

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 7, 2025

The Honorable Russ Vought
Director
The Office of Management and Budget
725 17th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20503

RE: Executive Branch violations of Section 715 of P.L. 118-47

Director Vought,

As Congress continues to work on funding the federal government for Fiscal Year 2026, the White House and political appointees assigned to agencies within the executive branch have been engaged in a widespread campaign of partisan political activities. These activities are in blatant violation of Section 715 of P.L. 118-47, which prohibits federal funds from being used for propaganda purposes “designed to support or defeat legislation pending before the Congress.”¹ These activities also appear to violate the Anti-Lobbying Act² and the Hatch Act.³ We urge you to immediately remove these illegal, partisan messages to comply with the law and hold accountable those who have directed this behavior.

As early as September 30, 2025, federal agencies began publicly posting various notices and other media from official accounts, on official websites, and in official email correspondence that violate Sec. 715’s prohibition on propaganda.

For example, beginning on September 30, 2025, the official website for the Department of Housing and Urban Development displayed a blatantly partisan political banner on their website claiming that the “Radical Left are going to ... inflict massive pain on the American people...”⁴ On October 1, 2025, similar partisan political messages appeared on the websites for the Small Business Administration, the Department of Justice, and the Department of Agriculture, among others.

In addition to website updates, federal employees - including of the Small Business Administration, Department of Labor, Department of Education, and Department of Veterans Affairs - were reportedly directed to set automatic reply email messages containing partisan political propaganda which asserts that “Democrat Senators are blocking passage of H.R. 5371 in

¹ SEC. 715. No part of any funds appropriated in this or any other Act shall be used by an agency of the executive branch, other than for normal and recognized executive-legislative relationships, for publicity or propaganda purposes, and for the preparation, distribution or use of any kit, pamphlet, booklet, publication, radio, television, or film presentation designed to support or defeat legislation pending before the Congress, except in presentation to the Congress itself.

² 18 U.S.C. 1913.

³ 5 U.S.C. 7323.

⁴ <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/government-website-hud-blames-shutdown-on-radical-left-ethics-group-calls-it-blatant-violation-hatch-act/>

the Senate which has led to a lapse in appropriations.⁵” As you well know, these messages are misleading, given that Democrats have voted four times over the last week to fully fund the government only to be rebuffed by our Republican colleagues. But more important, they are clear violations of Section 715, which prohibits the use of federal funds by an agency to publicly support or oppose legislation pending before Congress.

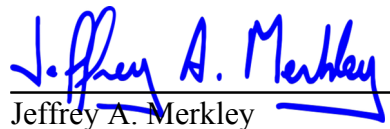
Spirited public debate has its place, but agency resources, including websites or emails, should not be used to send overtly political, and in this case, misleading messages, to the American people.

Congress has enacted longstanding laws to ensure that partisan political activities and propaganda do not impede the government’s ability to serve all Americans. However, given the blatant, systematic, and repeated violations of Sec. 715 of P.L. 118-47, and likely the Anti-Lobbying and Hatch Acts, over the last week, you must immediately remove these partisan messages from all executive branch agency communications and websites.

Sincerely,



Jack Reed
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

⁵ <https://fox59.com/news/national-world/ap-us-news/ap-the-blame-game-is-on-at-federal-agencies-where-political-messages-fault-democrats-for-the-shutdown/>



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



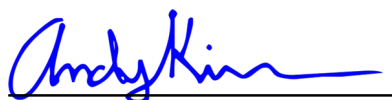
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



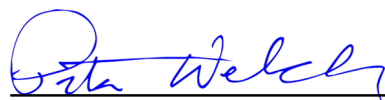
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Andy Kim
United States Senator



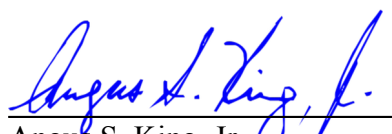
Peter Welch
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



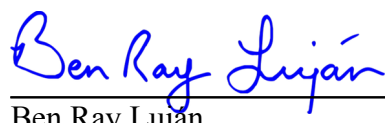
Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator



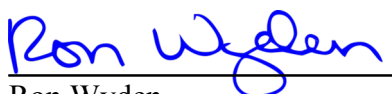
Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



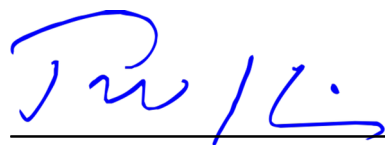
Jon Ossoff
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator