

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 25, 2012

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

As you are aware, under current law the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is required to issue an annual “Indicators of Welfare Dependence” report. Past issues of this report have provided Congress and the public valuable information about Americans’ dependence on various public benefit programs, including Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF or cash welfare), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly called food stamps), and Supplemental Security Income (SSI). These reports also provided detailed data about employment, educational attainment, health coverage, teenage births, non-marital births, child support collection and poverty, among other matters related to welfare dependence.

Since its initial release in 1997, the report has been regularly updated and issued by HHS. Through 2008, with the sole exception of 1999, this report was faithfully issued on an annual basis by Republican and Democratic Administrations alike. However, the most recent version of this report was issued by the prior Administration on December 30, 2008. Since then, HHS has failed to issue even one of these annual reports required by law during the nearly four years you have been Secretary. It also means that the 2009 annual report is now more than 1,000 days overdue.

As leaders of the Congressional Committees that are supposed to receive this annual report, we request your answers to two questions:

1. Why has HHS failed to issue this annual report required by law during the entire time you have been Secretary?
2. When will HHS next issue this annual report as required by law?

We look forward to your response to these questions by no later than the close of business on Thursday, November 1, 2012.

Sincerely,



Representative Dave Camp
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means



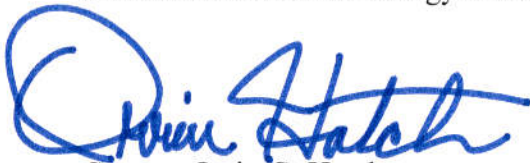
Representative John Kline
Chairman
House Committee on Education and the Workforce



Representative Frank Lucas
Chairman
House Committee on Agriculture



Representative Fred Upton
Chairman
House Committee on Energy and Commerce



Senator Orrin G. Hatch
Ranking Member
Senate Finance Committee



Senator Michael Enzi
Ranking Member
Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Pat Roberts', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the name.

Senator Pat Roberts
Ranking Member
Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee