

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 1, 2017

Mr. Jason Botel
Senior White House Advisor for Education
The White House
1700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20006

Mr. Phil Rosenfelt
Acting Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Mr. Botel and Mr. Rosenfelt:

We are deeply troubled to learn of reports that several employees who were hired by President Trump's transition team at the U.S. Department of Education ("the Department") have a history of making racist, bigoted, and misogynistic statements toward African-American and Muslim communities, transgender people, and women. While it now has been reported that at least one employee in question will no longer be joining the Department, we remain concerned about the employment decisions and hiring practices being established by the Trump Administration.

President Trump ran a divisive campaign filled with dangerous rhetoric and we are disappointed to see that this rhetoric appears to be continuing into his presidency. We are committed to fighting discrimination of any kind and to ensuring that political appointees and career employees at the Department—and throughout the Administration—will respect and serve *all* students, including students of color, LGBT students, immigrant students, international students, students with disabilities, homeless and foster youth, and students of all religious backgrounds and beliefs.

We are requesting a briefing for our staffs regarding the Department's efforts to promote a diverse and inclusive workforce free of prejudice or malice, the Administration's vetting procedures for appointees, and how the Department intends to handle reports of inappropriate communications or behavior from staff.

Thank you in advance for your prompt attention to this critical matter. If you have any questions, or would like to further discuss compliance with this request, please contact Beth Stein, General Counsel for the Ranking Member of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, at (202) 224-2931.

Sincerely,



PATTY MURRAY
United States Senator



TAMMY BALDWIN
United States Senator



BERNARD SANDERS
United States Senator



ELIZABETH WARREN
United States Senator



CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator



AL FRANKEN
United States Senator