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November 18, 2021

The Honorable Shalanda Young  
Acting Director  
Office of Management and Budget  
725 17<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Ms. Young:

The Safer Federal Workforce Task Force was created to stop the spread of COVID-19, to protect the Federal workforce, and to ensure the continuity of government services. On September 9, 2021, President Biden mandated that all executive branch employees become fully vaccinated by November 22, 2021, or else face formal discipline up to and including removal from Federal employment. The Task Force later issued guidance to agencies indicating that the disciplinary process could begin as early as November 9 for employees who refused to receive the final dose of a COVID-19 vaccine. By law, employers are required to provide employees the opportunity to seek both medical accommodation and religious exemptions with regard to the vaccine mandate.

My office has been inundated with communications from concerned Federal employees, contractors, and members of the armed services who do not believe they have been free to pursue these legally required accommodations. Some believe they have not been adequately consulted on how to seek an accommodation, some believe that they will be retaliated against if they seek an accommodation, and others have sought an accommodation and feel that they are being retaliated against currently. In fact, the templates produced by the Task Force for employees to seek an accommodation encourage religious harassment and seemed designed to shame or dissuade employees from submitting them.

Widespread fear of retaliation by employees for even seeking a legally required accommodation is unacceptable and antithetical to our nation's fundamental freedoms. However that is the reality of the environment the Task Force has created; it is either the result of a failure of leadership, or it is the intended result of an Administration which has sought to undermine Americans' freedom of conscience.

These concerns raise grave questions about the Task Force's preparation and promulgation of these policies, particularly whether it consulted subject matter experts like the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). Please respond to the following questions no later than 6 p.m., November 19, 2021:

The Hon. Shalanda Young

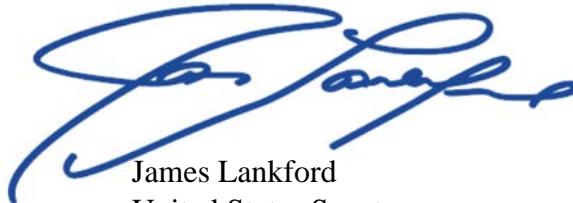
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1. Was the EEOC involved in developing and issuing Executive Orders 14042 and 14043 creating the vaccine mandates for Federal employees and contractors?
2. Did the Task Force include the EEOC in forming guidance to agencies on the implementation of the vaccine mandates with regard to legally required religious and medical accommodations as well as preventing retaliation?
3. Did the EEOC sign off on the religious and medical accommodation guidance forms provided to Federal agencies?
4. Has the Task Force encouraged agencies to consult the EEOC with regard to legally required accommodations and retaliation as they implement the mandate?
5. Is the Task Force providing agencies, federal employees, and federal contractors with information regarding an employee's right to seek a remedy through the EEOC process for allegations of retaliation or the wrongful denial of a religious or medical accommodation request?

In the coming days, I will send an additional request regarding how the Task Force is tracking requests for accommodations, how many have been granted, and additional information. Please reach out to Clark Hedrick on my staff at [Clark\\_Hedrick@hsgac.senate.gov](mailto:Clark_Hedrick@hsgac.senate.gov). Thank you for your attention to this matter.

In God We Trust,



James Lankford  
United States Senator

cc:

Kiran Ahuja  
Director  
U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Robin Carnahan  
Administrator  
U.S. General Services Administration