

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 8, 2023

The Honorable Sam Graves  
Chairman  
House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure  
2165 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rick Larsen  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure  
2164 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Chair  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ted Cruz  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Graves, Ranking Member Larsen, Chairwoman Cantwell, and Ranking Member Cruz,

We appreciate the House reaching a broad bipartisan consensus to improve our aviation system by passing the *Securing Growth and Robust Leadership in American Aviation Act* (H.R. 3935) earlier this year. The House's passage of this FAA Reauthorization package, with strong support on both sides of the aisle, is a testament to our tireless efforts to address the challenges facing our National Aviation System (NAS).

In that same bipartisan spirit, we write to reiterate our strong support for provisions included in H.R. 3935 to improve air traffic controller staffing and hiring, without which the NAS will struggle to meet current and future demands. Specifically, during future negotiations between both chambers, we urge you to ensure that any final FAA reauthorization legislation sent to the President's desk retains Section 314 of the House-passed bill. The inclusion of this provision will ensure the FAA conducts maximum hiring of new controllers for the next five fiscal years, as well as require the agency to revise its controller staffing model to include updated, more accurate hiring targets.

Today, there are approximately 1,200 fewer fully certified air traffic controllers than 10 years ago. This shortage of certified air traffic controllers has created inefficiencies in our aviation system, straining the frontline workforce and negatively affecting the travel economy. As a result, the FAA has implemented mandatory overtime for many air traffic controllers, including 10-hour days and six-day workweeks, which has increased stress and fatigue within a profession that is integral to the safety of our skies.

The status quo is unsustainable as the FAA's current finance-driven staffing model and inconsistent hiring practices have persisted for more than a decade across multiple administrations. Even more concerning, a Department of Transportation Office of Inspector General report issued in June 2023 found that, "FAA continues to face staffing challenges and lacks a plan to address them, which in turn poses a risk to the continuity of air traffic operations."<sup>1</sup>

A commitment to increase air traffic controller staffing is broadly supported among a diverse group of aviation stakeholders, including commercial airlines, business aviation, private pilots, and labor organizations representing controllers, pilots, flight attendants, aircraft mechanics, and ground support personnel.

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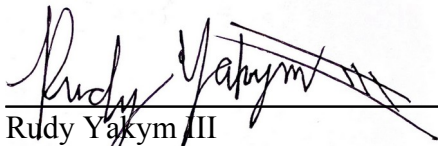
<sup>1</sup> <https://www.oig.dot.gov/library-item/39530>

The FAA reauthorization process presents a unique opportunity to improve controller staffing in a sustained and comprehensive manner. If Congress misses this opportunity, the NAS will be hard-pressed to manage current air traffic levels, let alone expand to integrate new entrants such as Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) and Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) operations.


Now is the time for a more proactive and intentional approach to addressing the ongoing shortage of air traffic controllers.

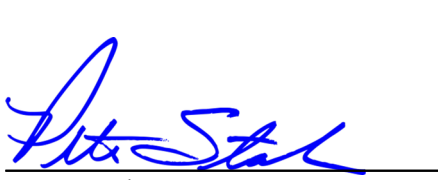
Thank you for your continued leadership and efforts to address this critical issue. We look forward to continuing to work with you on enacting a long-term FAA reauthorization bill into law that will ensure the continued safety of the NAS.


Sincerely,

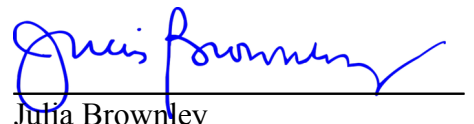
  
Rudy Yakym III  
Member of Congress

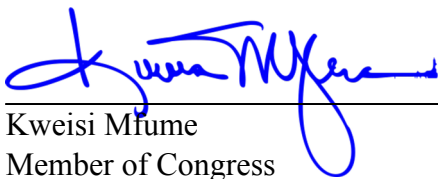
  
Dina Titus  
Member of Congress

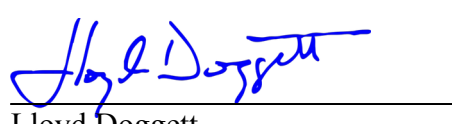
  
Bill Posey  
Member of Congress

  
Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress

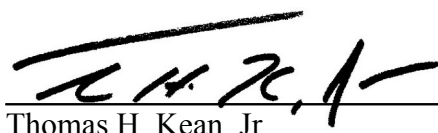
  
Val Hoyle  
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Julia Brownley  
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Kweisi Mfume  
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Lloyd Doggett  
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Jen A. Kiggans  
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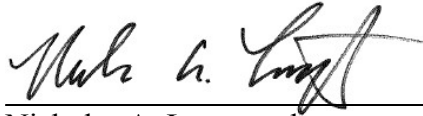
  
Thomas H. Kean, Jr.  
Member of Congress

  
Mike Bost  
Member of Congress

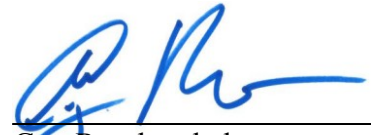
  
Marcus J. Molinaro  
Member of Congress



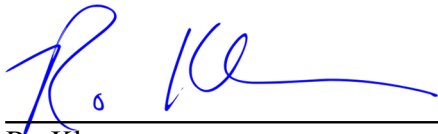
Nick LaLota  
Member of Congress



Nicholas A. Langworthy  
Member of Congress



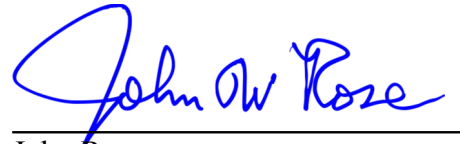
Guy Reschenthaler  
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David G. Valadao  
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Maxine Waters  
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Lois Frankel  
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Andy Barr  
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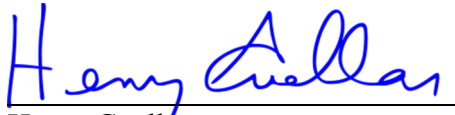
Michael V. Lawler  
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Brian Higgins  
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Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress


  
Joaquin Castro  
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Earl Blumenauer  
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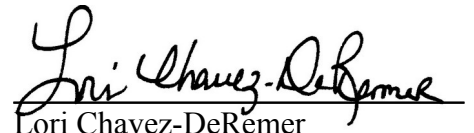
  
Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress

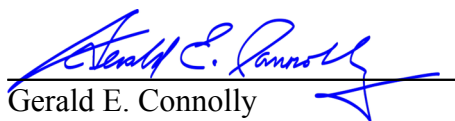
  
Maria Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress

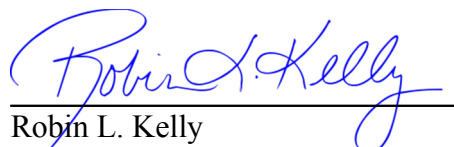
  
Doris Matsui  
Member of Congress

  
Colin Z. Allred  
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Darren Soto  
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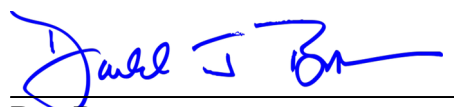
  
Lori Chavez-DeRemer  
Member of Congress

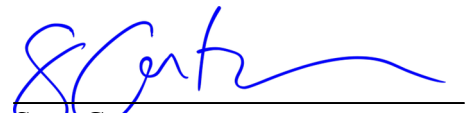
  
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

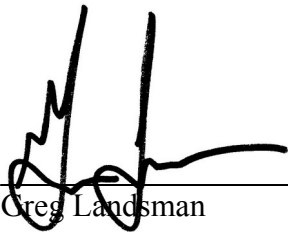
  
Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress

  
Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress

  
Kathy Castor  
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Don Bacon  
Member of Congress

  
Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



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Greg Landsman  
Member of Congress



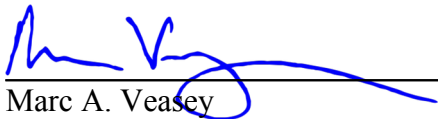
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Jared Moskowitz  
Member of Congress



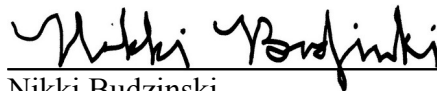
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Mark DeSaulnier  
Member of Congress



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Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress




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Nikki Budzinski  
Member of Congress



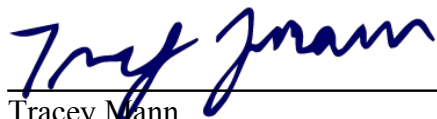
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Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



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Jake Ellzey  
Member of Congress



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Tracey Mann  
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Robert J. Wittman  
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Andrew R. Garbarino  
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Brittany Pettersen  
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Tony Cardenas  
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Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



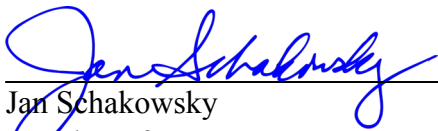
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Robert J. Menendez  
Member of Congress

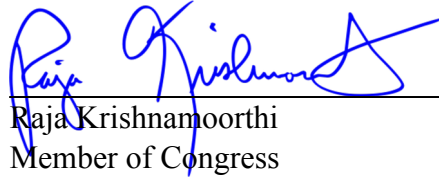


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Jesus G. "Chuy" Garcia  
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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



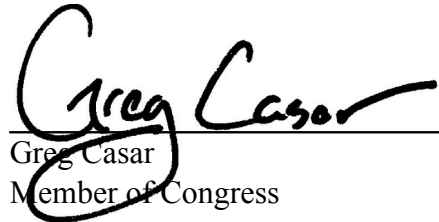
Raja Krishnamoorthi  
Member of Congress



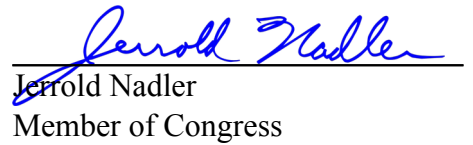
Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress



Eric Sorensen  
Member of Congress



Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



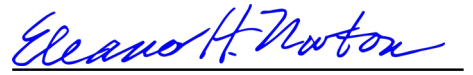
Jerrold Nadler  
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Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



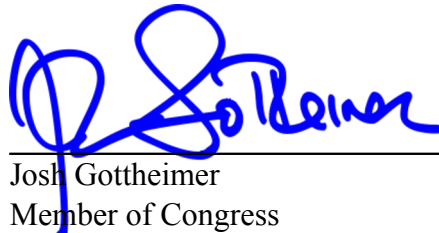
Donald G. Davis  
Member of Congress




Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross  
Member of Congress



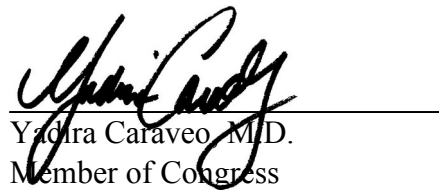
Josh Gottheimer  
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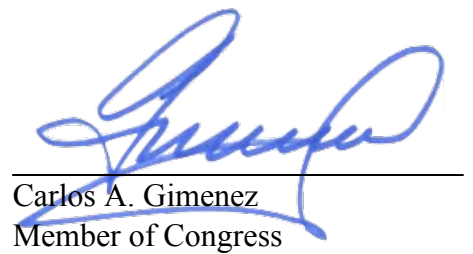
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



Kevin Mullin  
Member of Congress



Ysaira Caraveo, M.D.  
Member of Congress



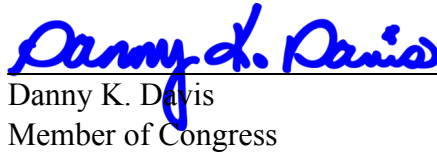
Carlos A. Gimenez  
Member of Congress





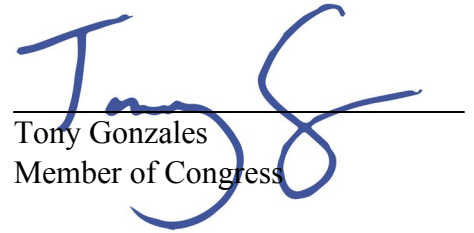
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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



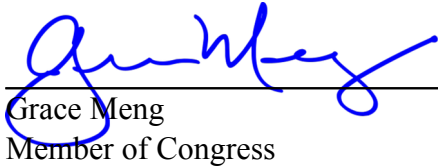
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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



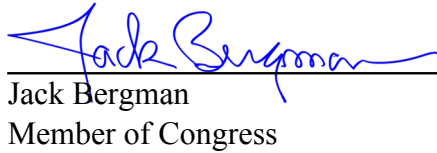
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Tony Gonzales  
Member of Congress



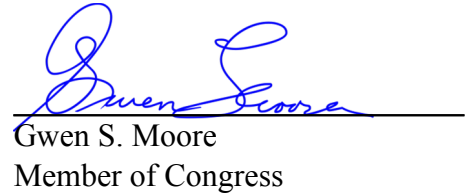
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Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



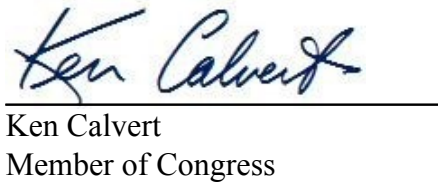
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Jack Bergman  
Member of Congress



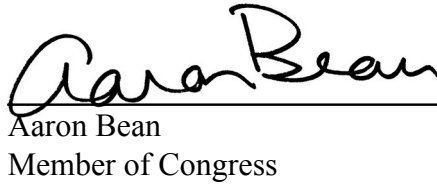
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Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



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Ken Calvert  
Member of Congress



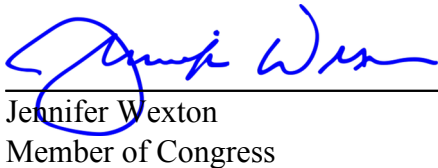
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Aaron Bean  
Member of Congress



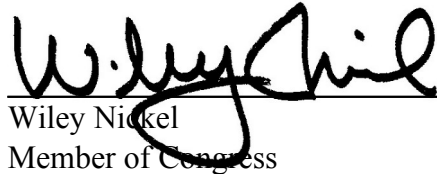
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C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress



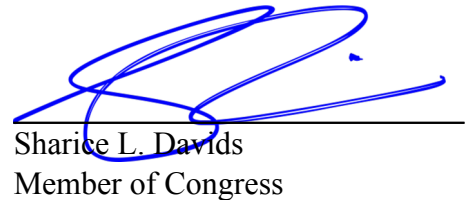
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Jennifer Wexton  
Member of Congress



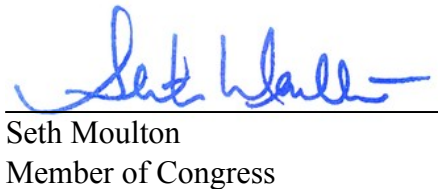
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Wiley Nickel  
Member of Congress



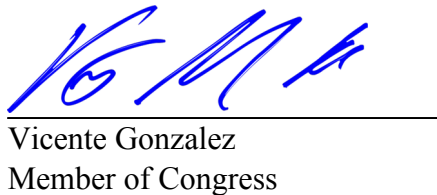
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Sharice L. Davids  
Member of Congress



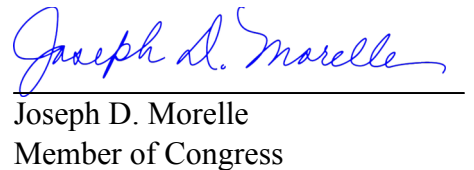
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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



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Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress




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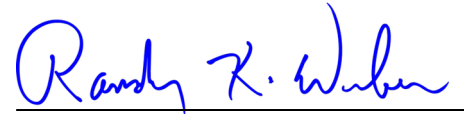
Joseph D. Morelle  
Member of Congress



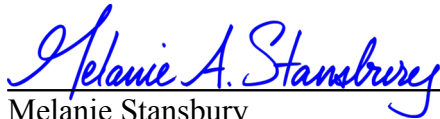
Greg Pence  
Member of Congress




Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



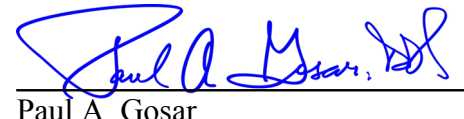
Randy K. Weber, Sr.  
Member of Congress



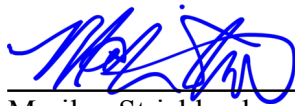
Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



John R. Moolenaar  
Member of Congress



Paul A. Gosar  
Member of Congress



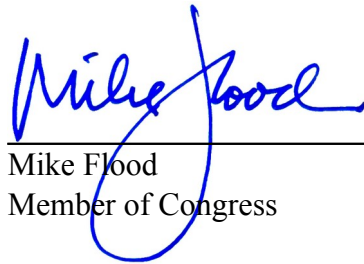
Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



Steve Womack  
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



Mike Flood  
Member of Congress



Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress

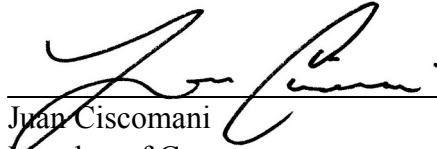


Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress





Jake LaTurner  
Member of Congress



Juan Ciscomani  
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



Frank D. Lucas  
Member of Congress



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



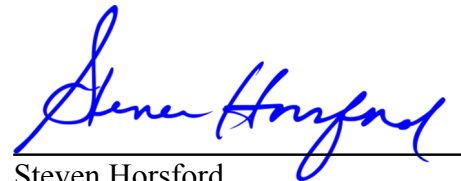
John Garamendi  
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Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress




Michael Guest  
Member of Congress



Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress



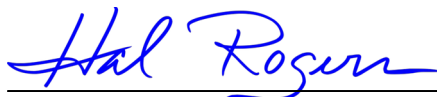
Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress



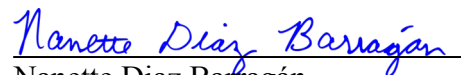
Mike Garcia  
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



Harold Rogers  
Member of Congress



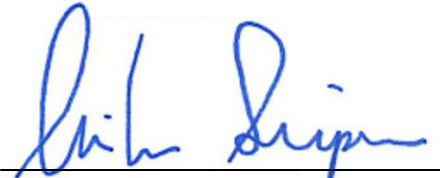
Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



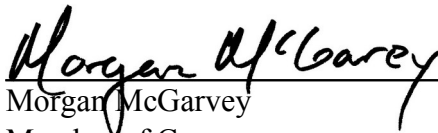
A. Drew Ferguson IV  
Member of Congress



Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



Michael K. Simpson  
Member of Congress



Morgan McGarvey  
Member of Congress



Mark Takano  
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee  
Member of Congress



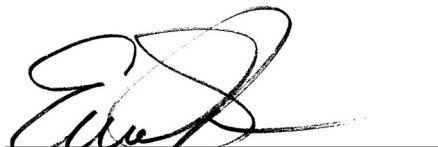
Earl L. "Buddy" Carter  
Member of Congress



Adrian Smith  
Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



Emilia Strong Sykes  
Member of Congress



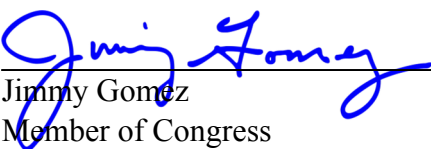
Darin LaHood  
Member of Congress



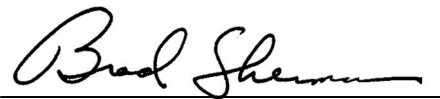
Jim Tokuda  
Member of Congress



Cori Bush  
Member of Congress



Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress

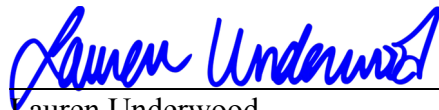


Brad Sherman  
Member of Congress



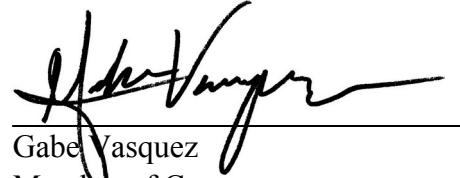
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Young Kim  
Member of Congress



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Lauren Underwood  
Member of Congress



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Gabe Vasquez  
Member of Congress



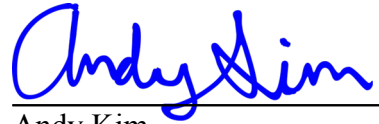
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Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



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Andy Kim  
Member of Congress