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UNITED STATES
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ROSA L. DELAURO
3RD DISTRICT, CONNECTICUT

February 7, 2019

CO-CHAIR, DEMOCRATIC STEERING AND
POLICY COMMITTEE

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FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,
AND RELATED AGENCIES

The Honorable Alex M. Azar II
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Azar:

To follow up on my meeting with Administration for Children and Families Assistant Secretary Lynn Johnson, I write to again urge you immediately rescind the waiver granted to the State of South Carolina that will allow for discrimination in adoption and foster care agencies. I also conveyed this request to Assistant Secretary Johnson in our meeting on January 24, 2019.

As the Chairwoman of Labor-Health and Human Services-Education Appropriations Subcommittee, I strongly oppose the use of taxpayer dollars to discriminate against potential parents because of their religion or sexual orientation. Discrimination has absolutely no place in our child welfare services, whether it is anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, or anti-LGBTQ discrimination.

Assistant Secretary Johnson stated that she did not issue this waiver “carte blanche” to apply to all states, but if you fail to rescind this waiver, it is an invitation to other states to pursue identical waivers. I urge you to rescind this waiver and deny any other state that may seek the same waiver. Put simply, we have a compelling interest to place foster children in safe, healthy, and permanent homes—not to discriminate against individuals who want to adopt or foster children.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rosa L. DeLauro".

Rosa L. DeLauro
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives