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November 23, 2009

The Honorable Hilda Solis
Secretary
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Solis:

Today more than ever, current retirees and American workers planning for their retirement are seeking assurances that their retirement income is being managed effectively, and they will receive the pension benefits they have been promised. We trust you would agree that increased access to information regarding the state of their pension plans' finances are critical tools in providing this security.

Accordingly, we request you improve pension plan transparency by providing the public electronic access to important financial information currently collected and maintained by the Department. Specifically, we ask you to direct the Department's Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) to post on the internet the Form 5500s filed in ERISA Public Disclosure System (EPDS) and presently maintained in the Department's Public Disclosure Room.

As you know, EPDS contains a database of publicly available forms detailing critical financial information on Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) plans. One form, the M-1, is currently available online. However, an arguably more important form, Form 5500, is not. Filed annually with the Department, Form 5500 provides the most comprehensive accounting of a private pension plan's status. We understand that Form 5500 is electronically available in the Public Disclosure Room in the Department's Washington, DC office; but outside of Washington, it is only available via a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. Limiting the public to two options – a trip to Washington, DC, or a cumbersome FOIA request – hardly seems an effective means of ensuring transparency and encouraging access to these important documents.

For these reasons, we respectfully request you take immediate action to increase the information available to millions of workers and retirees by providing online access to Form 5500 as quickly as possible. If it is your decision to not make these filings publicly available, we would

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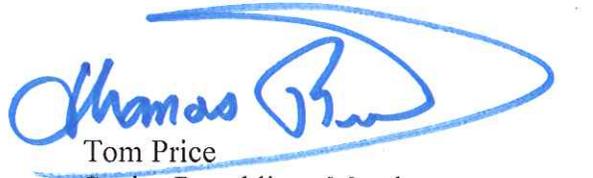
request an explanation regarding your choice to prevent this information from being readily accessible to workers and retirees.

We thank you for your consideration of this matter and look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,



John Kline
Senior Republican Member



Tom Price
Senior Republican Member
Subcommittee on Health, Employment,
Labor, and Pensions

cc: The Honorable George Miller, Chairman