



National Council of HUD Locals

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES
AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO

Council 222

October 1, 2025

The Honorable Scott Turner, Secretary
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410

Dear Secretary Turner:

I am writing on behalf of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) Council 222, which represents bargaining unit employees at the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The purpose of this correspondence is to formally protest and demand immediate corrective action regarding a partisan political message that appeared on HUD's internal "HUD at Work" website. The message in question states: "The Radical Left are going to shut down the government and inflict massive pain on the American people unless they get their \$1.5 trillion wish list of demands. The Trump administration wants to keep the government open for the American people."

This message constitutes a clear violation of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. §§ 7321-7326), which prohibits federal employees from engaging in political activity while on duty, in the federal workplace, or using government resources. Specifically, under 5 U.S.C. § 7323(a)(1), federal employees are barred from using their official authority or influence to interfere with or affect the result of an election, which includes advocating for or against political parties, candidates, or partisan groups. The message overtly criticizes "the Radical Left" (a partisan reference to Democrats or progressive political figures) while promoting the "Trump administration" in a favorable light, framing it as a defender of the American people against a potential government shutdown. This is partisan advocacy, not neutral government communication, and its placement on an official HUD intranet site—accessible to federal employees during duty hours—represents an impermissible use of government property and resources for political purposes, in violation of 5 U.S.C. § 7324.

Furthermore, this message serves as an inappropriate scare tactic directed at HUD employees, implying imminent harm to the public and workforce due to partisan actions. Such rhetoric creates a chilling effect on employees' rights to engage in protected activities and fosters a hostile work environment by injecting partisan fearmongering into the federal workplace. This violates federal standards of conduct under 5 C.F.R. § 2635.101(b)(7), which requires employees to act impartially and avoid the appearance of using public office for private gain or political advantage.

In addition to these statutory and regulatory violations, the message breaches several provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between HUD and AFGE Council 222, effective as of the date of this letter:

- Article 6, Section 6.09(2) - Political Activities: This section explicitly states that employees' political activities must be consistent with the Hatch Act and its amendments. By posting this partisan message on an official HUD platform, the Department has facilitated or endorsed conduct that directly contravenes the Hatch Act, thereby violating the CBA's requirement to adhere to these standards.
- Article 58, Section 58.08 - Personal Use: While this section addresses limited personal use of government systems, it prohibits any use that violates law, including the Hatch Act. The "HUD at Work" website is an administrative electronic communication tool, and posting political content thereon extends beyond permissible use, constituting a misuse of government resources.
- Article 58, Section 58.10 - Unauthorized Use: This prohibits the transmission of illegal, inappropriate, or offensive messages via HUD's electronic systems, including those that are "patently offensive" on bases such as political affiliation. The message's partisan framing is offensive and divisive, creating an environment of political intimidation.
- Article 58, Section 58.13 - Monitoring Email (extended by analogy to website content): While not directly applicable, the principle of requiring "cause" for monitoring underscores the CBA's emphasis on protecting employees from unwarranted intrusions or exposures to improper content. Posting this message without cause exposes employees to partisan material in violation of workplace neutrality.

We demand the following immediate actions to remedy these violations:

1. Remove the message from the "HUD at Work" website and any other HUD platforms where it may appear.
2. Issue a Department-wide corrective statement to all employees via email and the intranet, clarifying that the message was unauthorized, reaffirming HUD's commitment to Hatch Act compliance, and reminding employees of their rights under the law and CBA.
3. Conduct an internal investigation to identify those responsible for posting the message and take appropriate disciplinary action, consistent with Article 12 of the CBA.
4. Provide training to all supervisors and IT administrators on Hatch Act compliance and proper use of HUD electronic systems, as required under Article 58, Section 58.03.
5. Meet with AFGE Council 222 representatives within 10 business days to discuss preventive measures and any impact on bargaining unit employees, pursuant to Article 49 (Mid-Term Bargaining) and Article 3 (Labor Management Forum).

Failure to address these violations promptly may result in the filing of grievances under Article 51 of the CBA, Unfair Labor Practice charges with the Federal Labor Relations Authority, and complaints with the Office of Special Counsel regarding Hatch Act violations.

We stand ready to collaborate with HUD to ensure a neutral, respectful, and lawful workplace for all employees. Please contact me directly at (770) 882-7729 to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,



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