

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 17, 2025

The Honorable Lori Chavez-DeRemer
Secretary
Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Secretary Chavez-DeRemer:

As Members of the Inland Empire Congressional Delegation, we write to express our extreme concerns regarding your announcement to implement a nationwide “phased pause” in the Job Corps program. This led to the abrupt changes for the Inland Empire Job Corps Center at 3173 Kerry St. in San Bernardino that serves our communities, forcing more than 120 students to leave.¹ The Job Corps program has, for over 50 years, offered tuition-free education for low-income young people ages 16 through 24 to help complete their high school education, train them for good-paying careers, and help them get jobs. As such, we demand you strictly follow the federal court’s June 4, 2025, temporary restraining order and June 25, 2025, preliminary injunction. We also urge the Department to take immediate action to reverse and withdraw plans for the “phased pause” on the Job Corps program nationwide and ensure the Inland Empire Job Corps Center continues to stay open and serve students as it did prior to your May 29, 2025, announcement.²

The Job Corps program currently serves around 25,000 young Americans nationwide, offering them a lifeline and the opportunity to learn critical vocational and technical job skills to enter the workforce. Since 2023, more than 6,200 Californians have enrolled in Job Corps, with more than 2,400 of them coming from the counties of Riverside, San Bernardino, and Los Angeles. Until the abrupt and chaotic changes, the Inland Empire Job Corps Center served 340 students, teaching them much-needed skills to work in careers and trades industries, such as automotive, construction, homeland security, manufacturing, transportation, health care, and others.

The program enjoys strong bipartisan support, as we joined 199 Republican and Democratic members writing in support of the Job Corps after your announcement.³ As you are aware, Congress appropriated nearly \$1.8 billion to all Job Corps programs in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 (Public Law 118-47), which you voted for as a Member of Congress,⁴ and these programs remain funded through the FY 2025 Continuing Resolution (Public Law 119-4) that passed in March. The “phased pause” announced by the Department of Labor (DOL) on May 24, 2025, and to be implemented by June 30, 2025, runs counter to not only this law, but also the Trump Administration’s stated goals of putting American workers first. This decision will take away opportunities for American workers, especially at a time when many industries such as construction and manufacturing face labor shortages.

In your May 24, 2025, press release, you mention an “orderly transition for students, staff, and local communities,” but staff were not given prior notice, and students were left hanging out to dry.⁵ Many students lived on the Inland Empire Job Corps campus and were forced to leave and find other accommodations within a few days. Inland Empire staff were also given barely any notice and ordered to close the program as soon as possible. Our offices were also not given prior notice on the announcement or closures.

Your May 24, 2025, press release also mentions that as “the transition begins, the department is collaborating with state and local workforce partners to assist current students in advancing their training and connecting them.

¹ <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/osec/osec20250529>

² <https://apnews.com/article/job-corps-lawsuit-doge-cuts-trump-95cb2d50b9718ba5296f4695d48799cc>

³ <https://bishop.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/rep-bishop-guthrie-lead-199-members-of-congress-in-bipartisan-charge-to-save-job-corps>

⁴ <https://clerk.house.gov/Votes/202432>

⁵ <https://www.sbsun.com/2025/06/02/inland-empire-job-corps-closes-as-trump-administration-pauses-funding/>

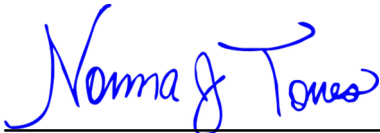
with education and employment opportunities.” Yet students have been forced to end their training and go home without proper referrals to another program, leaving them struggling to find the next step in their career.

We request the following materials and written responses to these questions within 14 days:

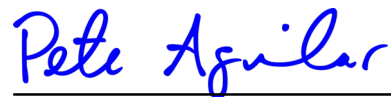
1. At what time did you notify Inland Empire Job Corps campus staff of the “phased pause,” and what were the instructions given to them?
 - a. Following the June 4, 2025, temporary restraining order and June 25, 2025, preliminary injunctions, what actions has DOL taken to ensure that campus staff and students are able to resume their training and education?
2. A “phased pause” implies that the Job Corps program will resume at some point. What are the DOL’s plans to resume the Job Corps programs prior to the preliminary injunction?
3. DOL states in the May 24, 2025, press release that as the transition begins, “the department is collaborating with state and local workforce partners to assist current students in advancing their training and connecting them with education and employment opportunities.”
 - a. What resources were provided to Inland Empire Job Corps students to continue their vocational and technical education elsewhere during this “phased pause” of the Job Corps program?
 - b. Some students also live on campus. What resources and options were provided to Inland Empire Job Corps center students to find housing, including if they are homeless or lack financial means to obtain housing?
 - c. Following the June 4, 2025, and June 25, 2025, court-ordered injunction on your announcement, what actions and steps have been taken to ensure students who were displaced are able to return to the Inland Empire Job Corps?
4. Job Corps centers are operated by hardworking staff. What impact will the closure of these centers have on the employment status of the staff? What resources will be provided to employees, and will they be tailored to the various roles carried out at the Job Corps?
5. Local communities have been referring vulnerable young people to Job Corps for years, trusting your department's commitment. These partnerships took years to build—how are you going to rebuild that trust when community leaders now know your 'commitment' can be rescinded without warning?"
 - a. What communications have you provided to state and local communities and partners regarding this “phased pause?”

We demand that DOL take swift action to reopen the Inland Empire Job Corps Center and allow students to return and resume their program. Thank you for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to a prompt response.

Sincerely,



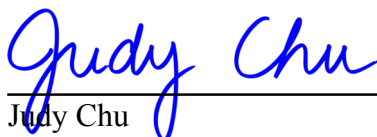
Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress



Raul Ruiz, M.D.
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Judy Chu
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Mark Takano
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