January 11, 2017

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the millions of Americans we represent, our organizations write to express our strong opposition to the confirmation of Rep. Tom Price to serve as Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). We also wish to convey our deep opposition to the effort to repeal the core elements of the Affordable Care Act, privatized Medicare and cap Medicaid funding to the states.

The stated mission of HHS is to, "enhance and protect the health and well-being of all Americans." But rather than promote the interests of all, Rep. Price has consistently promoted the interests of the well-to-do and the well-connected at the expense of the vast majority of Americans. In fact, Rep. Price has fought to weaken the very programs that he has been nominated to oversee. His views, which are far out of the mainstream, are incompatible with the goals of serving as Secretary of an agency that has a profound impact on the health and security of every American family.

As a member and, later, Chair of the House Budget Committee, Rep. Price supported budget proposals that granted tax cuts to profitable corporations and the wealthy and then sought to offset the lost revenue by cutting federal support for programs that reduce poverty and hunger, increase access to health care, give children a better start and provide other vital services. Chairman Price is a proponent of radical proposals to cut billions from Medicare, converting it to a voucher which would lose value over time and shift more and more costs onto seniors and people with disabilities. He also supports increasing the age of Medicare eligibility from 65 to 67, which would increase the number of older adults without health care coverage. Rep. Price supports capping Medicaid, a plan that would force states to reduce health services and eligibility for the poor and likely cut other state services to make up for lost federal revenue. Further, he supports the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, a plan that the Urban Institute estimates would cause 30 million people to lose their coverage by 2019 through the loss of ACA tax credits, elimination of the Medicaid expansion and the collapse of the individual insurance market.

More recently, Rep. Price has proposed budget process changes that would enable automatic across-the-board cuts to Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid and other critical services. The plan would shift the entire burden of deficit reduction onto low- and middle-income families without requiring the wealthy or profitable corporations to contribute through tax increases. Cynically, the plan would not require the Congress to debate or vote on spending cuts, even to Social Security. Members of Congress would be shielded from the consequences of allowing deeply unpopular cuts to take effect and citizens would lose their ability to influence budgetary decisions.

As consumers have become increasingly worried about their ability to obtain needed medicines, Rep. Price has been dismissive of proposals to address price gouging by pharmaceutical manufacturers. He referred to legislation requiring Medicare to negotiate drug prices with drug companies as "a solution in search of a problem.

During his tenure in the Congress, Rep. Price has established a record of extremism demonstrating that his values are out of step with the country. The Senate should not entrust the leadership of HHS to an individual who does not understand the challenges of the majority of Americans. We urge you to oppose his confirmation.

Sincerely,

9to5, National Association of Working Women
30 for 30 Campaign
AFL-CIO
Aging Life Care Association®
Alliance for Retired Americans
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Federation of Teachers
American Indian Mothers Inc.
Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union
Bend the Arc Jewish Action
Black Women's Roundtable
Center for Community Change
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Law and Social Policy
Center for Medicare Advocacy
Center for Popular Democracy
Center for Science in the Public Interest
Citizens Council for Human Rights
Coalition on Human Needs
Communications Workers of America
Community Catalyst
CREDO
Disabled Rights Action Committee
EMILY's List
Family Equality Council
Families First
Families USA
Friends of the Earth
GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace & Agricultural Implement Workers of America
Just Harvest
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
Main Street Alliance
Medical Mission Sisters, North America
Mi Familia Vota
Mommie Activist and Sons
MomsRising
MoveOn.org Civic Action
NAACP
National Advocates for Pregnant Women
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Black Justice Coalition
The National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare
National Council of Jewish Women
National Domestic Workers Alliance
National Education Association
National Employment Law Project
National Health Law Program (NHeLP)
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Nurses United
National Partnership for Women and Families
National Physicians Alliance
National Women's Health Network
National Women's Law Center
People For the American Way
People Demanding Action
People's Action
Physicians for a National Health Program
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Pride at Work
Project Inform
Public Citizen
Public Justice Center
Religious Institute
Service Employees International Union
Social Security Works
UNITE HERE
United Steelworkers

Voices for Progress
Voto Latino
UltraViolet
Universal Health Care Action Network
Witness to Mass Incarceration
Working America