

(Dues paying AFGE members who wish to sign this letter can do so [here](#).)

Dear President Kelley,

We, the undersigned rank-and-file members of AFGE, strongly oppose your recent call for an end to the government shutdown no matter the cost. While we share your concerns about the impact of the shutdown on federal workers and the American public, calling for an unconditional end to the shutdown ignores the voices of AFGE's membership and the historic opportunity that we have to press Congress to protect the interests of working people by protecting affordable healthcare, saving public services, constraining executive power, defending our rights as workers and power as unions, and standing up to one of the most anti-worker administrations in U.S. history. AFGE National has done much for federal employees through litigation and other means. But on this issue, you do not speak for us.

This administration and its Republican congressional allies have taken multiple steps to destroy the social safety net that we public servants toil to administer for Americans, including:

- Cutting \$1 trillion from healthcare spending over the next decade, which will lead to an estimated 12 million fewer Americans having insurance;¹
- Causing the loss of 20 percent of staff at the Social Security Administration² and thousands of staff at the Dept. of Veterans Affairs, destroying thousands of federal jobs and endangering Americans' access to benefits and healthcare;³
- Giving unprecedented budgetary powers to the executive branch, allowing the president to cancel programs funded by Congress in violation of the constitutional separation of powers;
- Terminating \$4 billion in research grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation, upending decades of medical research⁴; and, most recently,
- Using the shutdown as an excuse to end SNAP benefits for 42 million Americans and refusing to use \$5 billion in contingency funds, starving one out of every eight Americans for no reason other than political expediency.

This administration has launched some of the fiercest attacks on the federal workforce and U.S. workers in a generation. It lawlessly ended collective bargaining for most federal workers. It has hobbled the National Labor Relations Board, Federal Labor Relations Authority, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services, and Merit Systems Protection Board, leaving those bodies unable to protect workers and enforce limits on employer and administration power. Instead of applauding our allies in Congress and sister unions who are standing up to this administration and fighting for healthcare for all Americans, you parrot the Administration's talking points.

¹

<https://kffhealthnews.org/news/article/one-big-beautiful-bill-medicaid-work-requirements-affordable-care-act-immigrants/>

² <https://www.axios.com/2025/08/07/trump-social-security-customer-service>

³ <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2025/aug/11/us-veterans-affairs-agency-medical-staff-departures>

⁴ <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-025-02748-8>

Critically, caving and allowing the passage of a bad funding bill will ultimately harm federal employees as well. While the shutdown has adversely impacted federal employees through the stress of missed paychecks and added uncertainty, abandoning the fight for a good budget harms us materially; current and former federal employees are among the millions of Americans whose healthcare costs will rise without the passage of a better budget. And siding with the administration to call for a “clean CR” signals to the administration that they can continue to attack federal workers—by terrorizing us, worsening our working conditions, carrying out illegal RIFs, etc.—with impunity. This fight is about a better deal for the American people, but also about self-preservation and self-interest for us and for every working person who depends on a functioning government and fair labor protections. We ask AFGE to urge Congress to hold the line because we believe it would be in the best interest of all AFGE members in the long run.

We took an oath to defend the Constitution. And an injury to one is an injury to all. Vulnerable Americans are going hungry this month and stand to lose healthcare. We do not want to delay receiving our paychecks. But as public servants, we urge you to push to end the shutdown not on terms that sell out working-class Americans but on terms that will preserve the critical lifelines our government provides. Together with our allies, let’s win a shutdown that provides food and healthcare for the many, instead of emboldening the few trying to play chicken with our jobs and people’s lives.

We have a duty to fight for those we serve. Accordingly, we dissent from your position, and urge you to stand with our congressional and union allies who have stood up to this administration.

In solidarity,

1. David Casserly, steward, Local 12
2. Connor Durocher, Local 2110
3. Austin Beller, steward, Local 1966
4. Chelsea Rudman, Local 12
5. Julia Simon, Steward, Local Fair Practices Coordinator, Local 1969
6. Aimee Potter, Local 789
7. Sheen Justin, Local 228
8. Linh Nguyen, Local 62
9. Vasil Cobo, Local 62
10. Mae apGovannon, National Pride Committee Co-chair, Steward, Local 2157
11. Patricia Doyle, Local 3911
12. Latisha Thompson, Local 1793
13. Micah Niemeier-Walsh, Vice President, Local 3840
14. Betsy Zucker, Local 2157, retiree member
15. Stephanie Groleau, Local 1495
16. Karlos Garcia, Local 1201
17. Ericka Farrell, Local 3331
18. Devon Behrer, Local 1534

19. Robert Hitt, Local 21389
20. Sally Schuster, Local 62
21. Celia Laskowski, Local 1534
22. Sara J Holmes, Local 104
23. Dhrupad Nag, Local 1534
24. Emily Byrnes, Local AFGE 704
25. Shani Doss, Local 2883
26. Jessica Randle, Local 2157
27. Miles Batson, Local 3607
28. Stephanie Sampedro, Local 252
29. Catherine A. Mulligan, Local 1395, Officer (40+ years)
30. Mathias Quackenbush, Local 2157
31. Tracy L. Simpson, Local 3197
32. Rui Carlos Pereira de Sa, Local 2419
33. Anice Chenault, Local 1568
34. Christopher Rudolph, Local 1924
35. Jeffrey Phaup, Local 3380
36. Carey Chet Campbell, Local 1534, Executive Vice President
37. Sheryl Grier, Local 2782
38. Elizabeth Prosser, Local 12, Steward
39. Robin Johnson, Local 3428
40. Laura Missett, Local 1923
41. Jason Massengale, Local 0987
42. Dane Lauritzen, Local 17
43. Tihesha Climer, Local 3369, Union rep
44. Steven Anderson, Local 1444, Treasurer
45. Ann Becker, Local 3917
46. Eric Swenson, Local 3917
47. Jessica D. Ingram, Local 4156
48. Heriberto Leon, Local 704
49. Steven Frith, Local 1770, Vice President
50. Tracy Pondo, Local 2883
51. Apostolos Toompas, Local 3428
52. Nina Sparr, Local 2157
53. Sarah Mattson, Local 12, Steward
54. Fernando Ramirez, Local 3320
55. Kristen Kreisel, Local 2883
56. Taylor Barnes, Local 12
57. Hannah Echt, Local 3840 Steward
58. Christine Salmon, Local 4060
59. Elizabeth Besozzi, Local 4060
60. Ashlyn Stevens, Local 4060
61. Josh Zeier, Local 2110
62. Travis Howell, Local 3172

63. Patti Davis-Sato, Local 3448, Secretary/Treasurer
64. Leo Baunach, Local 12
65. Sophia Hart, Local 12
66. Elsbeth Hamilton, Local 12
67. Peter Meyer, Local 12
68. Devon Sanders, Local 1969, Steward
69. Chandler Bursey, Local 1273, President
70. Kim Coryat, Local 2578
71. Sheryl Ann Galchutt, Local 1924
72. Chris Huddleston, Local 14
73. Ashaki Robinson, Local 476, President
74. Michelle Underhill, Local 2107
75. Tyler Bane, Local 3432
76. Robert Hitt, Local 2139
77. Jason Phillip Cummings, Local 1216
78. Michael Pasqua, Local 704, Steward
79. Katy Shipman, Local 1410