Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

December 2, 2015

The Honorable Sylvia Mathews Burwell
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell:

It has come to our attention that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has failed to submit an annual report to Congress regarding the activities of the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR), in violation of federal law. Section 413(a) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as amended, requires the Secretary of HHS to submit an annual report to Congress "no later than the January 31 following the end of each fiscal year[.]"

The FY2014 report – which was due no later than January 31 of this year – is still outstanding, and must be produced immediately.

In its FY2016 "Justification of Estimates for Appropriations Committees," HHS requested over $1.6 billion for ORR. This request illustrates the exponential growth in ORR's budget in recent years. Indeed, as recently as FY2012, ORR received $768,334,000 in funding – or less than half of what it currently seeks.

Our nation is presented with serious economic and security threats emanating from our refugee resettlement programs. Congress cannot, and must not, issue a blank check to ORR, especially at a time when the Administration is actively in defiance of federal law.

We look forward to the immediate submission of ORR's FY2014 Annual Report to Congress.

Very truly yours,

Senator Jeff Sessions

Congresswoman Marsha Blackburn

Senator Richard Shelby

Congressman Lamar Smith