

## **DECLARATION OF REPRESENTATIVE PETER J. ROSKAM**

I, Peter J. Roskam, declare as follows:

1. My full name is Peter James Roskam. I am over the age of 18 and am competent to testify to the matters that are the subject of this Declaration.

2. I am currently serving my sixth term as the Congressional Representative for the 6th District of Illinois.

3. For many months my staff and I have been in contact with Education Secretary Betsy DeVos and the U.S. Department of Education regarding decisions related to how defaulted student loan borrowers are serviced. In particular, I have questioned the Department's cancellation of the planned procurement for private collection activities with agencies ranked as top performers, by the Department's own assessment, based on their success in working with defaulted borrowers. These decisions are impactful for jobs in my state, for student loan borrowers who need timely assistance to ensure they can meet their financial obligations, and for taxpayers.

4. It has come to my attention that there was a representation made before the Court late last week that the Department of Education postponed their most recent proposed recall of accounts to address the concerns of some Members of Congress. I further understand that it was represented to the Court that the concerned Members were satisfied by those intervening interactions with the Department. I am writing to the Court to convey that at no time did my staff or I communicate satisfaction with the Department's thinking.

5. To the contrary, the Department offered no specific feedback regarding their developing plans and intentions before my staff received an email the morning of Friday, July 13, from the Department indicating their intention to resume the proposed recall later that same day. In fact, my interest in seeing a better path forward for both borrowers and taxpayers was clearly

communicated, as was my ongoing interest in interacting with the U.S. House Education and Workforce Committee and the U.S. House Appropriations Committee on such a resolution.

6. My interest in such an effort was reflected in language included in the FY 2019 funding bill passed by the U.S. House Appropriations Committee last week that requires the Department to establish performance targets for its debt collection activities and in a Senate committee report directing the Department not to recall certain borrower accounts from the private collection agencies and to extend the term of the contract for these firms whose award term extensions expire in April 2019. Despite these efforts by House and Senate appropriators, the Department announced on Friday, July 13, its intention to move forward on the recall.


7. The announcement appears to have immediately been followed by the filing of an Emergency Motion for a Temporary Restraining Order, requesting the Court of Federal Claims intervene. In response, it is my understanding that the Court will conduct an additional hearing on this matter later this week. I'm pleased this is the case as any suggestion the Department has sufficiently responded to my concerns is simply false, and I appreciate the opportunity to communicate this before the Court now.

8. In closing, I would simply note that I am struck by the lack of transparency around which the Department is operating, especially given the significance of its decisions to millions of borrowers, the taxpayers supporting their educational pursuits, and the livelihood of hundreds of individuals in my district and around the country who work closely with borrowers in need.

9. If the Court would like additional information regarding my interactions with Department of Education officials, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office.

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated: July 17, 2018

  
Peter J. Roskam