

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2018

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior,
Environment, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Calvert and Ranking Member McCollum,

Just over fifty years ago, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act of 1964 established America's most successful conservation program. The bill was designed to assure our growing population that outdoor recreation lands would be secured, on a pay-as-you-go basis, for future Americans' requirements. We appreciated Congress's decision to reauthorize LWCF for three years in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 Omnibus Appropriations Bill, but note that we now face another expiration of this vital program within this fiscal year (FY 2018) and look forward to working quickly on a more permanent solution.

We are writing to express our strong support for LWCF and urge you to allocate robust funding to this valuable, time-tested program in the FY 2019 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. We thank you for funding LWCF at such a strong level in the last Interior bill, and urge you to continue this crucial investment in the coming fiscal year.

Investments in LWCF support public land conservation and ensure access to the outdoors for all Americans, in rural communities and cities alike. It has created outdoor recreation opportunities in every state and 98 percent of counties across the country, opening up key areas for hunting, fishing, and other recreational access; supporting working forests and ranches; and acquiring inholdings and protecting critical lands in national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests, Civil War battlefields, and other federal areas.

The State and Local Grants Program and the Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program provide crucial support for state and local park acquisitions in cities, counties, and rural towns as well as recreational facilities and trail corridors. It is the government's primary investment tool for ensuring that children and families have access to close-to-home recreation, having funded over 42,000 projects in virtually every county in the nation.

The Cooperative Endangered Species grants program provides states and counties with essential resources for habitat conservation that in turn allows for appropriate economic development. The American Battlefield Protection Program ensures the protection of America's Civil War and Revolutionary War

sites at the state and local level. And finally the Forest Legacy Program helps maintain critical jobs in the woods while protecting outdoor resources, recreation access, and local economies.

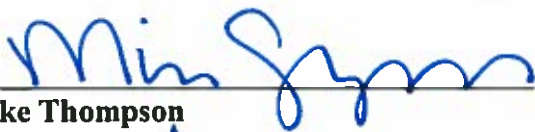
As you know, LWCF uses no taxpayer dollars. Instead, LWCF funds are primarily derived from oil and gas receipts paid to the federal government by energy companies that extract publicly-owned resources from the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). Congress created LWCF as a bipartisan promise to return precious resources back to the American public by using these funds specifically for conservation and recreation purposes. Unfortunately, over the 50-year history of LWCF, over \$20 billion of these funds have been diverted from their original conservation purpose. This chronic problem has created a substantial backlog of conservation and recreation needs; has caused state, local, and federal land management agencies to postpone or cancel many important projects; and has created undue hardship for many property owners.

Despite this history of underfunding, LWCF remains the premier federal program to conserve our nation's land, water, historic, and recreation heritage. LWCF funds support an entire suite of conservation tools to address national, state, local, and regionally-driven priorities across the country. These include working lands easements that keep farmers and ranchers as stewards of the landscape that provides their livelihoods, working forest projects that keep timberlands forested and accessible and provide jobs in our rural communities, and vital recreation access projects – making public lands public – for hunting, fishing, and other activities.

As you develop the FY 2019 legislation, the LWCF should be reliably funded to ensure that it plays the strongest possible role in revitalizing local communities. America's outdoor recreation, conservation, and preservation economies contribute \$1.06 trillion to the nation's economy each year and support 9.4 million American jobs (1 out of every 15 jobs in the U.S.). Support for public lands among the American public remains consistently and overwhelmingly strong.

We look forward to working with the Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies in the coming months to ensure that the suite of LWCF programs receive strong and consistent support in FY 2019 in order to maintain our commitment to conservation and recreation, as well as to states and local communities. As Americans continue to visit forests, parks, historic battlefields, and wildlife areas across America, we urge you to provide the funding levels necessary to ensure these opportunities exist everywhere in our great Nation. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

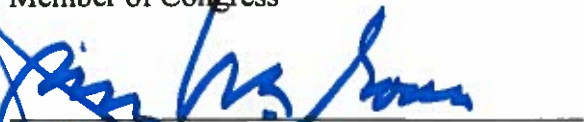
Sincerely,



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Ryan A. Costello
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



John Katko
Member of Congress


Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

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Suzanne Bonamici
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John Faso
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Patrick Meehan
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David Reichert
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Jack Bergman
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Earl Blumenauer
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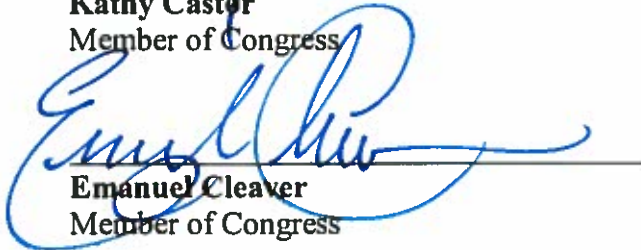
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Member of Congress


Robert A. Brady
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Julia Brownley
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Michael Capuano
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Kathy Castor
Member of Congress

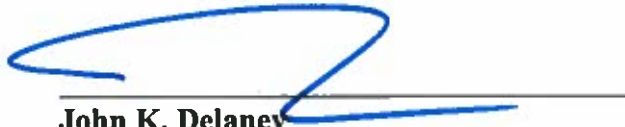

Emanuel Cleaver
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Joseph Crowley
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Peter DeFazio
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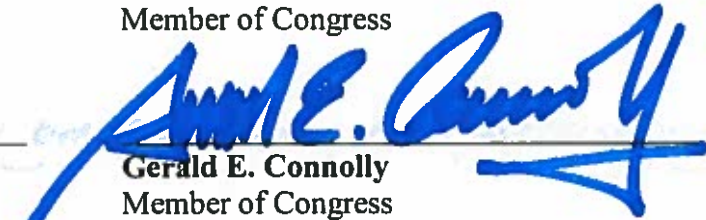

John K. Delaney
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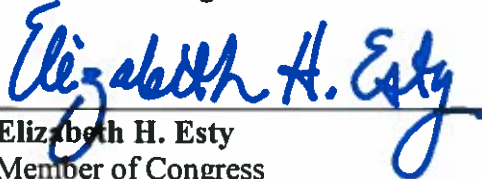

Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle
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Eliot Engel
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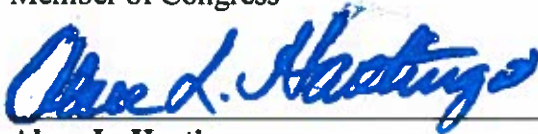
Bill Foster
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Alcee L. Hastings
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Joseph P. Kennedy III
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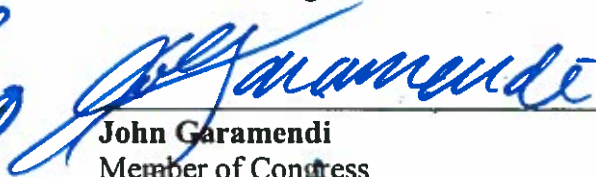
Adriano Espillat
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Warren Soto
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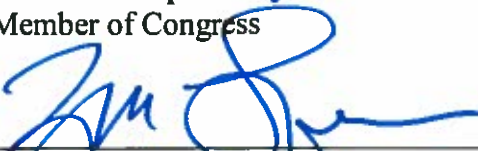
Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



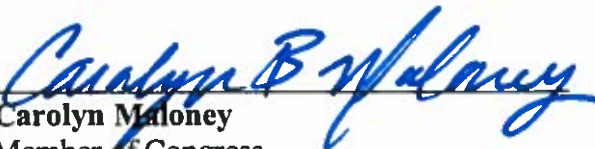
Daniel W. Lipinski
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Zoe Lofgren
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Stephen Lynch
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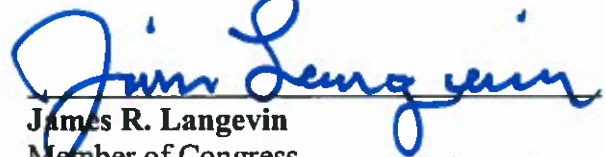
Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress



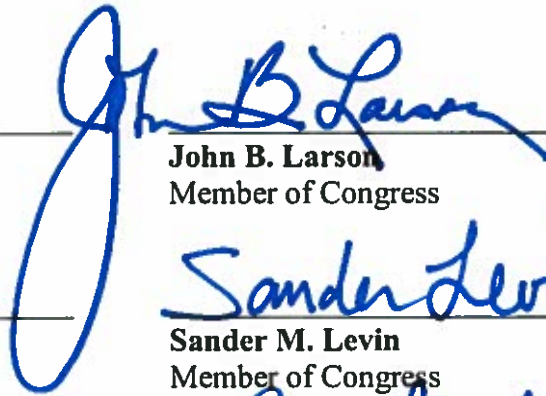
Peter T. King
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster
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James R. Langevin
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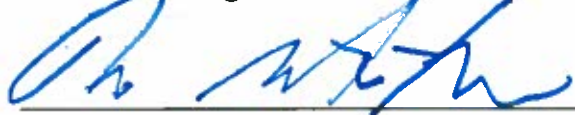
Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress



David Loebsack
Member of Congress



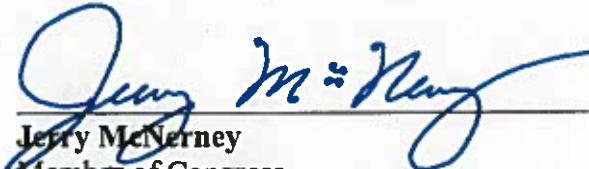
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress

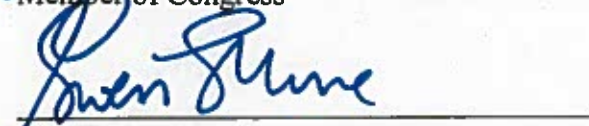


Tom MacArthur
Member of Congress

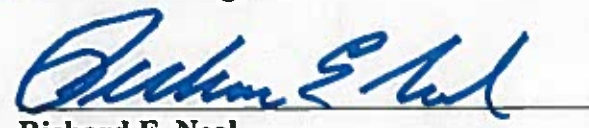



Tom Marino
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Jerry McNerney
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Gwen Moore
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Jerrold Nadler
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Richard E. Neal
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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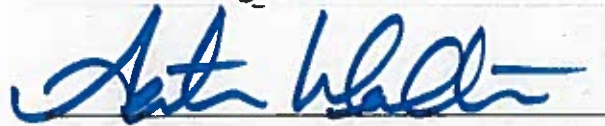

Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

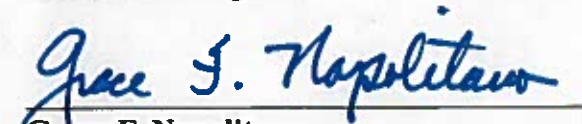

Mike Quigley
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Dennis A. Ross
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard
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Daniel M. Donovan, Jr.
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Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress


Rick Nolan
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Frank Pallone, Jr.
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Donald M. Payne Jr.
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Jacky Rosen
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David Rouzer
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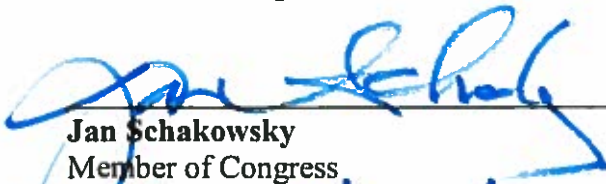

Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



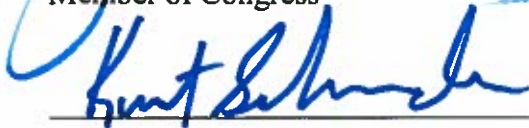
John Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Bradley S. Schneider
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader
Member of Congress



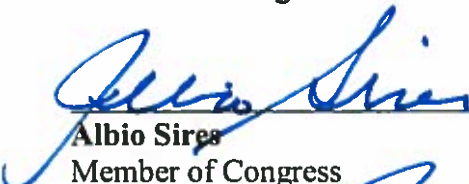
David Scott
Member of Congress



Terri Sewell
Member of Congress



Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
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Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



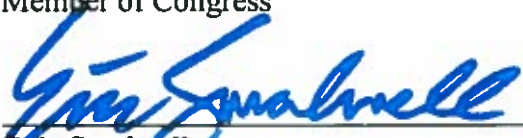
Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



Elise Stefanik
Member of Congress



Steve Stivers
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
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Mark Takano
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Bennie Thompson
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Norma Torres

Norma Torres
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Niki Tsongas

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress

Michael R. Turner

Michael R. Turner
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Juan Vargas

Juan Vargas
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Tim Walz

Tim Walz
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Bonnie Watson Coleman

Bonnie Watson Coleman
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Peter Welch

Peter Welch
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John Yarmuth
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Don Young

Don Young
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Lee Zeldin

Lee Zeldin
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Josh Gottheimer

Josh Gottheimer
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A. Donald McEachin

A. Donald McEachin
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Stephanie Murphy

Stephanie Murphy
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Claudia Tenney

Claudia Tenney
Member of Congress

Raja Krishnamoorthi

Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress

Val B. Demings

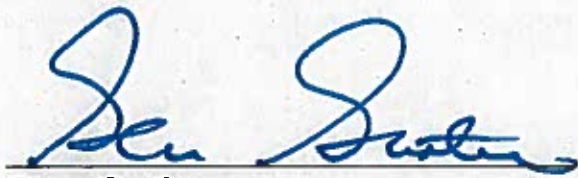
Val B. Demings
Member of Congress

Tom O'Halleran

Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress

Al Green

Al Green
Member of Congress



Glenn Grothman
Member of Congress



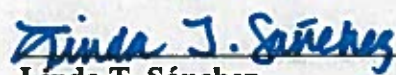
Hakeem Jeffries
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter
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Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



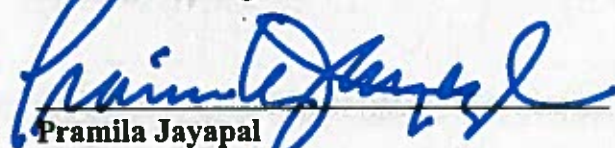
Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



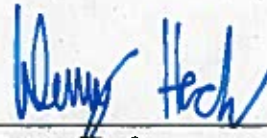
Alma Adams
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



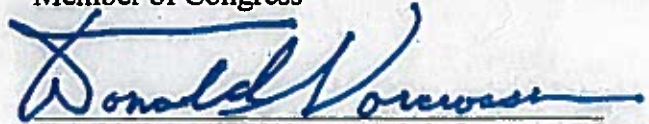
Pramila Jayapal
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Denny Heck
Member of Congress



Brenda Lawrence
Member of Congress



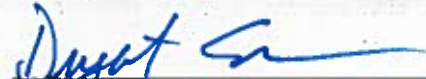
Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



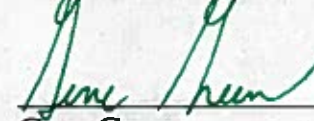
Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



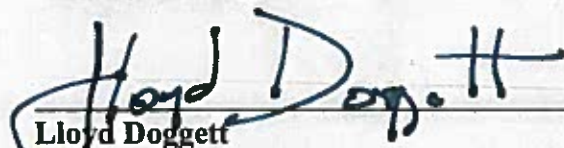
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress



Gene Green
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



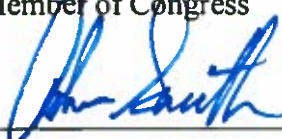
John Lewis
Member of Congress



Sean Patrick Maloney
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Mark Sanford
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



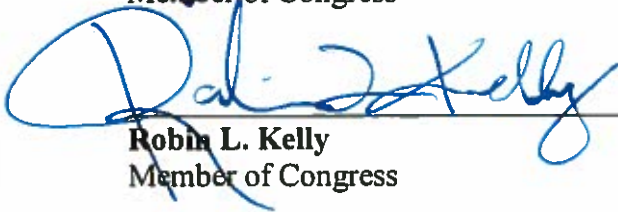
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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Gregg Harper
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



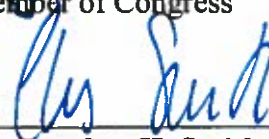
Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress



Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress



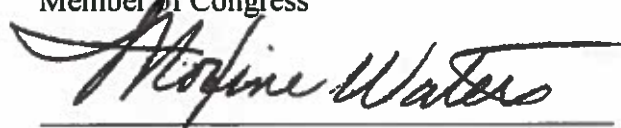
Kyrsten Sinema
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Maxine Waters
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Marc Veasey
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Ami Bera
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Wm. Lacy Clay
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Anna Eshoo
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Martha McSally
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Kristi L. Noem
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Scott Peters
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Sanford D. Bishop Jr.

Sanford D. Bishop
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Marcia L. Fudge

Marcia L. Fudge
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Tulsi Gabbard

Tulsi Gabbard
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Brad Sherman
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Al Lawson

Al Lawson
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Jimmy Gomez

Jimmy Gomez
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David Cicilline

David Cicilline
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Rosa L. DeLauro

Rosa L. DeLauro
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Stacey E. Plaskett

Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress

Daniel T. Kildee

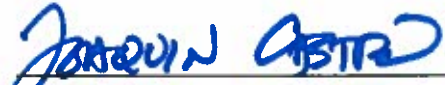
Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

Scott Tipton

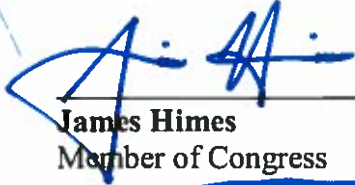
Scott Tipton
Member of Congress



Thomas A. Garrett, Jr.
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



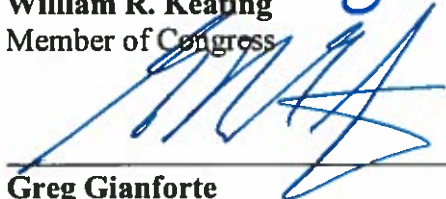
James Himes
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Cedric Richmond
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William R. Keating
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Greg Gianforte
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Ben Ray Luján
Member of Congress



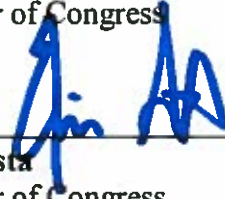
Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress



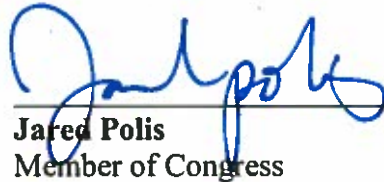
Raul Ruiz
Member of Congress



Nanette Barragán
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Jared Polis
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



David Price
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress



Bruce Poliquin
Member of Congress



Bradley Byrne
Member of Congress

Susan A. Davis

Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress

Gregory W Meeks

Gregory Meeks
Member of Congress

Jeff Fortenberry

Jeff Fortenberry
Member of Congress

Mike Bost

Mike Bost
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings

Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress