

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Goodlatte
Chairman, House Committee on Agriculture
1301 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Collin Peterson
Ranking Member, House Committee on Agriculture
1305 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Goodlatte and Ranking Member Peterson:

As the House Committee on Agriculture prepares its reconciliation package, we urge the Committee to resist changes to current law that would cut benefits provided by federal nutrition programs.

The Food Stamp Program is the cornerstone of federal nutrition programs, and serves as the first line of defense in the national battle against hunger. Food stamps provide an important safety net to the most vulnerable people in our communities. Prior to Hurricane Katrina, 36 million people in the United States, including 13.3 million children, were living in households that experienced food insecurity. Roughly 88 percent of these households have gross incomes below the poverty line; 38 percent of these households have gross incomes at or below half of the poverty line.

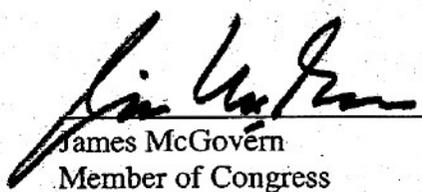
In the weeks since Hurricane Katrina, the number of individuals in need of food stamps has exploded, and is only expected to increase as the rebuilding efforts continue. Now is not the time to turn our backs on the millions left poor, homeless and hungry by this natural disaster. Cuts to the Food Stamp Program would cripple its ability to meet the basic human needs of these displaced persons. Food banks, private charities and local communities, even the most generous, are not equipped to cope with hunger on such a grand scale.

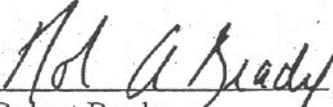
We understand that the Committee has difficult decisions to make as it works to reduce mandatory spending. However, we strongly urge the Committee to keep any cuts to federal food programs as close to zero as possible and oppose changes in eligibility requirements that would jeopardize the integrity and character of these assistance programs.

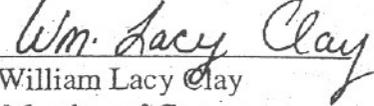
We would like to thank you for your consideration of this request.

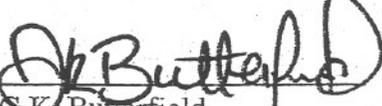
Sincerely,

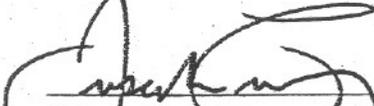

Bernard Sanders
Member of Congress

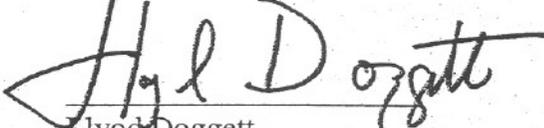

James McGovern
Member of Congress

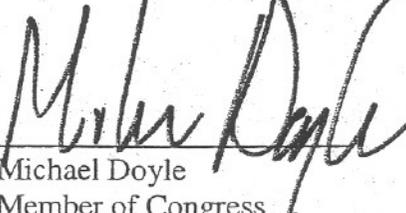

Robert Brady
Member of Congress


William Lacy Clay
Member of Congress

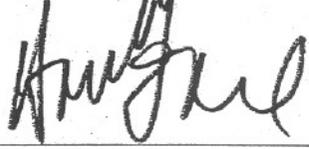

C.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress


Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress

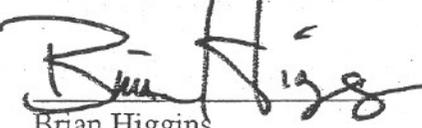

Llyod Doggett
Member of Congress


Michael Doyle
Member of Congress

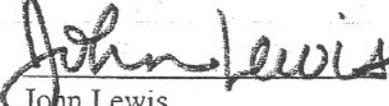

Anna Eshoo
Member of Congress

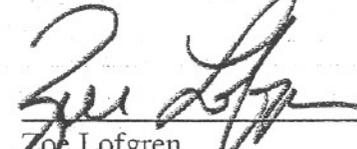

Harold Ford
Member of Congress


Charles Gonzalez
Member of Congress


Brian Higgins
Member of Congress

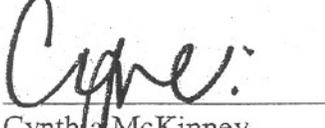

Patrick Kennedy
Member of Congress

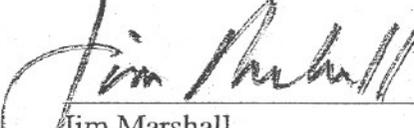

John Lewis
Member of Congress

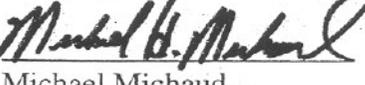

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress


Stephen Lynch
Member of Congress


Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress

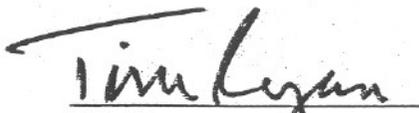

Cynthia McKinney
Member of Congress


Jim Marshall
Member of Congress


Michael Michaud
Member of Congress

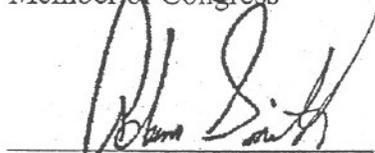

Frank Pallone
Member of Congress

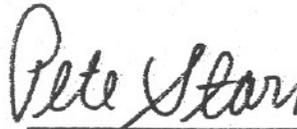

Mike Ross
Member of Congress


Tim Ryan
Member of Congress

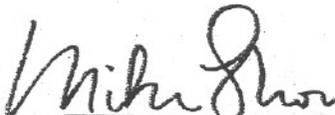

Adam Schiff
Member of Congress


David Scott
Member of Congress

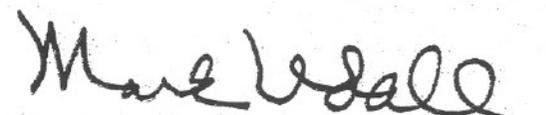

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

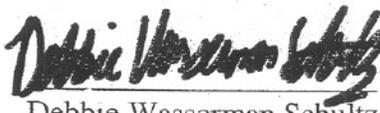

Fortney Pete Stark
Member of Congress

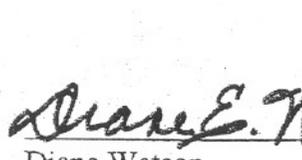

Ted Strickland
Member of Congress

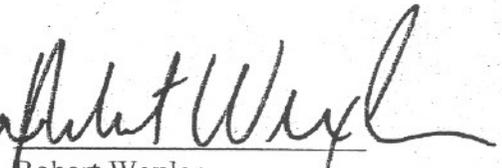

Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

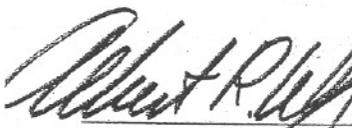

John Tierney
Member of Congress


Mark Udall
Member of Congress

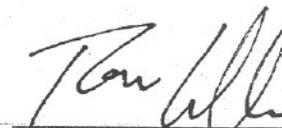

Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress

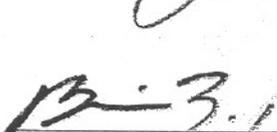

Diane Watson
Member of Congress


Robert Wexler
Member of Congress


Albert Russell Wynn
Member of Congress


Neil Abercrombie
Member of Congress

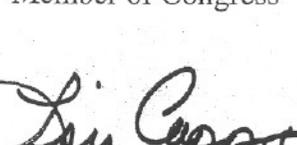

Thomas Allen
Member of Congress


Brian Baird
Member of Congress


Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress


Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress

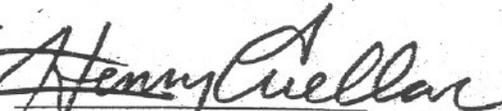

Tim Bishop
Member of Congress

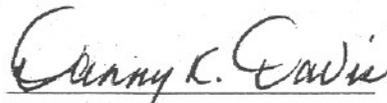

Lois Capps
Member of Congress

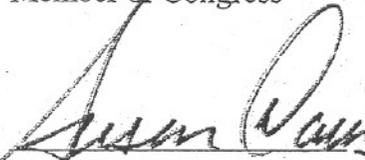

Michael Capuano
Member of Congress

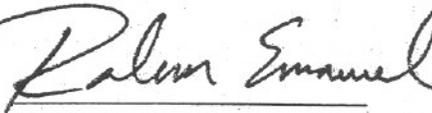

Julia Carson
Member of Congress

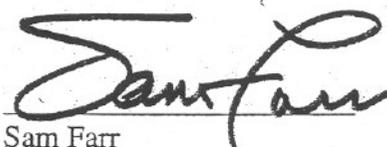

Donna Christensen
Member of Congress

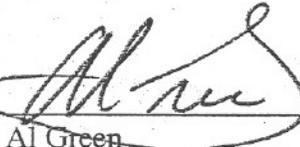

Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress

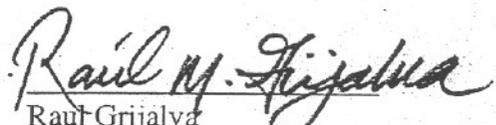

Danny Davis
Member of Congress

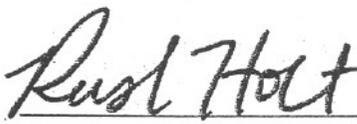

Susan Davis
Member of Congress


Rahm Emanuel
Member of Congress


Sam Farr
Member of Congress

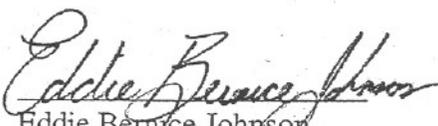

Al Green
Member of Congress

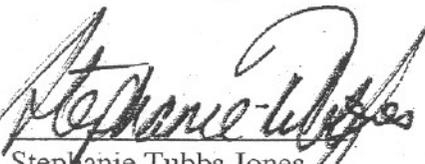

Raul Grijalva
Member of Congress

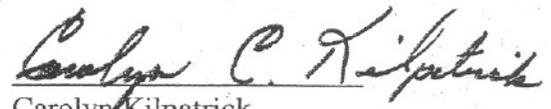

Rush Holt
Member of Congress


Michael Honda
Member of Congress

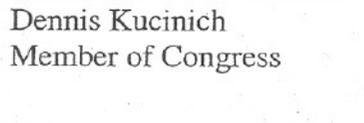

Steny Hoyer
Member of Congress


Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress

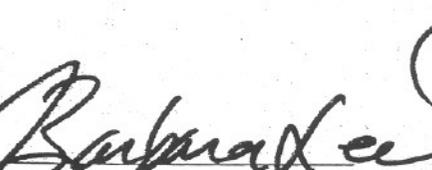

Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Member of Congress

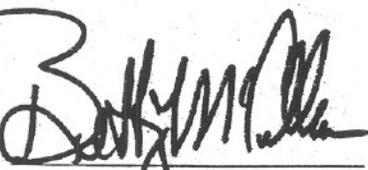

Carolyn Kilpatrick
Member of Congress


Ron Kind
Member of Congress

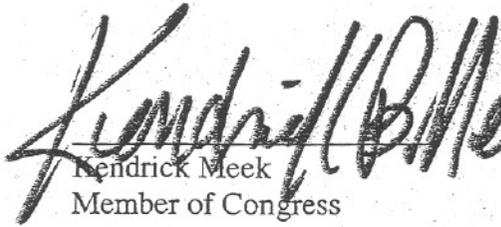

Dennis Kucinich
Member of Congress

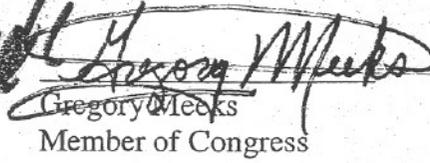

John Larson
Member of Congress

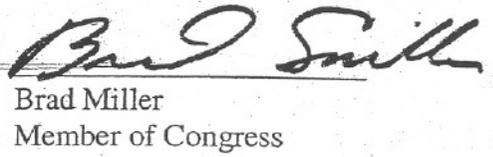

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

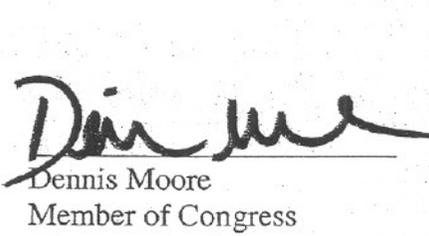

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

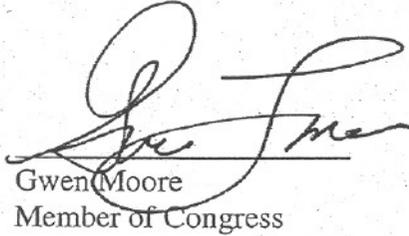

Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

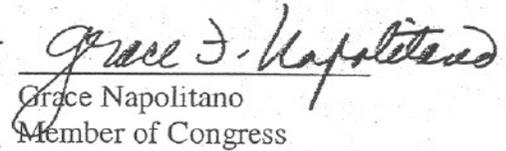

Kendrick Meek
Member of Congress

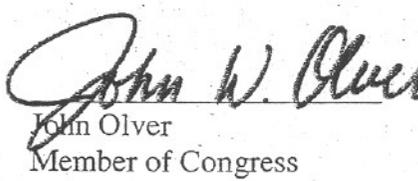

Gregory Meeks
Member of Congress


Brad Miller
Member of Congress

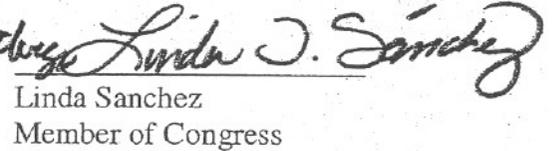

Dennis Moore
Member of Congress

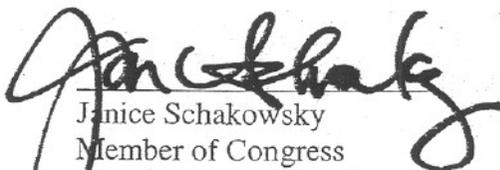

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

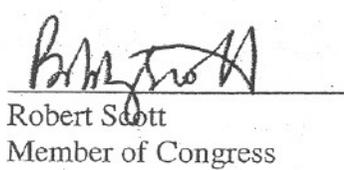

Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress


John Olver
Member of Congress

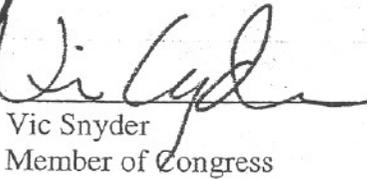

Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress

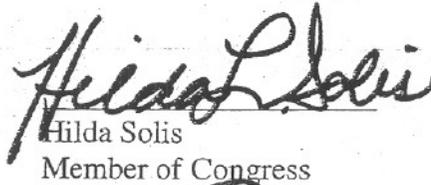

Linda Sanchez
Member of Congress


Janice Schakowsky
Member of Congress

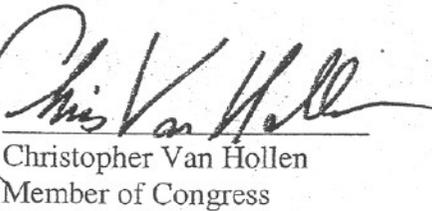

Robert Scott
Member of Congress

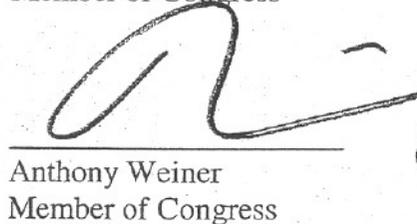

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

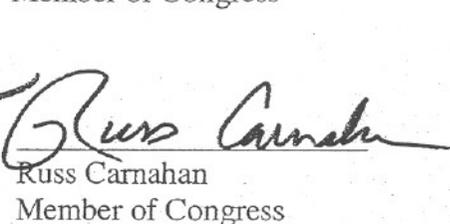

Vic Snyder
Member of Congress

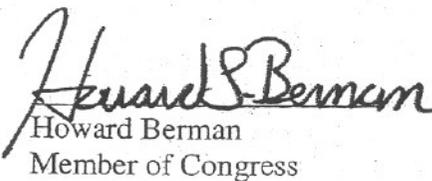

Hilda Solis
Member of Congress

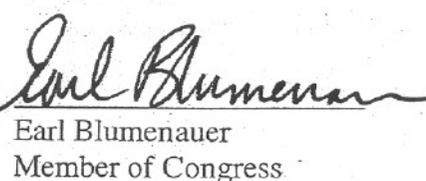

Ellen Tauscher
Member of Congress

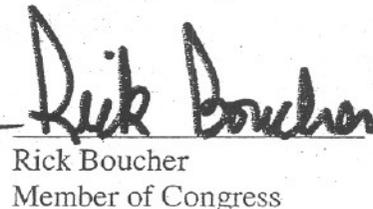

Christopher Van Hollen
Member of Congress


Anthony Weiner
Member of Congress


Russ Carnahan
Member of Congress


Howard Berman
Member of Congress


Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress


Rick Boucher
Member of Congress

Corrine Brown

Corrine Brown
Member of Congress

Sherrrod Brown

Sherrrod Brown
Member of Congress

Ben Cardin

Benjamin Cardin
Member of Congress

James E. Clyburn

James Clyburn
Member of Congress

John Conyers

John Conyers
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings

Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress

Peter DeFazio

Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress

William Delahunt

William Delahunt
Member of Congress

Rosa DeLauro

Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress

Norm Dicks

Norm Dicks
Member of Congress

John Dingell

John Dingell
Member of Congress

Eliot L. Engel

Eliot Engel
Member of Congress

Lane Evans

Lane Evans
Member of Congress

Chaka Fattah

Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress

Bob Filner

Bob Filner
Member of Congress

Barney Frank

Barney Frank
Member of Congress

Gene Green

Gene Green
Member of Congress

Luis V. Guterres

Luis Gutierrez
Member of Congress

Alcee Hastings

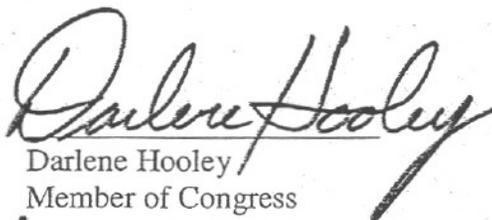
Alcee Hastings
Member of Congress

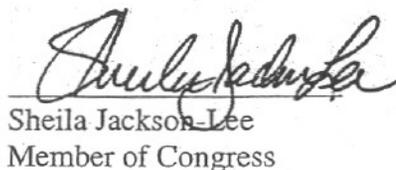
Maurice D. Hinchey

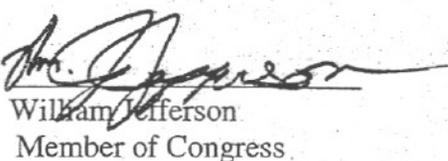
Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress

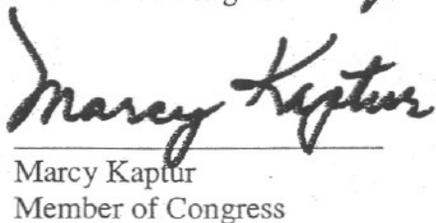
Ruben Hinojosa

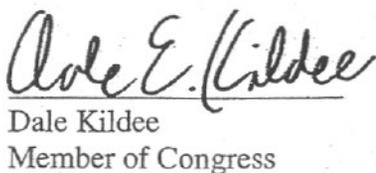
Ruben Hinojosa
Member of Congress

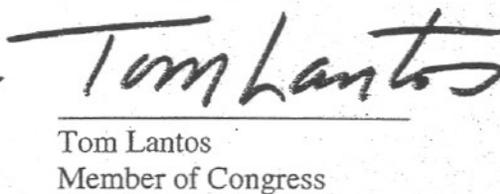

Darlene Hooley
Member of Congress

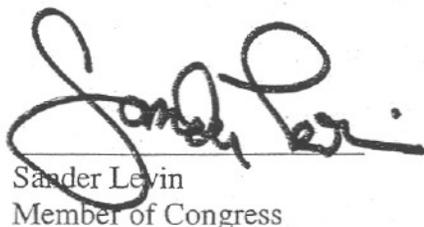

Sheila Jackson-Lee
Member of Congress

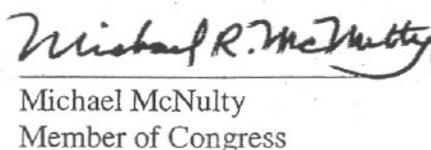

William Jefferson
Member of Congress

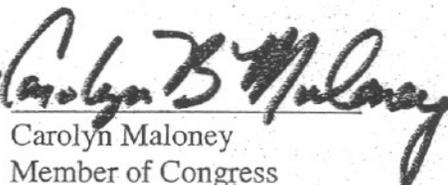

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

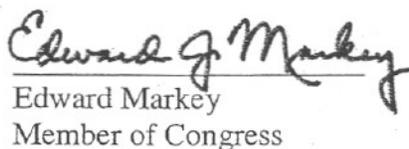

Dale Kildee
Member of Congress

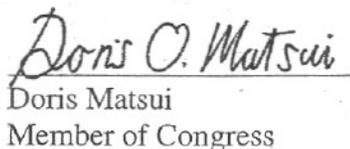

Tom Lantos
Member of Congress

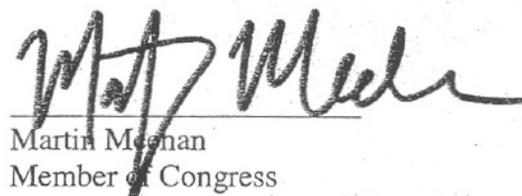

Sander Levin
Member of Congress


Michael McNulty
Member of Congress

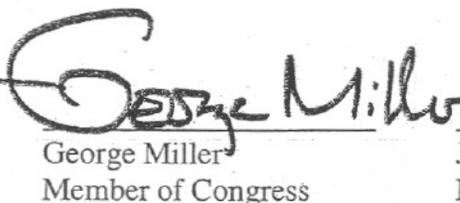

Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress

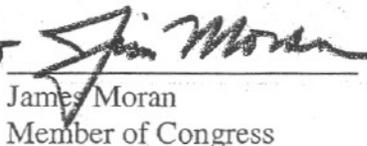

Edward Markey
Member of Congress

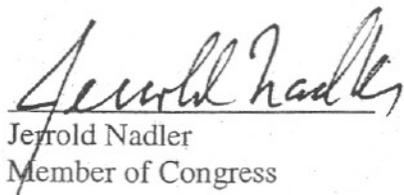

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

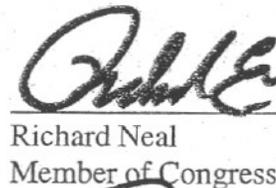

Martin Meenan
Member of Congress

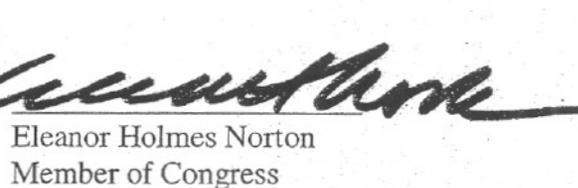

Juanita Millender-McDonald
Member of Congress

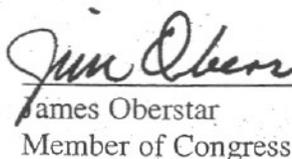

George Miller
Member of Congress

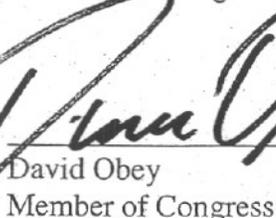

James Moran
Member of Congress

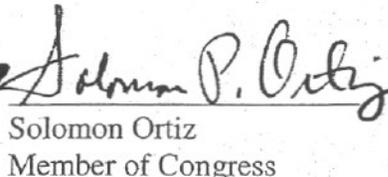

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

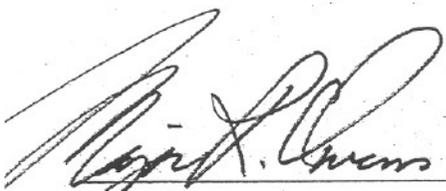

Richard Neal
Member of Congress


Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

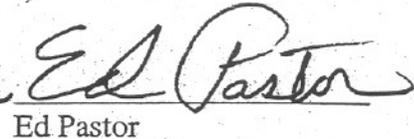

James Oberstar
Member of Congress

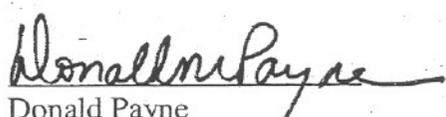

David Obey
Member of Congress

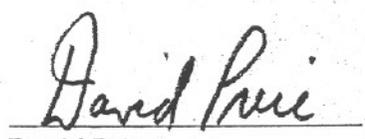

Solomon Ortiz
Member of Congress


Major Owens
Member of Congress

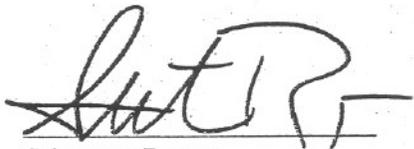

Bill Pascrell
Member of Congress

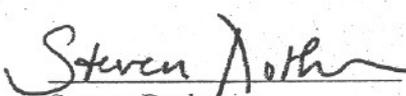

Ed Pastor
Member of Congress


Donald Payne
Member of Congress

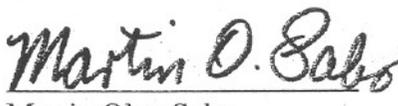

David Price
Member of Congress

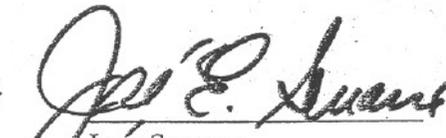

Charles Rangel
Member of Congress

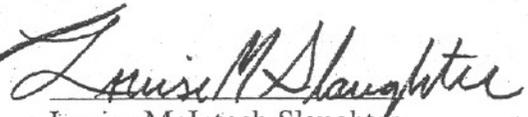

Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress

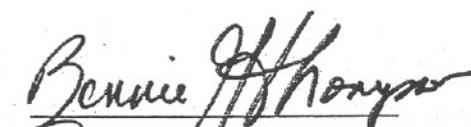

Steven Rothman
Member of Congress


Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

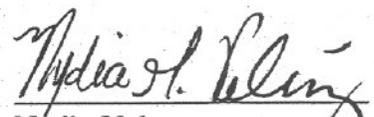

Martin Olav Sabo
Member of Congress

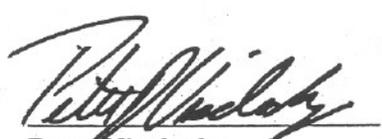

Jose Serrano
Member of Congress

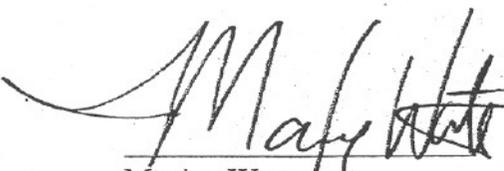

Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Member of Congress

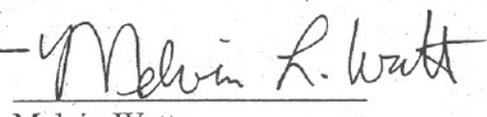

Bennie Thompson
Member of Congress

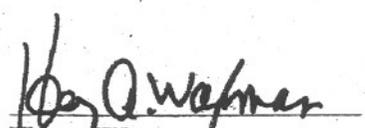

Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress

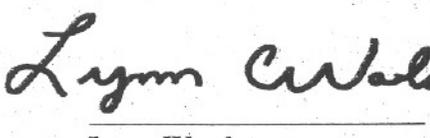

Nydia Velazquez
Member of Congress

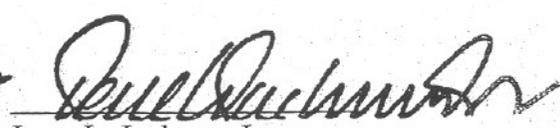

Peter Visclosky
Member of Congress

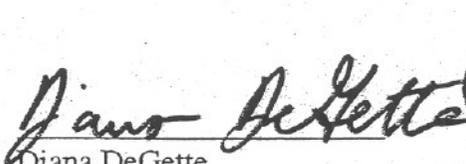

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress


Melvin Watt
Member of Congress

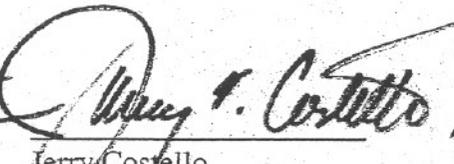

Henry Waxman
Member of Congress


Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress

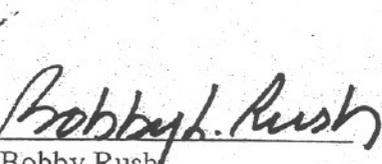

Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.
Member of Congress



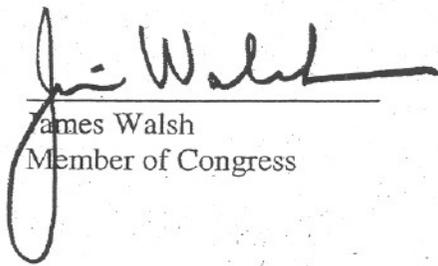
Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



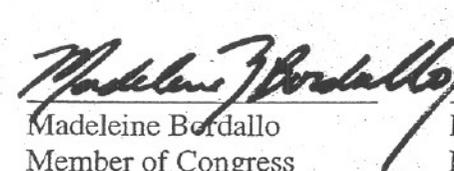
Jerry Costello
Member of Congress



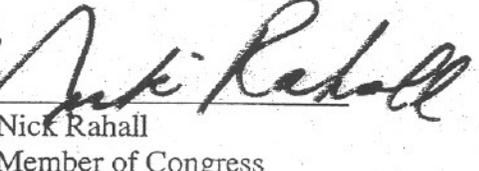
Bobby Rush
Member of Congress



James Walsh
Member of Congress



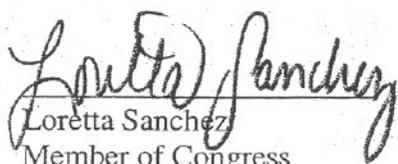
Madeleine Bordallo
Member of Congress



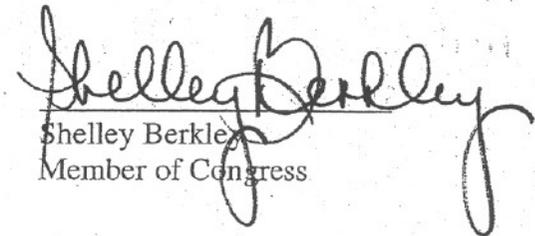
Nick Rahall
Member of Congress



Artur Davis
Member of Congress



Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress



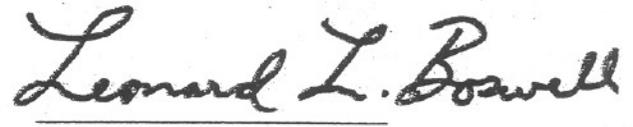
Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress



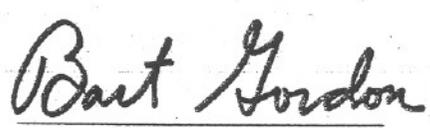
Gary Ackerman
Member of Congress



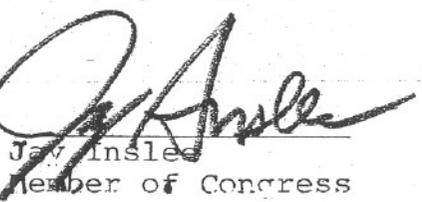
Ike Skelton
Member of Congress



Leonard Boswell
Member of Congress



Bart Gordon
Members of Congress



Jay Inslee
Member of Congress

Jane Harman

Jane Harman
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver

Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress