

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

June 29, 2016

The Honorable John Kerry  
United States Secretary of State  
Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry,

We write to urge the State Department to immediately and unreservedly exercise its leadership to ensure that the United Nations (UN) take concrete steps to eliminate the cholera epidemic introduced to Haiti in 2010 by waste from a UN peacekeeper camp, and to comply with its legal and moral obligations to provide cholera victims with access to an effective remedy.

A recently revealed internal UN report confirms that the Haiti mission, known as MINUSTAH, was discharging untreated waste into Haiti's environment from several peacekeeping bases, and continued this unacceptable practice after the cholera outbreak. The official cumulative death toll since 2010 — nearly 10,000—makes Haiti's epidemic the worst cholera epidemic of modern times, but recent scientific studies suggest that the true death toll may be three to ten times higher. Since we last wrote to Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon in December 2014 urging action, the epidemic's damage to the people of Haiti and to the UN's credibility has become more catastrophic, while the UN's response to the emergency has dwindled. Cholera increased in the first three months of 2016 compared to the previous year.

While the deaths, illness, and evidence of malfeasance mounted, UN Assistant Secretary-General Pedro Medrano Rojas, who met with Congress as the UN's point person for responding to the epidemic, left office in June 2015 and was not replaced. The UN continues to refuse to even discuss providing compensation for the losses incurred by those killed and sickened by the cholera it brought to Haiti, and there is no notable progress in its proclaimed efforts to provide the water and sanitation infrastructure necessary to control the cholera epidemic.

In calling for a more effective response to the UN cholera epidemic, we are joining the weight of world opinion, both inside and outside the UN. Five of the UN's own human rights experts—four UN Special Rapporteurs and the UN's Independent Expert on Human Rights in Haiti—wrote to the UN Secretary-General in October 2015 that “it is essential that the victims of cholera have access to a transparent, independent and impartial mechanism that can review their claims and decide on the merits of those claims in order to ensure adequate reparation...” Amnesty International has stressed that “the legacy of the UN in Haiti, and particularly of MINUSTAH, will be greatly determined by the way the United Nations responds to this very important situation.”

In July 2015, 154 Haitian-American groups and leaders from across the United States asked you to ensure that the United States' support for UN immunity in U.S. courts did not result in

impunity for the UN's damage in Haiti. At a recent hearing in the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit, the panel of judges questioned why the State Department had not used its diplomatic powers to press for a more just UN response. A judge asked the U.S. Attorney to concede that the result of leaving the victims without a remedy would be "very, very bad."

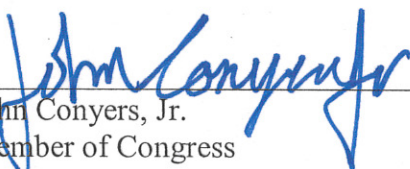
While we do not wish to take a position in the litigation, we are deeply concerned that the State Department's failure to take more leadership in the diplomatic realm might be perceived by our constituents and the world as a limited commitment to an accountable and credible UN. As the Boston Globe Editorial Board recently wrote, Congress and the Department of State "have a moral duty to lead the way, not follow — outside the courtroom walls."

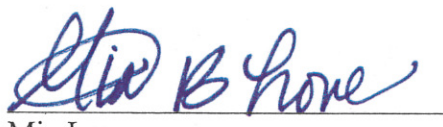
Each day that passes without an appropriate UN response is a tragedy for Haitian cholera victims, and a stain on the UN's reputation. As the Special Rapporteurs stated, "the denial of the fundamental right of the victims of cholera to justice and to an effective remedy is difficult to reconcile with the United Nations' commitment to 'promote and encourage respect for human rights.'" We are especially concerned that the UN's refusal to comply with its legal responsibility for cholera deeply undermines the organizations' rule of law and democracy-building work throughout the world that American taxpayers support so generously.

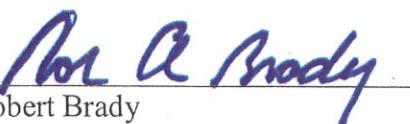
Mr. Secretary, we respectfully urge the Department of State to treat the issue of a just and accountable UN response to Haiti's cholera with the urgency that 10,000-100,000 deaths and catastrophic damage to the UN's credibility deserves. A just resolution is imperative to protecting the human rights of victims, and to preserving the UN's role as a champion for human rights.


Your leadership in this noble and urgent endeavor is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

  
John Conyers, Jr.  
Member of Congress

  
Mia Love  
Member of Congress


  
Robert Brady  
Member of Congress


  
Alan Lowenthal  
Member of Congress

  
James R. Langevin  
Member of Congress

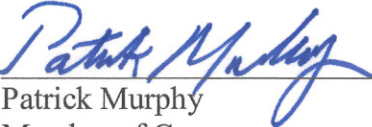
  
Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress

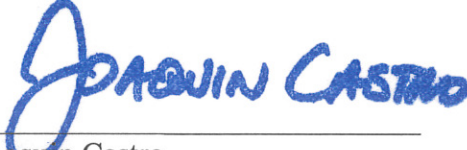
  
Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress

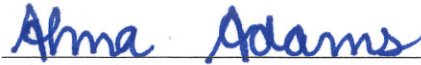
  
Michael McCaul  
Member of Congress

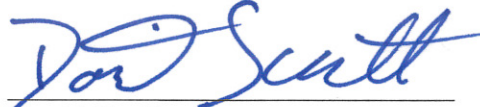
  
Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

  
Frederica S. Wilson  
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Patrick Murphy  
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Joaquin Castro  
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Alma Adams  
Member of Congress


  
David Scott  
Member of Congress

  
Dan Kildee  
Member of Congress

  
Frank Pallone  
Member of Congress

  
Cedric Richmond  
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Alan Grayson  
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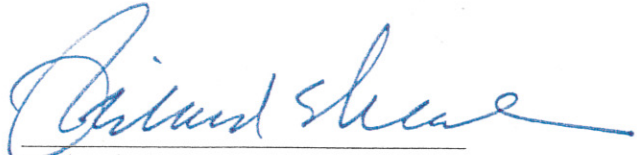
  
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress

  
William R. Keating  
Member of Congress

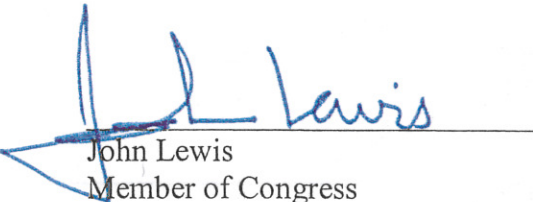




Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



Richard Neal  
Member of Congress



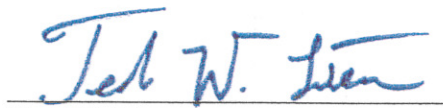
John Lewis  
Member of Congress



Karen Bass  
Member of Congress



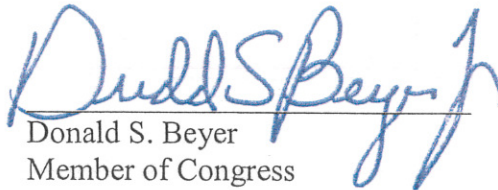
Marc Veasey  
Member of Congress



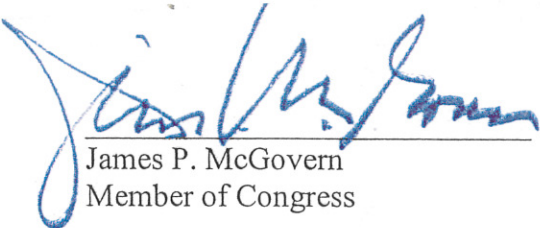
Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress




Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan  
Member of Congress



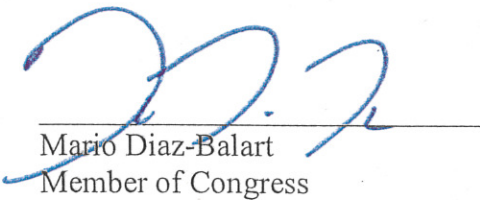
Donald S. Beyer  
Member of Congress



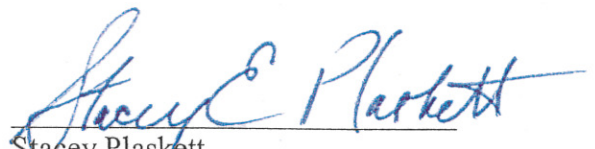
James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



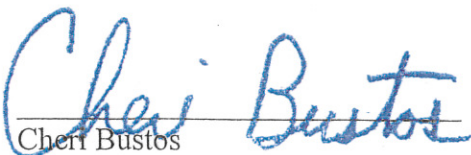
Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart  
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Stacey Plaskett  
Member of Congress



Chen Bustos  
Member of Congress



Marcia Fudge  
Member of Congress



Tim Walz  
Member of Congress



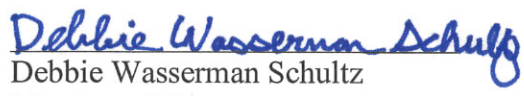
Jim McDermott  
Member of Congress



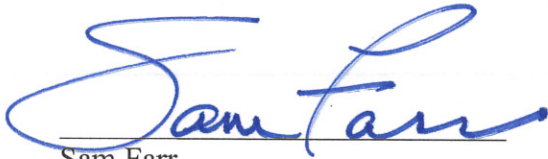
Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



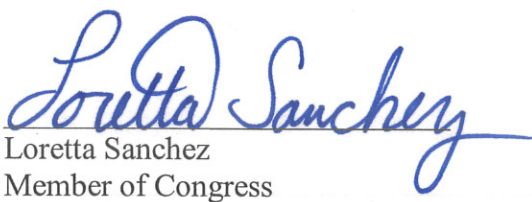
Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



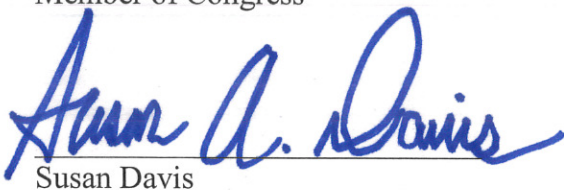
Sam Farr  
Member of Congress




Terri Sewell  
Member of Congress



Loretta Sanchez  
Member of Congress



Susan Davis  
Member of Congress



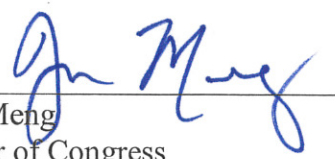
Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



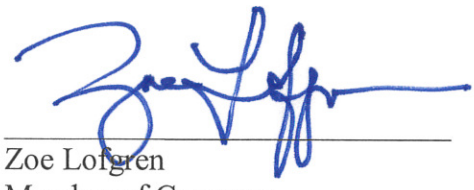
Brenda Lawrence  
Member of Congress



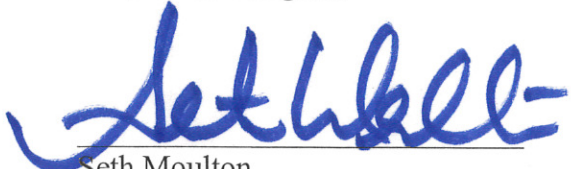
Robin Kelly  
Member of Congress



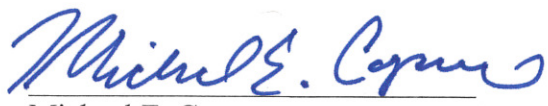
Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



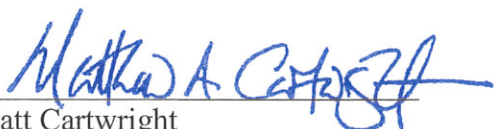
Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



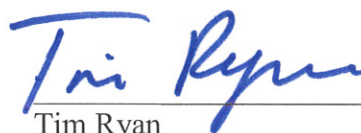
Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



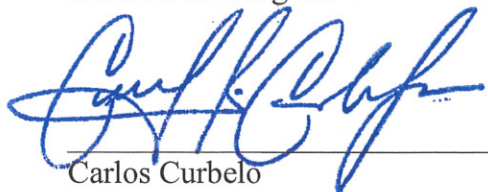
Michael E. Capuano  
Member of Congress



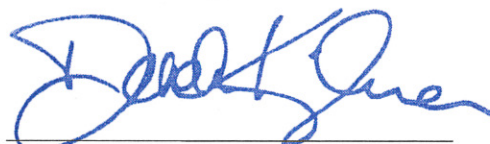
Matt Cartwright  
Member of Congress



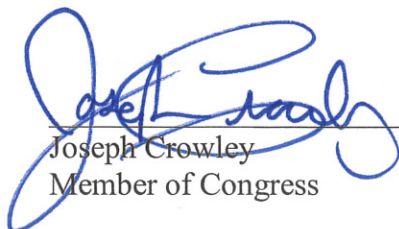
Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress



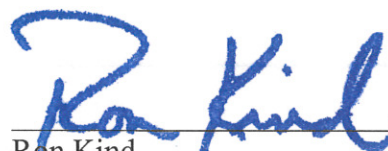
Carlos Curbelo  
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



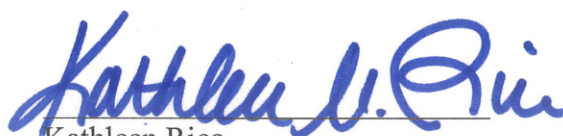
Joseph Crowley  
Member of Congress



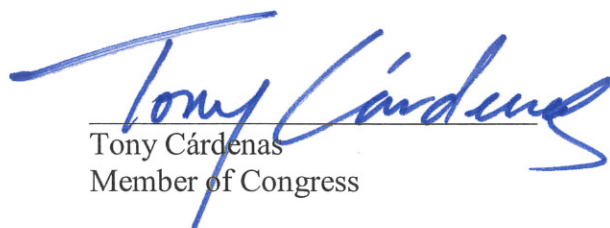
Ron Kind  
Member of Congress



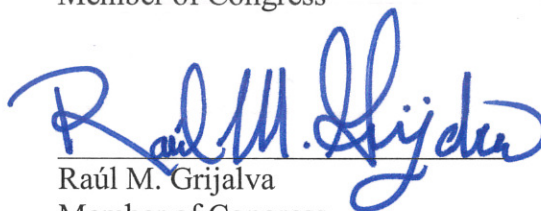
Mark Takano  
Member of Congress



Kathleen Rice  
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress



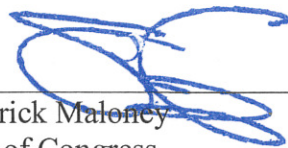
Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



Lee Zeldin  
Member of Congress



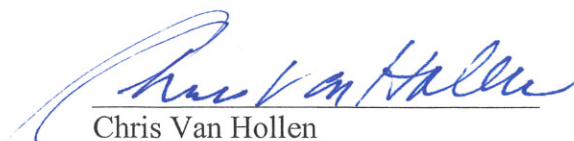
Dave Loebsack  
Member of Congress



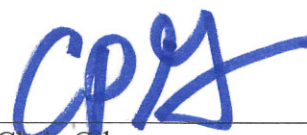
Sean Patrick Maloney  
Member of Congress



Hakeem Jeffries  
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen  
Member of Congress

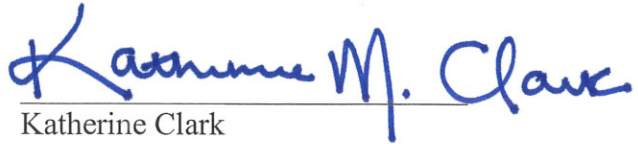


Chris Gibson  
Member of Congress





Michael M. Honda  
Member of Congress



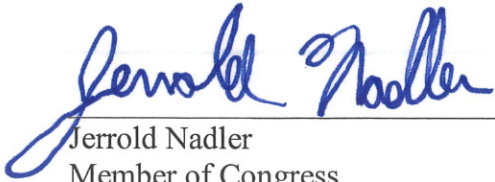
Katherine Clark  
Member of Congress



Daniel Donovan  
Member of Congress



David E. Price  
Member of Congress



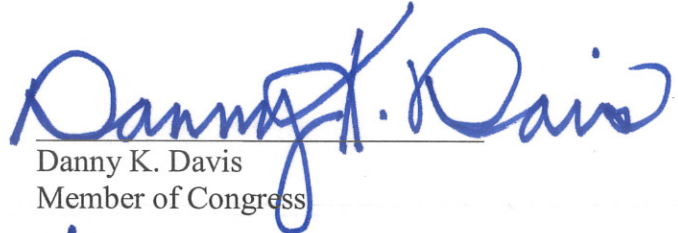
Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



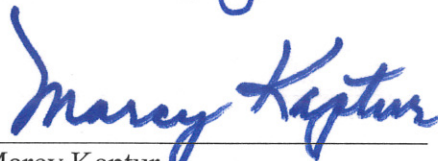
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



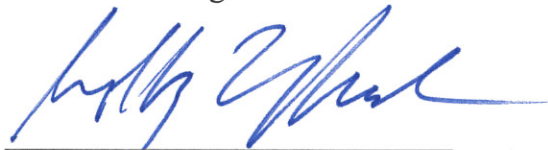
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



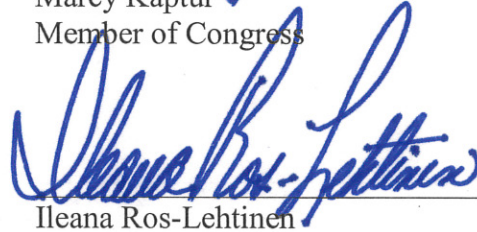
Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



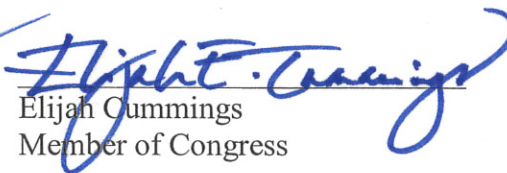
Bobby Rush  
Member of Congress



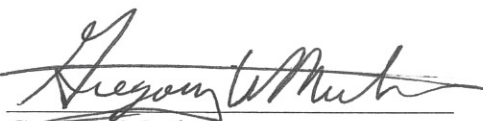
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Member of Congress



Jose E. Serrano  
Member of Congress



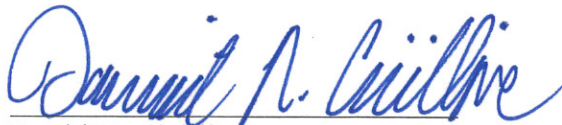
Elijah Cummings  
Member of Congress



Gregory Meeks  
Member of Congress



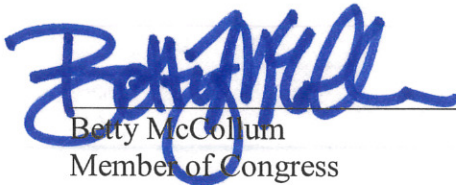
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson  
Member of Congress



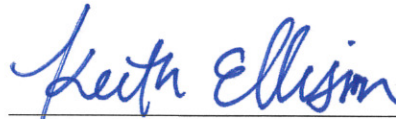
David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



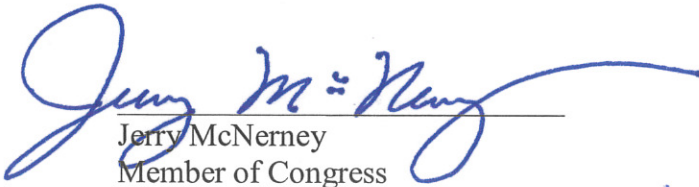
Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



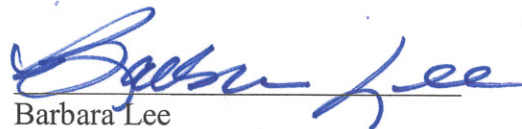
Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



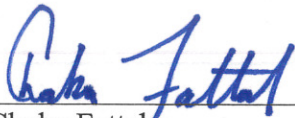
Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress



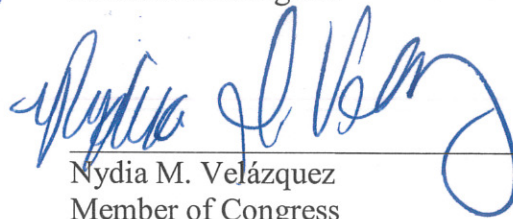
Jerry McNerney  
Member of Congress



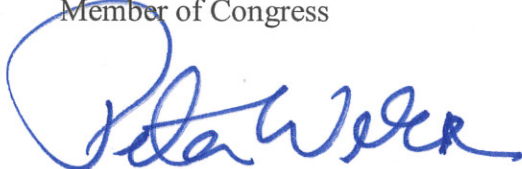
Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Chaka Fattah  
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



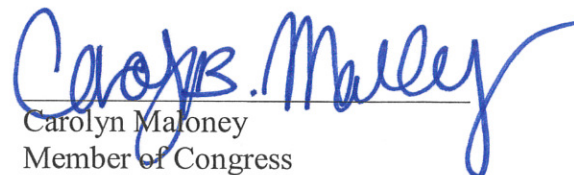
Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



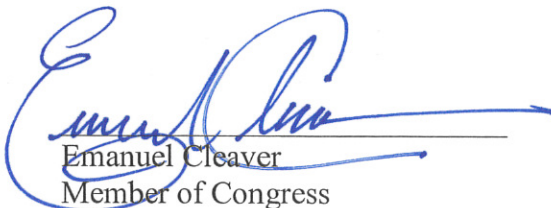
G. K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



Carolyn Maloney  
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver  
Member of Congress



Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress



*Albro Sires*

Albro Sires  
Member of Congress

*Donald M. Payne, Jr.*

Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress

*Al Green*

Al Green  
Member of Congress

*Stephen F. Lynch*

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

*Yvette D. Clarke*

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

*Alcee Hastings*

Alcee Hastings  
Member of Congress

*Charles Rangel*

Charlie Rangel  
Member of Congress

*Jan Schakowsky*

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

*Bill Pascrell, Jr.*

Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress

*Chris Smith*

Chris Smith  
Member of Congress

*Steve Cohen*

Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

*Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.*

Sanford Bishop  
Member of Congress

*Luis V. Gutiérrez*

Luis V. Gutiérrez  
Member of Congress

*Adam B. Schiff*

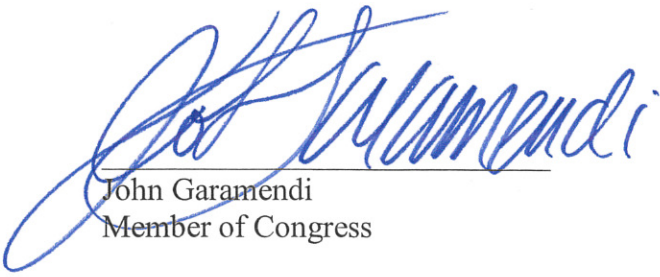
Adam Schiff  
Member of Congress

*Rosa L. DeLauro*

Rosa L. DeLauro  
Member of Congress

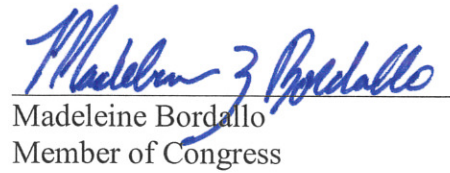
*Wm. Lacy Clay*

Wm. Lacy Clay  
Member of Congress



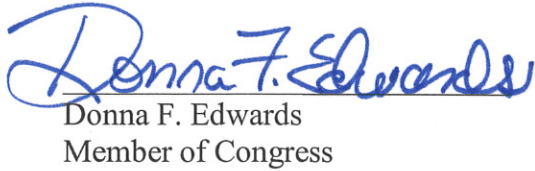
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John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



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Madeleine Bordallo  
Member of Congress



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Donna F. Edwards  
Member of Congress



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Ted Deutch  
Member of Congress



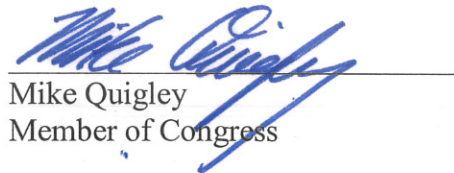
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André Carson  
Member of Congress



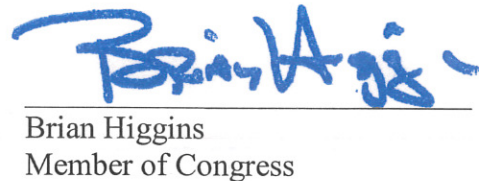
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Steve Israel  
Member of Congress



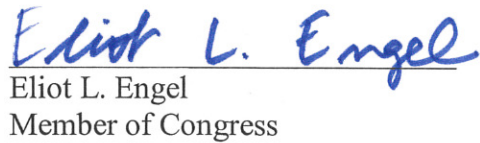
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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



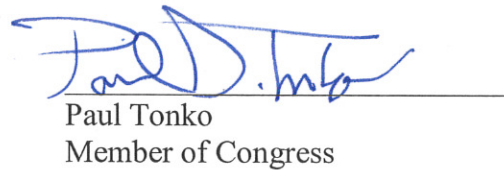
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Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress



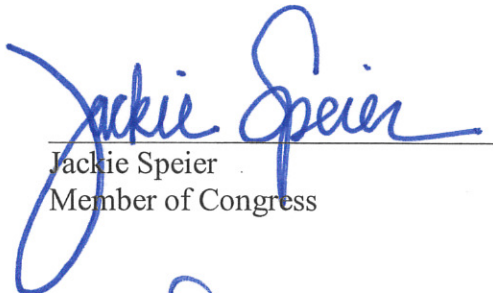
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Eliot L. Engel  
Member of Congress



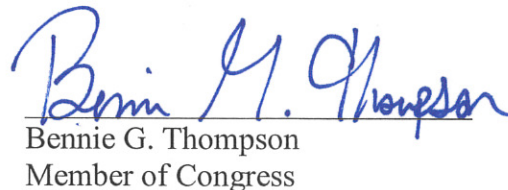
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Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress



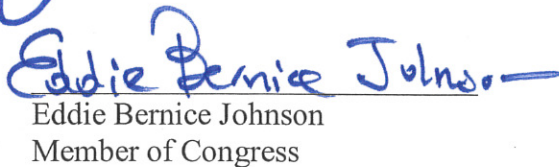
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Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



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Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



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Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress

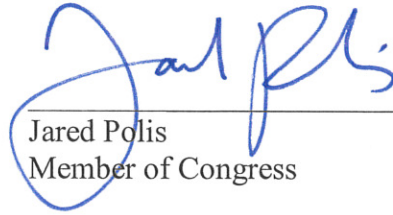


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Gene Green  
Member of Congress



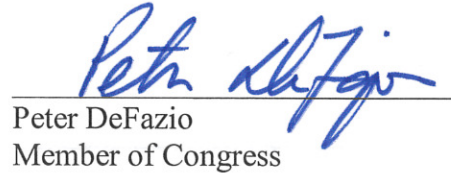
C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress



Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



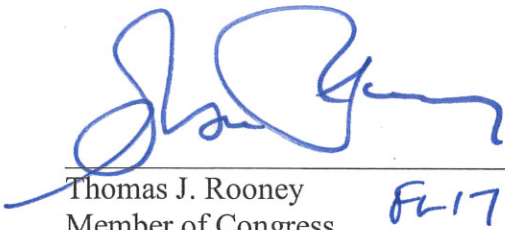
Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress



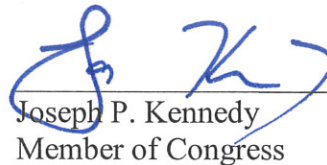
Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



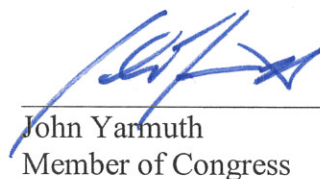
Thomas J. Rooney  
Member of Congress



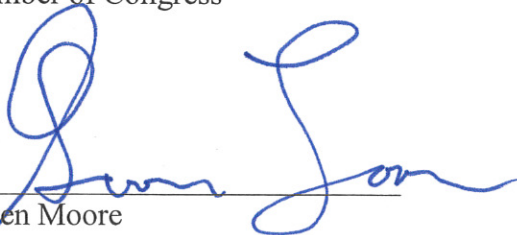
Joseph P. Kennedy  
Member of Congress



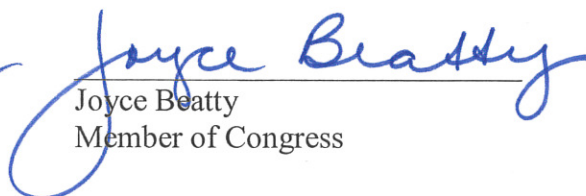
Rubén Hinojosa  
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

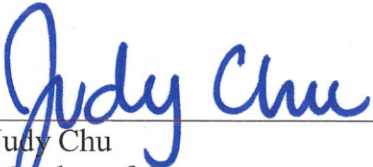


Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

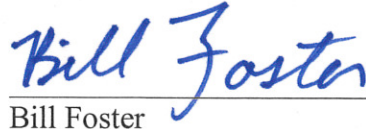


Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress

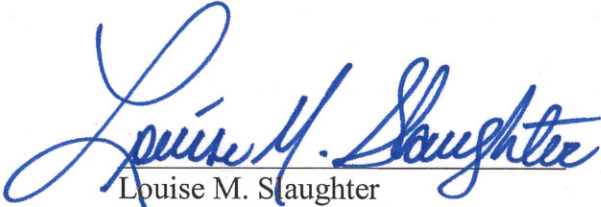




Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



Louise M. Slaughter  
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



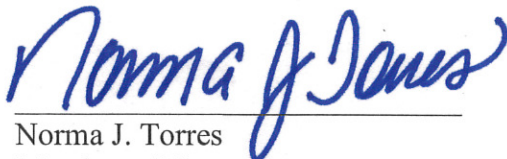
Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



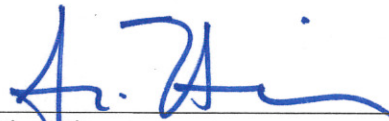
Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress



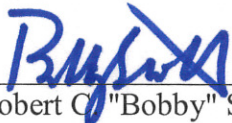
Janice Hahn  
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress



Jim Himes  
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



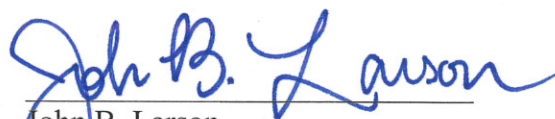
Steve Chabot  
Member of Congress



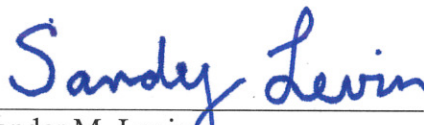
Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



Michelle Lujan Grisham  
Member of Congress



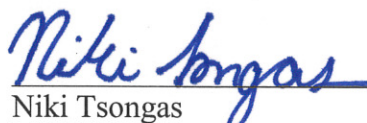
John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



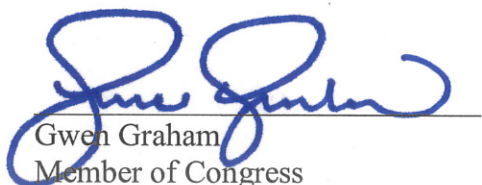
Sander M. Levin  
Member of Congress



Donald Norcross  
Member of Congress



Niki Tsongas  
Member of Congress



Gwen Graham  
Member of Congress



Tammy Duckworth  
Member of Congress