

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 7, 2017

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Leader McConnell, Leader Schumer, Speaker Ryan, and Leader Pelosi:

We write to urge House and Senate leadership to work together to urgently and responsibly extend funding for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) without the inclusion of harmful provisions that would reduce coverage among people who get health insurance under the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, and Medicaid. CHIP is a critical program that provides health coverage to millions of children and must be reauthorized immediately. It does not make sense, however, to pass any legislation that simultaneously harms children and families by undermining other important health programs. No one should have to lose coverage for others to maintain it.

A bipartisan framework is the surest and most responsible path to quickly reauthorize CHIP. After all, CHIP has a long history of bipartisan support, and was the byproduct of a bipartisan agreement in 1997 on the importance of investing in our children's care. Unfortunately, the recent bill passed by the House deviated from this commendable legacy. The highly partisan bill seeks to provide healthcare for some at the expense of others, undermining CHIP's mission. This bill weakens coverage for too many Americans, cutting funding for financial assistance for middle- and working-class Americans who purchase subsidized coverage in the Marketplaces under the Affordable Care Act. It also reduces the Prevention and Public Fund by more than \$6 billion, crippling programs that improve access to vaccines for children, opioid treatment, youth suicide programs, and diabetes prevention services. There is broad, bipartisan agreement on a policy to extend CHIP for five years, but neither chamber of Congress has yet scheduled a vote to do so without also including policies that would undermine care for millions of Americans.

A number of organizations devoted to the health care of Americans support legislation that extends funding for CHIP and have also expressed opposition to the offsets included in the House bill. The March of Dimes stated that it "opposes the decision to fund important public health priorities...with monies from the Prevention and Public Health Fund." The Service Employees International Union (SEIU) found it "disappointing that this legislation includes offsets that undermine our communities' access to coverage and services." The Campaign for

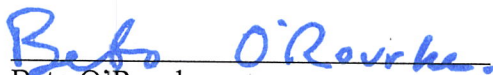
Tobacco-Free Kids expressed in a letter that “reauthorization of CHIP and funding for community health centers need not come at the expense of our nation’s investment in prevention.” And according to the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities, the bill would result in up to 688,000 Americans losing insurance in the individual market, and “would hurt low- and moderate-income individuals and families who miss a payment or even part of a payment for any reason, such as a costly home or car repair.”¹ Leadership must not take these concerns lightly, and work together to not incorporate damaging offsets opposed by so many.

Nine million children rely on CHIP, which has played a fundamental role in lowering the uninsured rate among children down to a record 4.5 percent.^{2,3} CHIP provides comprehensive, low-cost health coverage for services including routine check-ups, immunizations, doctor visits, prescriptions, dental and vision care, and emergency services. Federal funding for CHIP expired over two months ago, and as a result, many states across the country are preparing to terminate children’s health coverage. As families begin receiving notices that they may lose CHIP coverage, they will undoubtedly be left worried and wondering how they will pay for their children’s care.^{4,5}

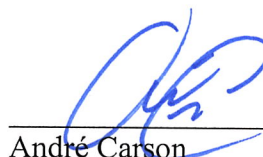
We must not continue to delay – every additional day puts children at risk for losing access to these core health services. While we are encouraged by ongoing discussions regarding the program, it is long past time for Congress to act together in this endeavor. The continuing uncertainty leaves states unable to adequately plan their budgets, and, moreover, too many are being forced to prepare for the worst case scenario: abandoning our mutual commitment to children’s health.

Families throughout the country are depending on us to ensure that their children have healthcare coverage. We all share a commitment to promoting the well-being of children in our country, and we look forward to promptly considering bipartisan legislation to extend funding for CHIP.

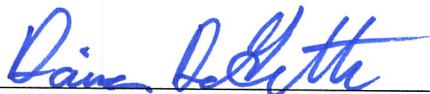
Sincerely,



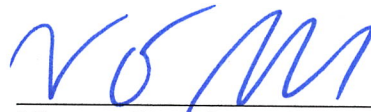
Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress

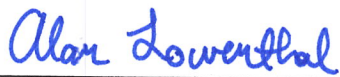
¹ CBPP, “Up to 688,000 Would Lose Insurance Under House Bill”

² Medicaid.gov, CHIP

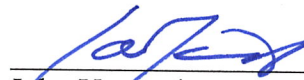
³ Georgetown University Health Policy Institute, “Nation’s Uninsured Rate for Children Drops to Another Historic Low in 2016”

⁴ Washington Post, “States prepare to shut down children’s health programs if Congress doesn’t Act”

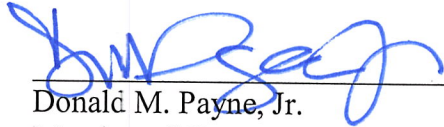
⁵ Colorado, “Families to Begin Receiving Letters on Future of CHIP+”



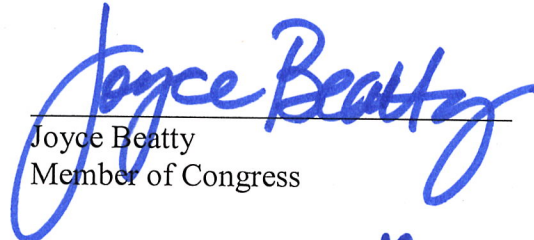
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



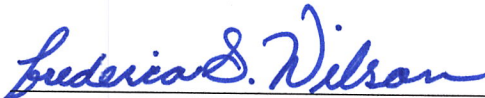
John Yarmuth
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



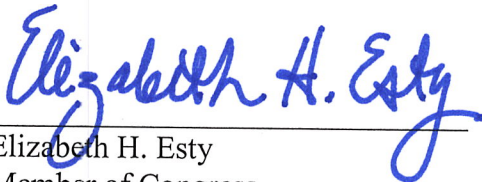
Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



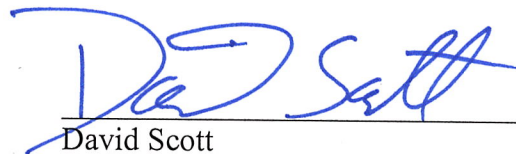
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



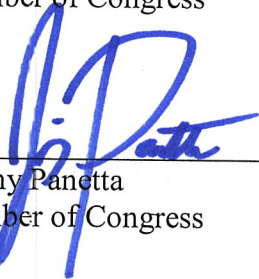
Michelle Lujan Grisham
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Elizabeth H. Esty
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



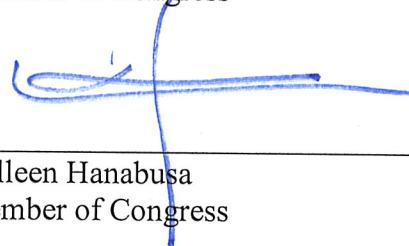
Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



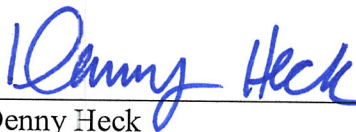
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



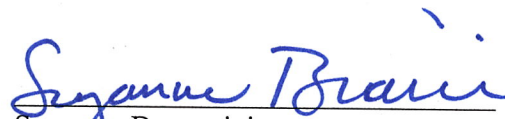
A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



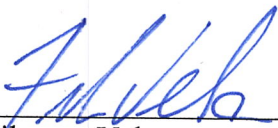
Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress



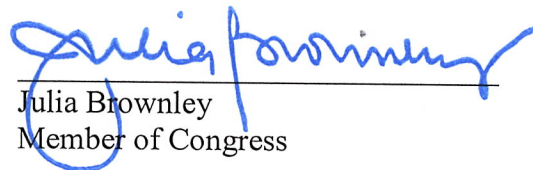
Denny Heck
Member of Congress



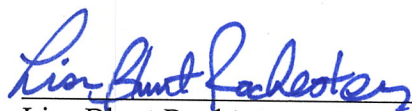
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



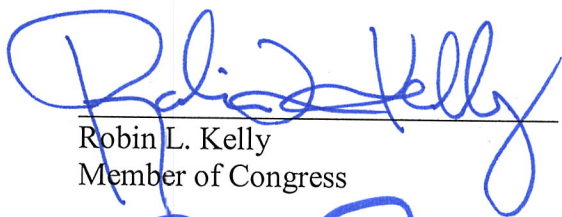
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



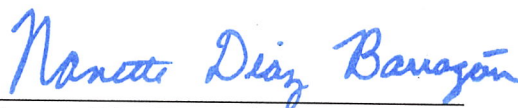
Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress



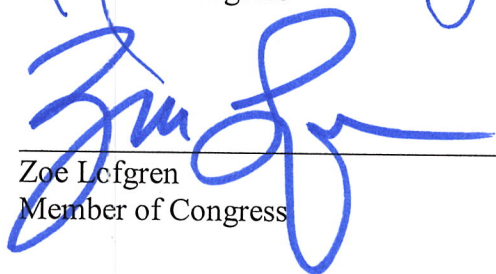
Terri Sewell
Member of Congress



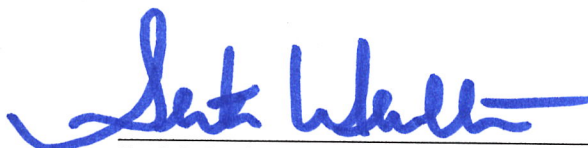
Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



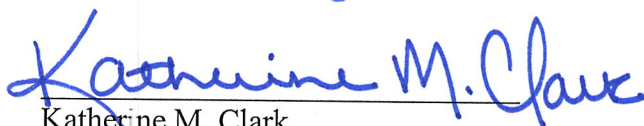
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



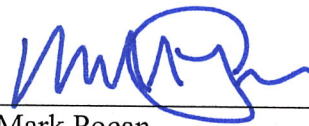
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



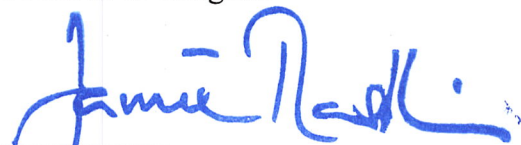
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Katherine M. Clark
Member of Congress



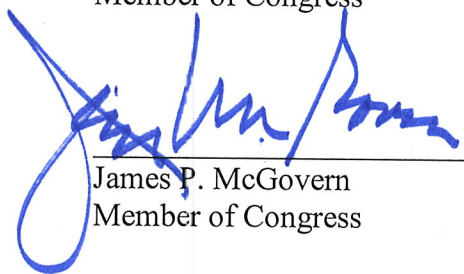
Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



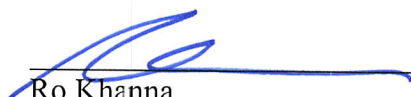
Mark Takano
Member of Congress



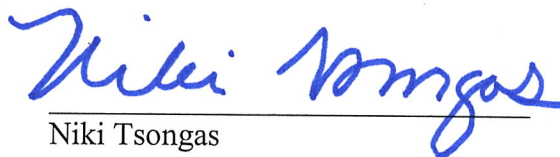
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



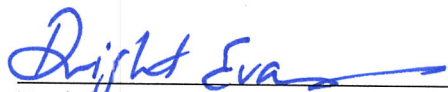
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



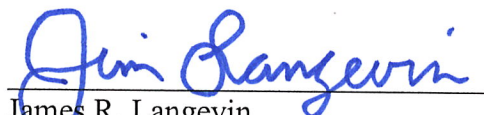
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



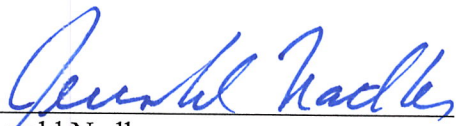
Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress




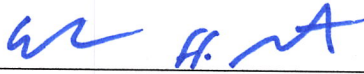
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress

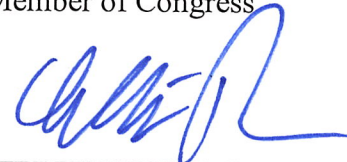


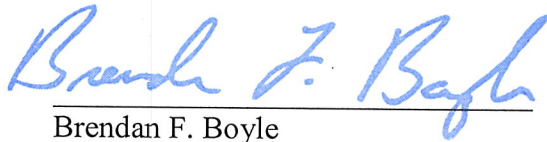
James R. Langevin
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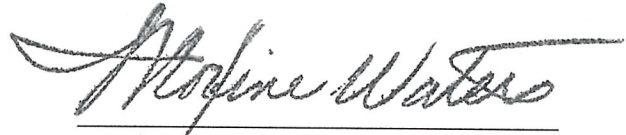

Jerrold Nadler
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Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

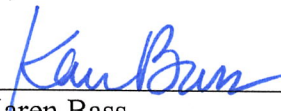

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

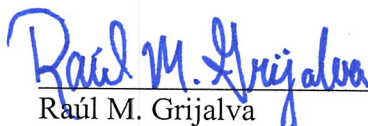

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

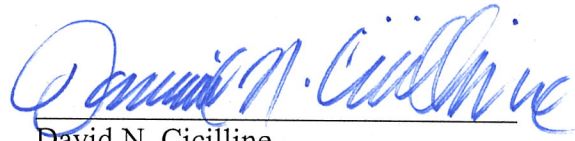

Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress

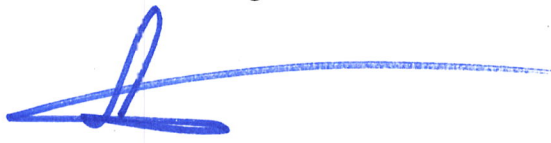

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

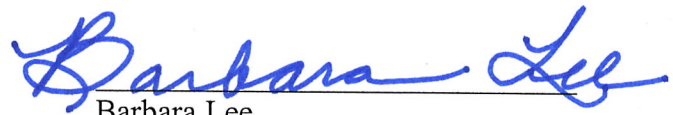

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

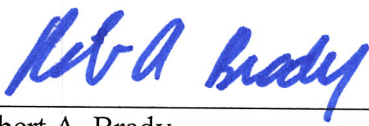

Karen Bass
Member of Congress

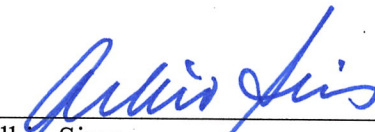

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress


David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

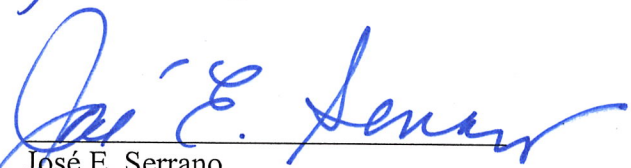

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

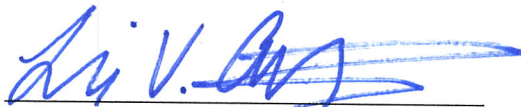

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress


Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress

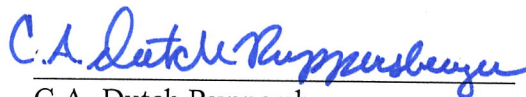

Albio Sires
Member of Congress


Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

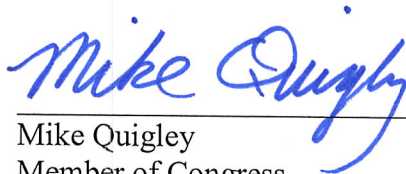

José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



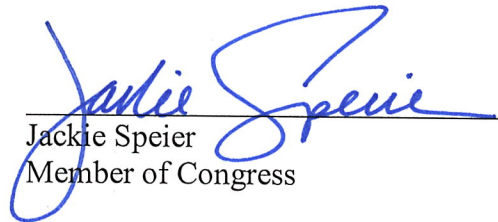
Luis V. Gutiérrez
Member of Congress



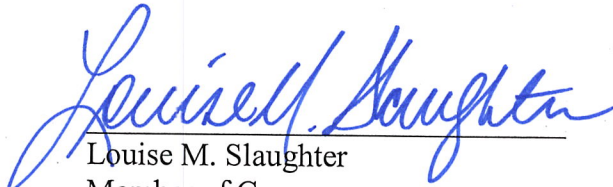
C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress



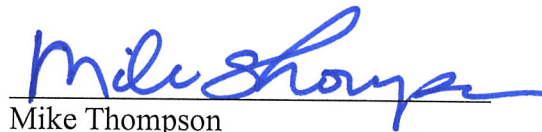
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



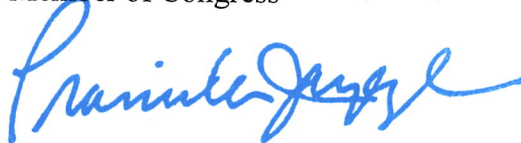
Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



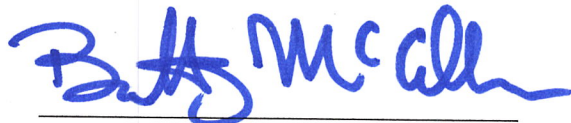
Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Val Demings
Member of Congress



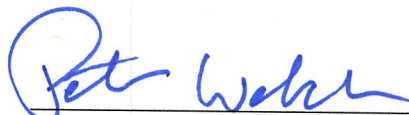
Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



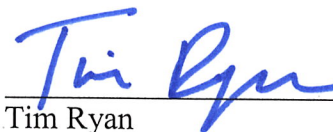
Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



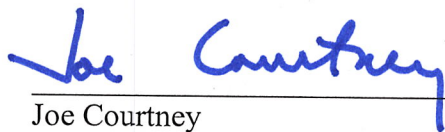
Charlie Crist
Member of Congress



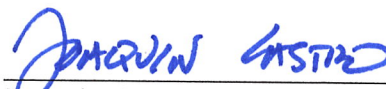
Peter Welch
Member of Congress



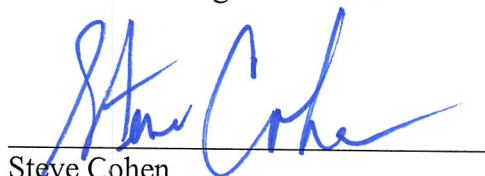
Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



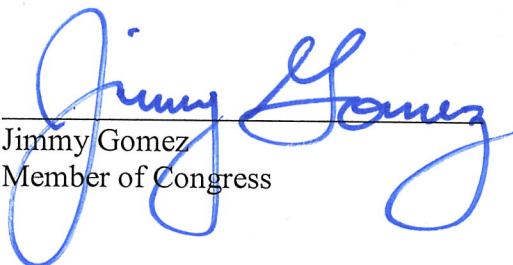
Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



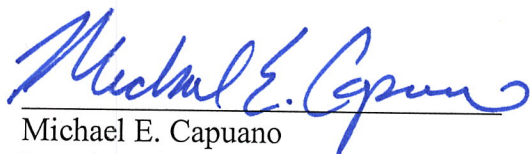
Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress





Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

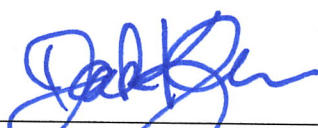


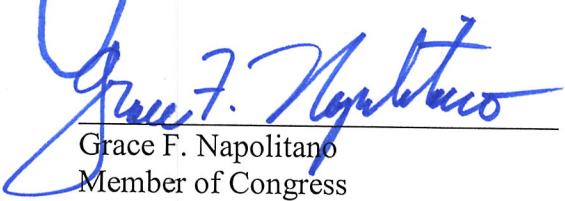
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress

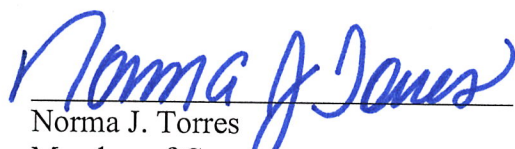

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress

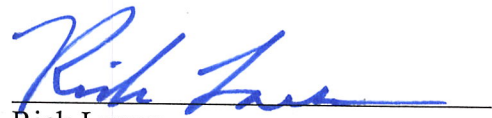

Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress

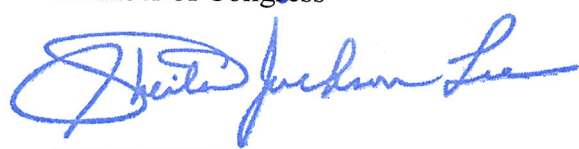

John B. Larson
Member of Congress

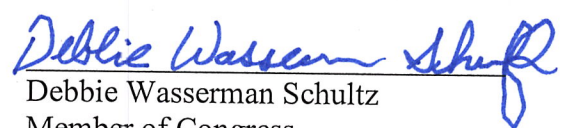

Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

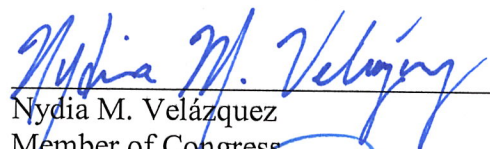

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

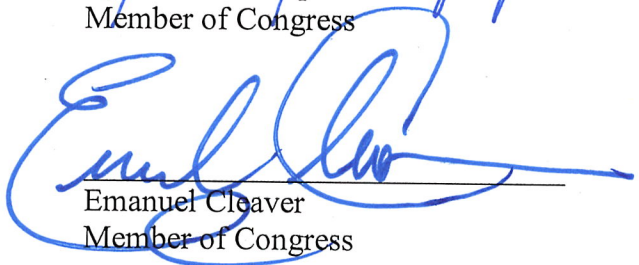

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

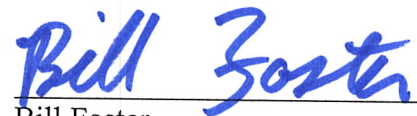

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

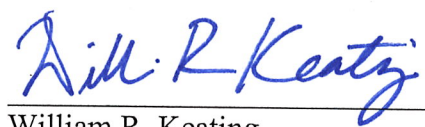

Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress

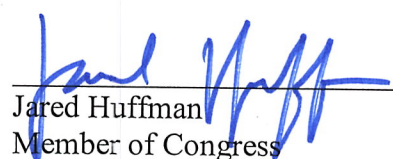

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

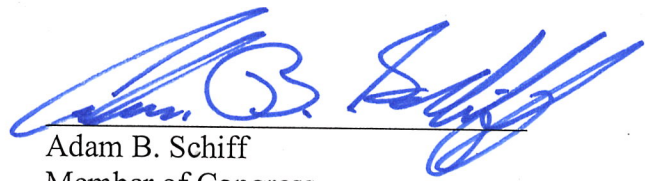

Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress

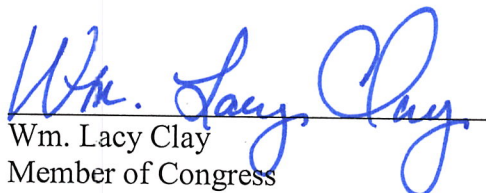

Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress

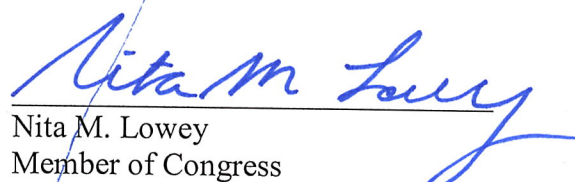

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

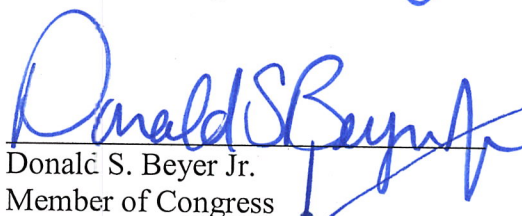

William R. Keating
Member of Congress

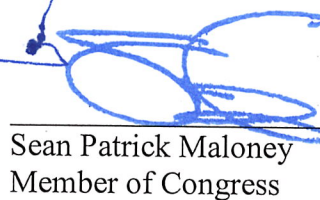

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

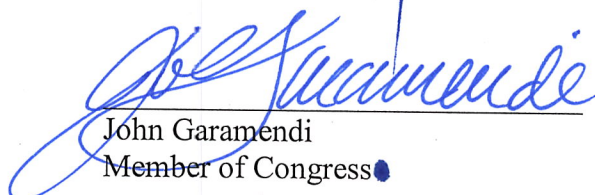

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

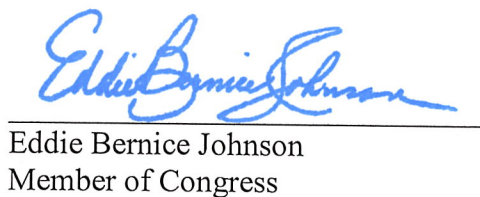

Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress

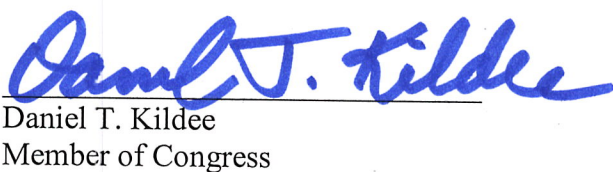

Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress

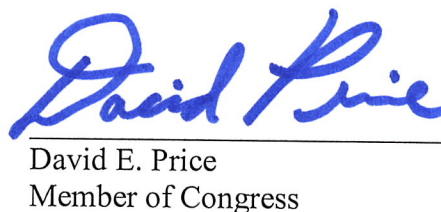

Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress

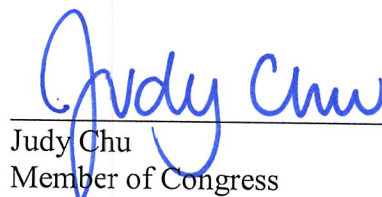

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress


John Garamendi
Member of Congress

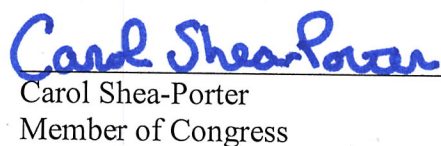

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress

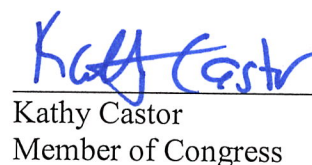

Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

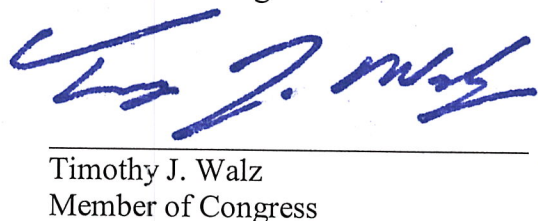

David E. Price
Member of Congress

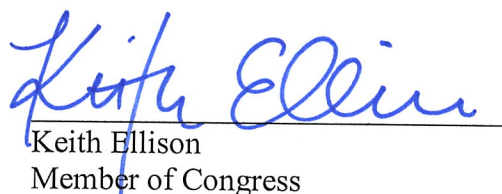

Judy Chu
Member of Congress


Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress


Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress


Kathy Castor
Member of Congress


Timothy J. Walz
Member of Congress


Keith Ellison
Member of Congress


Al Green
Member of Congress