

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

March 24, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chair  
Committee on Appropriations,  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations,  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education, and Related Agencies  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you consider Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations legislation, we urge you to prioritize funding for Head Start. Specifically, we request \$17.47 billion for Head Start in FY 2024 to maximize the role Head Start plays in supporting our country's most vulnerable children and their families.

Head Start and Early Head Start programs offer education, health, and nutrition services to children from at-risk backgrounds—those living in poverty, in foster care, or experiencing homelessness—as well as employment and educational support to their parents. Increased funding for Head Start is a wise, cost-effective investment in families and local communities that ultimately leads to greater prosperity for future generations. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that high-quality early childhood education programs generate a significant return on investment, and that the advantages of Head Start can last a lifetime.<sup>1</sup> Head Start programs have also proven to be resilient in their work to maintain quality programming and support children and families throughout the pandemic-related challenges of the past few years, and we must continue to invest in Head Start's proven, crisis-tested work.

Head Start programs continue to face substantial challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified staff as programs struggle to pay competitive wages and match the benefits provided by comparable jobs. Strong outcomes for children and families receiving Head Start services rely on well-qualified staff, and well-qualified staff should be properly compensated. Yet compensation for the early childhood workforce, including Head Start, ranks in the lowest 10 percent of professions, resulting in unprecedented turnover of Head Start staff and threatening the stability and ability of Head Start programs to properly serve a maximum number of children.<sup>2</sup> This request ensures funding for an adequate cost-of-living-adjustment to help programs keep pace and funding to support increasing the compensation of Head Start staff to help attract and retain a well-qualified workforce.

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<sup>1</sup> Schanzenbach, Diane Whitmore & Bauer, Lauren, *The Long-Term Impact of the Head Start Program* (Aug. 2016), The Hamilton Project, [https://www.hamiltonproject.org/assets/files/long\\_term\\_impact\\_of\\_head\\_start\\_program.pdf](https://www.hamiltonproject.org/assets/files/long_term_impact_of_head_start_program.pdf); Barr, Andrew & Gibbs, Chloe, *Breaking the Cycle? Intergenerational Effects of an Anti-Poverty Program in Early Childhood* (Jan. 2022), *Journal of Political Economy*, <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1086/720764>.

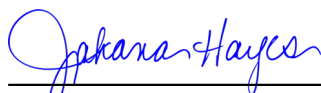
<sup>2</sup> National Head Start Association, *Statement of NHTA Executive Director Yasmína Vinci on FY23 Appropriations Deal* (Dec. 2022), [https://nhsa.org/press\\_release/fy23-appropriations-960-million-increase/](https://nhsa.org/press_release/fy23-appropriations-960-million-increase/).

This request also supports a strong investment in quality improvement funding (QIF), which provides critical flexibility to Head Start programs to address local quality improvement priorities. For instance, this funding can be used for staff training on trauma-informed care to ensure the Head Start workforce is prepared to help children who have experienced childhood trauma. This funding can also help programs employ qualified classroom staff to reduce child-to-teacher ratios, and can be used to ensure that the physical environments of Head Start programs are conducive to providing effective program services to children and families.

Finally, Early Head Start programs work alongside Head Start programs to provide comprehensive care and support for the unique needs of infants and toddlers as well as pregnant women. Early Head Start programs promote physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development of infants and toddlers that prepare these children for continued growth and development and eventual success in school and life. Currently, Early Head Start serves only 11 percent of eligible infants and toddlers,<sup>3</sup> preventing a continuum of care for our youngest learners and undermining quality. Recognizing that Early Head Start is an essential and growing component to ensuring that even our youngest learners can access high-quality care, we encourage you to include funding for Early Head Start expansion and Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships. This funding level includes \$1 billion for these elements, with grants awarded based on the unique needs of each community and its families.

For decades, and in a spirit of bipartisanship, Congress has united around Head Start to provide high-quality early learning and support to our nation's underserved children. Nevertheless, perennial issues remain that we look to address. For these reasons, we request that you make these investments as outlined so that Head Start can continue putting children and families on the path to success in school, in work, and in life.

Sincerely,



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Jahana Hayes  
Member of Congress

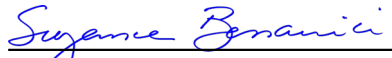


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Lauren Underwood  
Member of Congress

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<sup>3</sup> National Head Start Association, *Early Head Start Rising* (last accessed March 6, 2023), <https://nhsa.org/advocacy/early-head-start-rising/>.



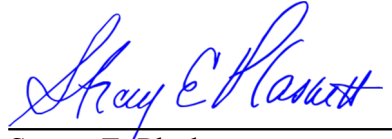
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Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



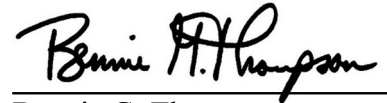
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Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress



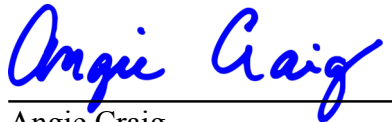
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Stacey E. Plaskett  
Member of Congress



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Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



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Angie Craig  
Member of Congress



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Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress



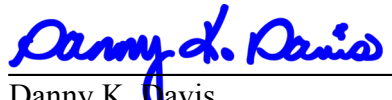
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Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress



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Teresa Leger Fernández  
Member of Congress



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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



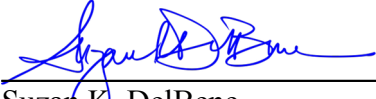
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Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



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Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



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Suzan K. DelBene  
Member of Congress



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Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



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Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



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Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



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Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



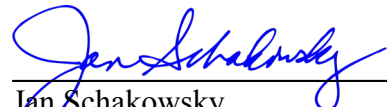
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Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



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James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



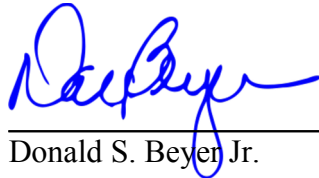
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



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Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



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Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



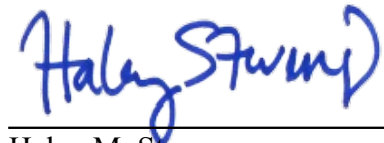
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Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



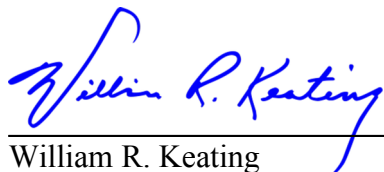
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Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



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David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



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Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



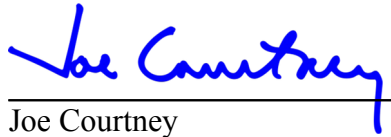
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Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress



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Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



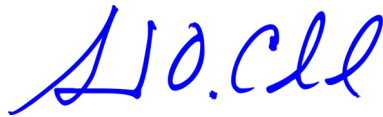
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Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress



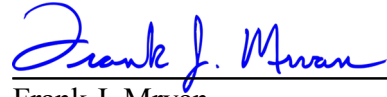
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Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



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Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



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Frank J. Mrvan  
Member of Congress



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Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



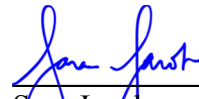
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Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



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Adam Smith  
Member of Congress




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Sara Jacobs  
Member of Congress



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Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



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Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



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Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



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Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress



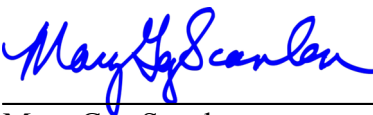
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Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



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Daniel T. Kildee  
Member of Congress



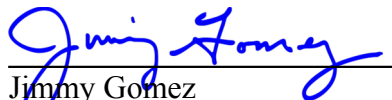
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Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress

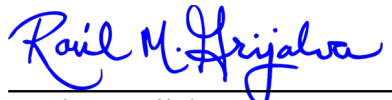



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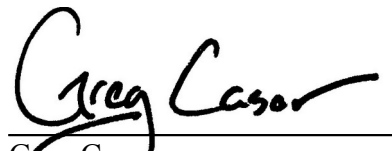
Chris Pappas  
Member of Congress

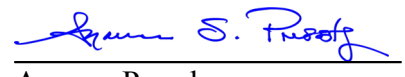
  
Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress


  
Kathy E. Manning  
Member of Congress

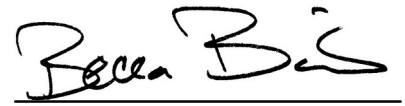
  
Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress


  
Gregorio Kilili Camacho  
Sablan  
Member of Congress

  
Greg Casar  
Member of Congress

  
Ayanna Pressley  
Member of Congress

  
Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress

  
Becca Balint  
Member of Congress

  
Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress

  
Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress





Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



Katie Porter  
Member of Congress



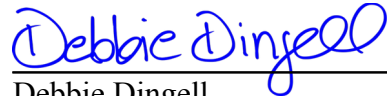
Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress




Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress



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Josh Gottheimer  
Member of Congress



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David Scott  
Member of Congress



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John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



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Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



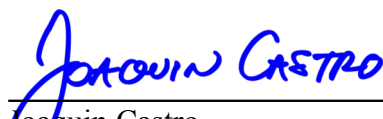
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Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



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Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



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Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



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Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress



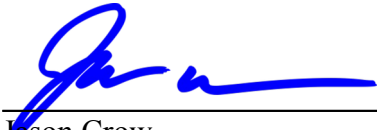
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Dean Phillips  
Member of Congress



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Mike Levin  
Member of Congress



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Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



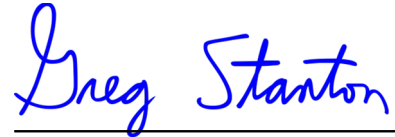
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Andy Kim  
Member of Congress



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Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



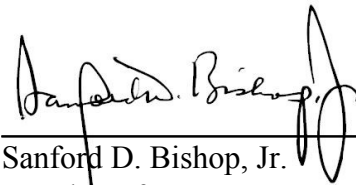
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Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress



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Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



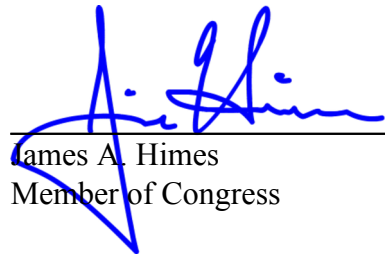
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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
Member of Congress



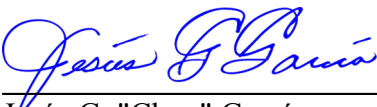
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Gabe Vasquez  
Member of Congress



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James A. Himes  
Member of Congress



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Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



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Donald Norcross  
Member of Congress



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Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



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Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



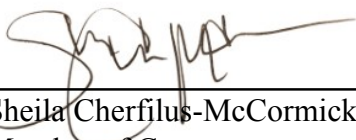
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Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress



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Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress



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Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Member of Congress



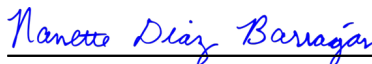
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Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress



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Al Green  
Member of Congress



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Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



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Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



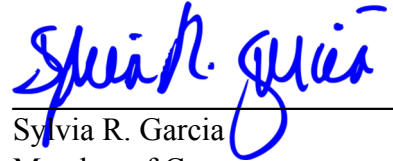
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Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Donald G. Davis  
Member of Congress



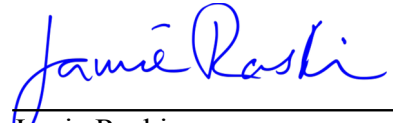
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Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



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Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



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Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



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Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress



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Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress



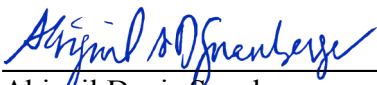
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Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



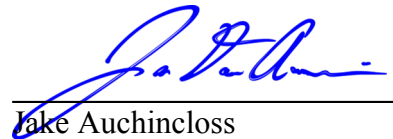
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Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



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Abigail Davis Spanberger  
Member of Congress



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Jake Auchincloss  
Member of Congress



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Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress



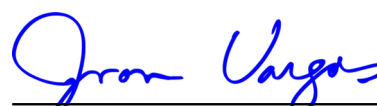
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Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



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Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



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Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



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Robert J. Menendez  
Member of Congress



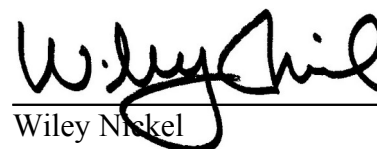
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Cori Bush  
Member of Congress



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Troy Carter  
Member of Congress



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Wiley Nickel  
Member of Congress



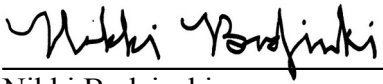
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André Carson  
Member of Congress



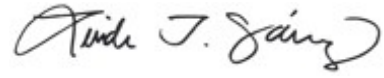
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Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



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Nikki Budzinski  
Member of Congress



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Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
Member of Congress



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Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress



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Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



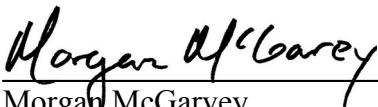
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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



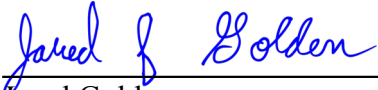
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Morgan McGarvey  
Member of Congress



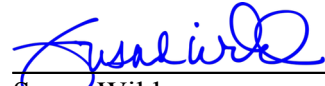
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Mike Thompson  
Member of Congress



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Jared Golden  
Member of Congress



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Susan Wild  
Member of Congress



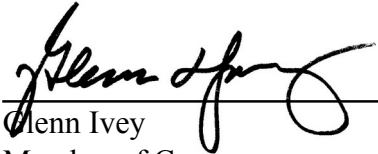
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Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



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Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



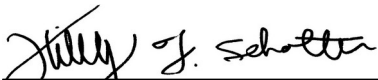
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Glenn Ivey  
Member of Congress



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Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



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Hillary J. Scholten  
Member of Congress




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John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



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Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



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Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress





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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress



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Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress



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C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress



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J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



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Eric Sorensen  
Member of Congress



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Patrick Ryan  
Member of Congress



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Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



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Kevin Mullin  
Member of Congress



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Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



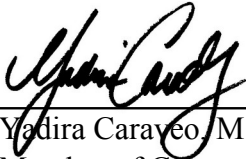
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Chris Deluzio  
Member of Congress



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Marie Gluesenkamp Perez  
Member of Congress



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Yadira Caraveo, M.D.  
Member of Congress



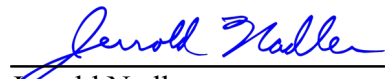
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Jared Moskowitz  
Member of Congress



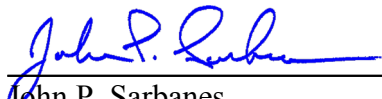
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Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



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Terrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



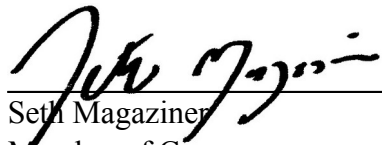
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John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress



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Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



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Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress



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Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



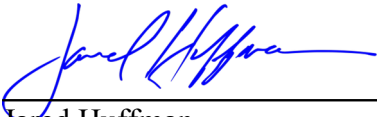
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Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



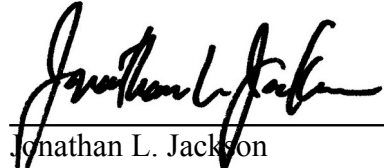
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Raul Ruiz, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



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Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress