The Honorable Robert Aderholt Chairman Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies House Committee on Appropriations Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito Chairman Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Senate Committee on Appropriations Washington, DC 20510 The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin Ranking Member Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Senate Committee on Appropriations Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs Aderholt and Capito and Ranking Members DeLauro and Baldwin:

For decades, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) has played a pivotal role in combating unlawful employment discrimination and promoting equal employment opportunities for underrepresented workers, including women, workers of color, workers with disabilities, and veterans. While the repeal of Executive Order 11246 stripped OFCCP of many of these core responsibilities, the agency remains responsible for ensuring disabled workers and veterans are protected against discrimination. That is why the undersigned organizations urge you to provide a minimum of \$111 million for OFCCP, which will fund the necessary staffing and field office presence to ensure OFCCP meets its statutory obligations.

Federal contract workers—who make up more than 20 percent of this country's workforce—rely on the experience and expertise of federal enforcers at OFCCP to effectively enforce anti-discrimination and equal employment requirements under the Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 (VEVRAA) and Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

But effective enforcement requires robust staffing levels in the agency's D.C. office and field offices. OFCCP staff in field offices respond to workers' complaints and conduct proactive review for compliance to help ensure that taxpayer-funded federal contractors are not illegally discriminating against workers. OFCCP staff also provide compliance assistance to arm contractors with tools and resources to comply with the law and prevent discrimination before it

happens. Without adequate OFCCP staff levels and field presence, federal contract workers will become more vulnerable to discrimination that could cost them equal pay, a promotion, or even a job.

Alarmingly, <u>reports</u> from earlier this year indicate that the Labor Department plans to cut capacity at OFCCP by 90 percent and close more than 50 field offices. According to <u>reports</u> from mid-April, most of OFCCP's staff has been placed on administrative leave in a lead up to expected layoffs.

Our veterans and disabled workers deserve a level playing field that provides them the opportunity to succeed on their merits. We urge you to provide a minimum of \$111 million and include bill language requiring the agency to maintain adequate staffing levels and field offices to ensure OFCCP's capacity to promote equal opportunity in employment for federal contract workers. If you have any questions, please contact Michelle Feit at mfeit@nationalpartnership.org.

Sincerely,

A Better Balance

Access Ready Inc.

AFL-CIO

All* Above All

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Civil Liberties Union

Association of People Supporting Employment First (APSE)

Autistic Women & Nonbinary Network

Center for Advancement of Public Policy

Chicago Women in Trades

Clearinghouse on Women's Issues

Coalition on Human Needs

Equal Rights Advocates

Family Equality

Family Values @ Work Action

Feminist Majority Foundation

Institute for Women's Policy Research

Justice for Migrant Women

Legal Momentum, The Women's Legal Defense & Education Fund

MomsRising

Muscular Dystrophy Association

National Center for Law and Economic Justice

National Council of Jewish Women

National Employment Law Project

National Organization for Women

National Partnership for Women & Families

National Women's Law Center Action Fund

National Women's Political Caucus

New Disabled South

Shriver Center on Poverty Law

Union for Reform Judaism

Women of Reform Judaism