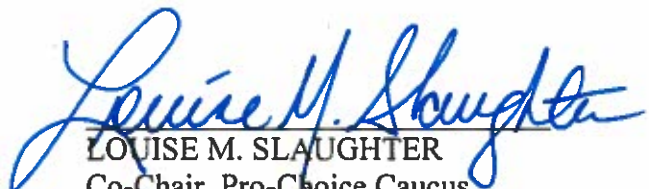
The latest revelation that lawyers who receive federal funding may be prohibited by HHS from discussing abortion rights with these women suggests an ongoing, complete disregard for the rule of law. Based on their conversations with HHS employees, these lawyers are under the impression that such restrictions on communication with their clients are of the "utmost import" to Mr. Lloyd in his capacity as ORR Director. Furthermore, as a lawyer yourself, you should understand the almost sacred significance of attorney-client communication in our judicial system. Lawyers must be able to communicate openly with their clients about their rights. Immigrants in detention rely on their lawyers for honest advice and help in navigating difficult and often frightening situations. Any efforts to disrupt these relationships run contrary to hundreds of years of American legal tradition.

ORR's mission is to "foster health and well-being by providing federal leadership, partnership and resources for the compassionate and effective delivery of human services." Mr. Lloyd, through his treatment of women under his care, has utterly failed to carry out his office's mission and fulfill the oath he took as a government employee to uphold the U.S. Constitution. We therefore ask that you ensure Mr. Lloyd immediately steps down so someone fit to carryout ORR's important duties can assume his role.

Sincerely,



DIANA DEGETTE
Co-Chair, Pro-Choice Caucus



LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER
Co-Chair, Pro-Choice Caucus

Cc: President Donald J. Trump
Chairman Bob Goodlatte, House Judiciary Committee