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## RELEASE: Rep. Adams, Democrats Raise Concerns Over Education Department Capacity During Shutdown

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### Rep. Adams, Democrats Raise Concerns Over Education Department Capacity During Shutdown

**WASHINGTON, DC—**Today, **Congresswoman Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. (NC-12), Ranking Member of the House Education Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development**, led [a letter](#) signed by 22 House Democrats to U.S. Department of Education Secretary Linda McMahon and Office of Management and Budget Director Russell Vought raising concerns over the Education Department's capacity, timelines, and follow-through during the government shutdown.

In the letter, lawmakers raised concerns over the shutdown's impact on the government, which has already faced major operational issues in 2025: **"The [Education] Department has gone forward with another round of layoffs during the shutdown... Our Committee recently sent a letter to the Office of Management and Budget outlining concerns about staffing losses across the Department, including in civil rights, K-12, and special education offices. This letter follows up specifically on [the Office of Postsecondary Education], which is now operating with limited capacity. Those cuts are already being felt by students, borrowers, and colleges."**

The letter emphasized how implementing provisions in the One Big Beautiful Bill Act will require significant staff capacity and resources now threatened by shortages, saying, **"The Reimagining and Improving Student Education (RISE) Committee is working through new repayment rules, loan caps, and phaseouts that affect tens of millions of borrowers. The committee met with limited public input at the close of each day and without a dedicated civil rights voice at the table. The Department has said it plans to publish proposed rules later this year and move quickly. That work will require adequate staff, clear guidance, and reliable operations, not just at FSA, as well as clear communication with borrowers and institutions."**

Lawmakers questioned whether cuts leave the Department able to meet its obligations: **"Taken together, these developments raise questions about the Department's capacity to meet its Congressionally-mandated responsibilities. Who is handling grants, rulemaking, and stakeholder engagement at OPE? Who is staffing the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) and its compliance reviews? Who is processing borrower cases at FSA while new repayment rules are being written? If the Department intends to meet its legal duties on time, Congress needs to see the plan and staffing behind it."**

The lawmakers are calling for a response from the Department by Friday, November 14, addressing the concerns outlined in the letter, including a list of staffing cuts and the Department's updated shutdown contingency plan.

[The full letter can be found here.](#)

For press inquiries, contact Congresswoman Adams Communications Director Kaleb Harmon by email at [kaleb.harmon@mail.house.gov](mailto:kaleb.harmon@mail.house.gov) or by phone at (202) 875-4063.

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