

Department of Health & Human Services
Office of the Secretary of Health & Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201



1/29/19

From: the Office of the Secretary of Health and Human Services
To: the Speaker of the House of Representatives u/Gunnz011 and Member
u/PresentSale

The Honorable Gunnz011
Speaker of the House
Chairman of GOII
The Capitol Building
First St SE, Washington, DC 20004

The Honorable PresentSale
Authorized Member of GOII
Rayburn House Office Building
45 Independence Ave, Washington, DC 20515

Mr. Speaker, In response to recent Congressional subpoenas being delivered to members of cabinet with regards to an “audit” of the federal government, The Secretary would like to make it abundantly clear to the Speaker, and Congress, that the Secretary is more than happy to engage with the Congress at any point if given due notice. I would, however, state that the use of subpoenas to force members of the cabinet to attend hearings without due notice and due diligence on behalf of the Speaker to find a mutually optimal time for both the Congress and the relevant Secretaries is either a massive oversight or an act of political sabotage meant to, “catch” members of cabinet off guard so as they are purposefully unprepared for these hearings that the Speaker has called.

I must say I sincerely hope the former rather than the latter is the case. I will remind the Speaker that the Departments I alone oversee constitutes over half a million federal employees and over a trillion dollars in taxpayer spending. To expect myself to be prepared to offer detailed and accurate answers to questions about the departments I oversee at the whim of the Speaker is absolutely ludicrous. If this is some attempt to constrain the executive with a death by a thousand cuts mentality simply because the Speaker wishes to hinder the efforts of a Democratic President and his cabinet, I would be forced to wholeheartedly condemn such an action.

If it were the case that the Speaker and his caucus were participating in political theater in an effort to score political gain, I would assert that such an action would be totally unprecedented and incredibly dangerous. I would hope the Speaker understands the important work I and my fellow cabinet members do and that to waste our time for the benefit of the Speaker's party would be beyond an egregious perversion of the American political system, and would set a horrible precedent. I do hope this is not the case and the Speaker's actions are merely an oversight on his part.

To reiterated the Secretary is more than willing to cooperate with a Congressional subpoena should one be issued, however, it is the belief of the Secretary that such an action would be absolutely unnecessary and the Secretary is more than happy to work with whatever relevant parties in Congress to find a mutually beneficial time for the Secretary to speak with Congress.

Signed,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aimee Vert". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the "Signed," text.

AV200

**Secretary of Health & Human Services, Education, Housing, Labor, Veterans'
Affairs**