

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

October 11, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Minority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Minority Leader Jeffries:

The undersigned bipartisan members of Congress write to urge you to expeditiously pass legislative fixes that not only stop another damaging round of cuts to Medicare payments, but also provide greater certainty and stability for clinicians serving Medicare beneficiaries. On July 10, the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released the Calendar Year (CY) 2025 Medicare Physician Fee Schedule (MPFS) Proposed Rule that includes provisions subjecting all physicians and other clinicians treating Medicare patients to a 2.8 percent payment cut.<sup>1</sup> In lieu of these harmful cuts, which, absent federal legislation, will take effect on January 1, 2025, Congress must pass a bill providing physicians and other clinicians with a payment update that takes into account the cost of actually delivering care to patients.

The scheduled 2.8 percent reduction represents the fifth consecutive year that CMS issued a fee schedule regulation that lowers payments to physician and other clinicians. While Congress has stepped in the past four years to pass legislation to mitigate portions of these cuts, the fact remains that the MPFS is inherently broken. Continued payment cuts undermine the ability of independent clinical practices — especially in rural and underserved areas — to care for their community, which reduces patient access to care. The continued cuts have forced medical groups and integrated systems of care to make difficult choices, such as imposing hiring freezes, delaying system improvements, delaying implementation of care model changes including transitions to value-based care systems, and possibly eliminating services.<sup>2</sup> Because healthcare often comprises a large percentage of employment in rural areas, the closure of independent practices not only lessens patient access to care but also jeopardizes the livelihood of rural Americans.

Medicare payment rates have fallen by 29 percent over the last two decades, when adjusting for the costs of running a practice.<sup>3</sup> In addition, compliance with the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) is expensive and a flawed, insufficient way to measure quality and costs of care that has resulted in steep and unfair penalties.<sup>4 5</sup> These payment cuts and MIPS compliance costs also come on the heels of the extremely disruptive COVID-19 public health emergency and the Change Healthcare cyberattack.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/calendar-year-cy-2025-medicare-physician-fee-schedule-proposed-rule>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.amga.org/getmedia/ee996ffa-d42e-4f8c-82ac-142875103761/2024\\_Medicare\\_Cuts\\_Survey\\_Results.pdf](https://www.amga.org/getmedia/ee996ffa-d42e-4f8c-82ac-142875103761/2024_Medicare_Cuts_Survey_Results.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ama-assn.org/system/files/2024-medicare-updates-inflation-chart.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama-health-forum/fullarticle/2779947>

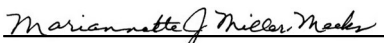
<sup>5</sup> <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/article-abstract/2799153>


The CY 2025 MPFS Proposed Rule, however, highlights that the estimated cost of running a practice, such as expenses associated with paying rent, compensating clinical and administrative staff, and purchasing supplies and equipment, is estimated to increase substantially next year. This ever-widening gap between what Medicare pays physicians and other clinicians and the cost of delivering quality care to patients demands Congressional intervention.

Thankfully, bipartisan lawmakers have come together to propose several legislative solutions in pursuit of permanent relief from the long-term problems plaguing the Medicare payment system. We urge Congressional Leadership to move legislation to provide physicians and other clinicians with a permanent, annual inflationary update in Medicare equivalent to the Medicare Economic Index (MEI). We also request that you enact targeted reforms to statutory MPFS budget neutrality requirements, raise the current MPFS budget neutrality threshold to be reflective of 2024 dollars, require CMS to cross-check utilization assumptions associated with a narrow set of newly unbundled codes that trigger budget neutrality cuts to correct any misestimates, mandate CMS review key elements of practice expense costs concurrently and no less often than every five years, and limit changes to the MPFS conversion factor to no more than 2.5 percent in a given year. Some of these legislative solutions already passed by the Energy and Commerce Committee in 2023 with strong bipartisan support. In addition, we urge Congressional Leadership to utilize bipartisan offsets as we address all issues pertaining to Medicare payments to physicians and other clinicians.

Increased instability in the healthcare sector due to looming cost hikes impacts the ability of physicians and clinicians to provide the highest quality of care and threatens patient access to affordable healthcare. Rural physicians and other clinicians, as well as those treating underserved populations, are facing the most daunting challenge of trying to provide care in the wake of devastating reimbursement cuts. To prevent the very real scenario of insufficient access to physicians and other clinicians treating Medicare patients, Congress must stop the 2.8 percent payment cut from occurring in 2025, enact targeted reforms to statutory budget neutrality requirements, and provide physicians with a payment update reflective of inflationary pressures. We stand ready to work with you to pass crucial bipartisan legislative initiatives before the conclusion of the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress.

Sincerely,

  
Mariannette Miller-Meeks,  
M.D.  
Member of Congress

  
Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Raul Ruiz, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Larry Bucshon, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier, M.D.  
Member of Congress



John Joyce, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman  
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Robert E. Latta  
Member of Congress



Jefferson Van Drew  
Member of Congress



Neal P. Dunn, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Mike Bost  
Member of Congress



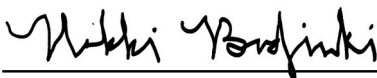
Glenn "GT" Thompson  
Member of Congress



Brandon Williams  
Member of Congress



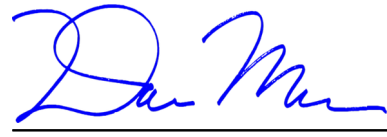
Sharice L. Davids  
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Nikki Budzinski  
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Katie Porter  
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David G. Valadao  
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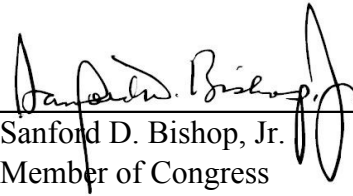
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
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Aaron Bean  
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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.  
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Anthony D'Esposito  
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Tracey Mann  
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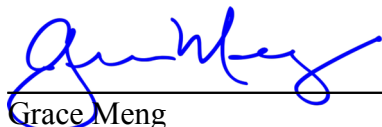
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Member of Congress



Jim Costa  
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Michael Waltz  
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Grace Meng  
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Jim Tokuda  
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Darren Soto  
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Rich McCormick, MD, MBA  
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Brittany Petterson  
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Glenn Ivey  
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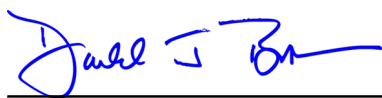
Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress



Josh Gottheimer  
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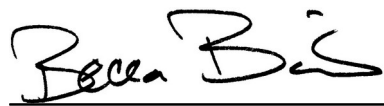
Darin LaHood  
Member of Congress



Don Bacon  
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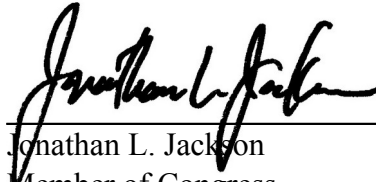
Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



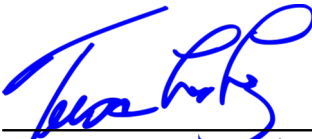
Marcus J. Molinaro  
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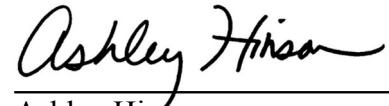
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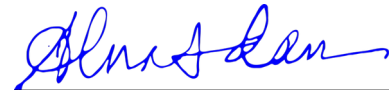
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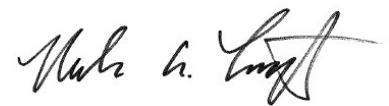
Mike Thompson  
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Julia Brownley  
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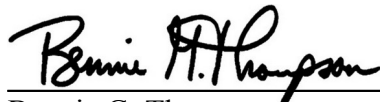


Nicholas A. Langworthy  
Member of Congress





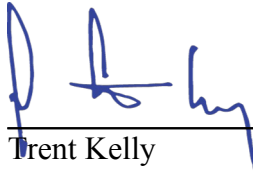
Ronny L. Jackson, M.D.  
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Bennie G. Thompson  
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Chrissy Houlahan  
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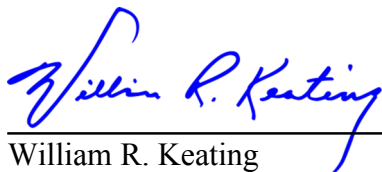
Trent Kelly  
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Steve Cohen  
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Andrew R. Garbarino  
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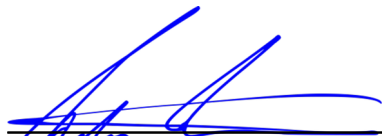
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Charles J. "Chuck"  
Fleischmann  
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Adriano Espaillat  
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Bradley Scott Schneider  
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Steven Horsford  
Member of Congress



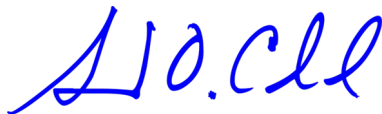
Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



Mike Garcia  
Member of Congress



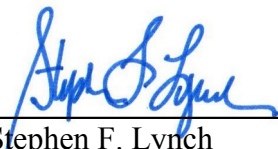
Salud Carbajal  
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Brendan F. Boyle  
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Marilyn Strickland  
Member of Congress



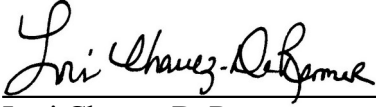
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Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



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Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



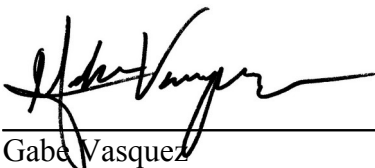
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Lori Chavez-DeRemer  
Member of Congress



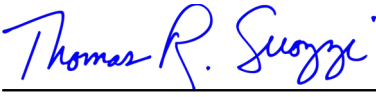
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Young Kim  
Member of Congress




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Gabe Vasquez  
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Thomas R. Suozzi  
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Dusty Johnson  
Member of Congress



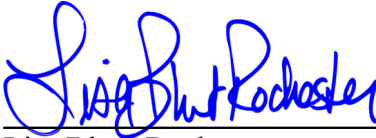
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress




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Greg Pence  
Member of Congress



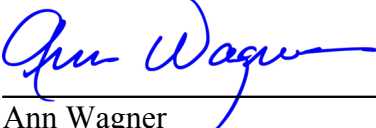
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Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress




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Joe Wilson  
Member of Congress



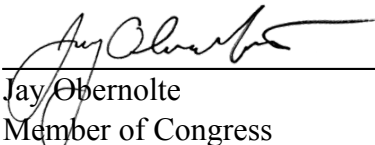
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Ann Wagner  
Member of Congress




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Erin Houchin  
Member of Congress




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Jay Obernolte  
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Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



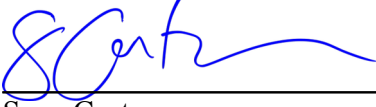
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J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress




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Harriet M. Hageman  
Member of Congress




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Sean Casten  
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Paul Tonko  
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Garret Graves  
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Eric Swalwell  
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Harold Rogers  
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Chris Pappas  
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Andrea Salinas  
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Alex X. Mooney  
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Cliff Bentz  
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August Pfluger  
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Andy Harris, M.D.  
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Kathy Castor  
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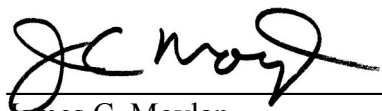
Nanette Diaz Barragán  
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Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress



Donald Norcross  
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James C. Moylan  
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Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress



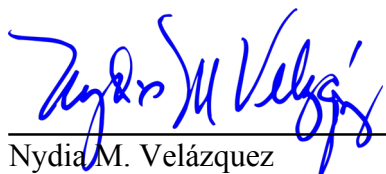
Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



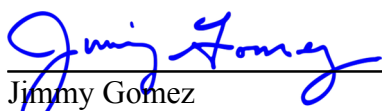
Michael A. Rulli  
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress

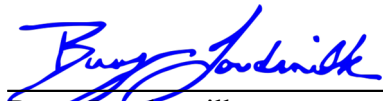



Yadira Caraveo, M.D.  
Member of Congress





Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress

  
Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress

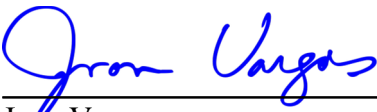
  
Barry Loudermilk  
Member of Congress

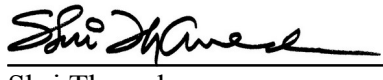
  
John R. Moolenaar  
Member of Congress

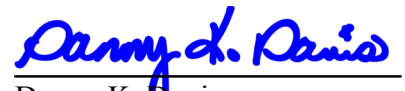
  
Tony Gonzales  
Member of Congress

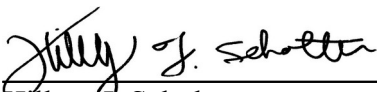
  
Michael K. Simpson  
Member of Congress

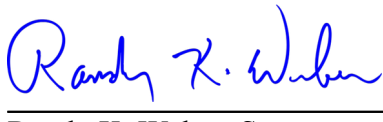
  
Steny H. Hoyer  
Member of Congress


  
Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress

  
Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress

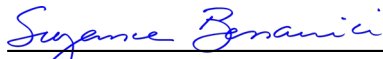
  
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress

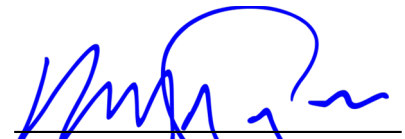
  
Hillary J. Scholten  
Member of Congress


  
Randy K. Weber, Sr.  
Member of Congress


  
Mike Levin  
Member of Congress

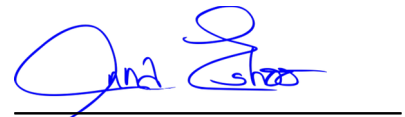
  
Debbie Lesko  
Member of Congress

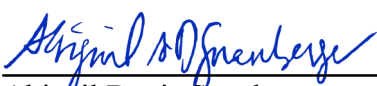
  
Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

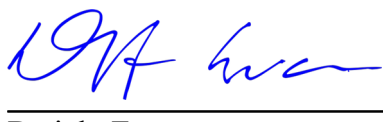
  
Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress

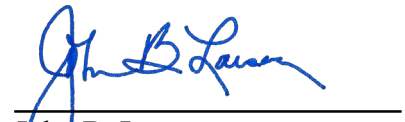
  
Derrick Van Orden  
Member of Congress

  
H. Morgan Griffith  
Member of Congress

  
Anna G. Eshoo  
Member of Congress

  
Abigail Davis Spanberger  
Member of Congress

  
Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress

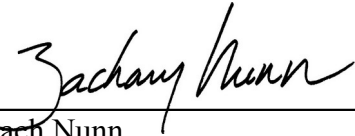
  
John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



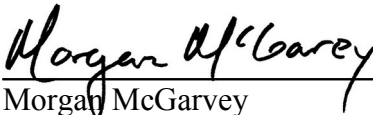
Dan Goldman  
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Stephanie Bice  
Member of Congress



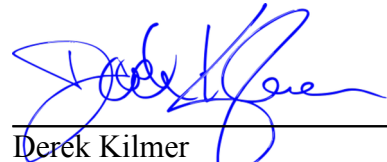
Zach Nunn  
Member of Congress



Morgan McGarvey  
Member of Congress



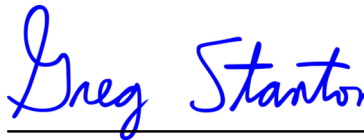
Maria Elvira Salazar  
Member of Congress



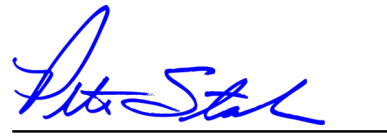
Derek Kilmer  
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Dan Newhouse  
Member of Congress



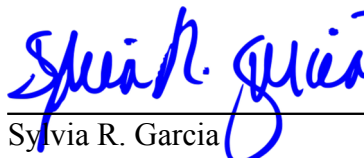
Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress



Pete Stauber  
Member of Congress



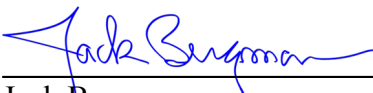
John S. Duarte  
Member of Congress



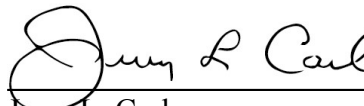
Sylvia R. Garcia  
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Jack Bergman  
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Jerry L. Carl  
Member of Congress



Jason Crow  
Member of Congress



Andy Kim  
Member of Congress



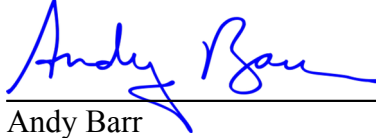
Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress



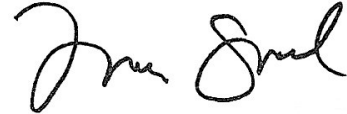
Aumua Amata Coleman  
Radewagen  
Member of Congress



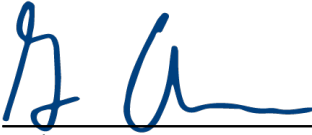
Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



Andy Barr  
Member of Congress



Michelle Steel  
Member of Congress



Gabe Amo  
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



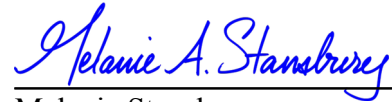
Susie Lee  
Member of Congress



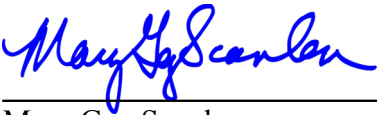
Emanuel Cleaver, II  
Member of Congress



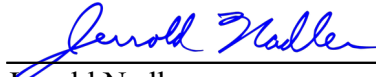
Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress



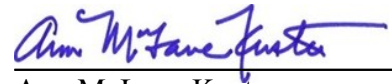
Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress



Ann McLane Kuster  
Member of Congress



Mary Sattler Peltola  
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill  
Member of Congress



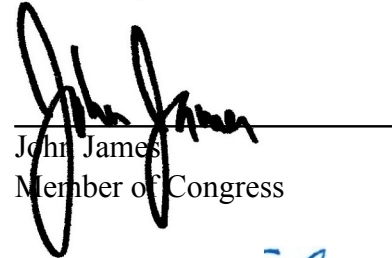
Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



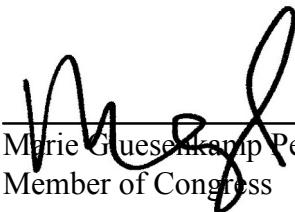
Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress



Robert B. Aderholt  
Member of Congress



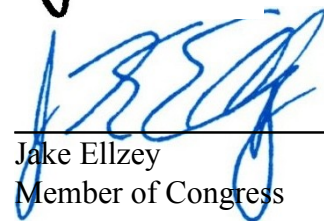
John James  
Member of Congress



Marie Guesenken Perez  
Member of Congress



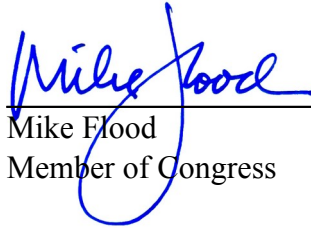
Tim Walberg  
Member of Congress



Jake Ellzey  
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



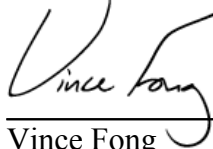
Mike Flood  
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



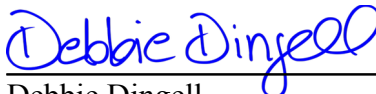
Vince Fong  
Member of Congress



Sydney Kamlager-Dove  
Member of Congress



Lance Gooden  
Member of Congress



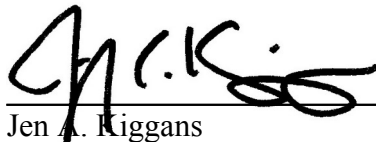
Debbie Dingell  
Member of Congress



Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



Jen A. Riggans  
Member of Congress



Monica De La Cruz  
Member of Congress



Jennifer González-Colón  
Member of Congress



C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel  
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith  
Member of Congress



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress



David P. Joyce  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



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Morgan Luttrell  
Member of Congress



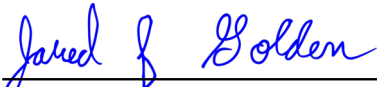
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Elissa Slotkin  
Member of Congress



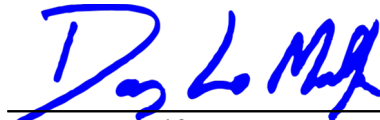
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Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



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Jared Golden  
Member of Congress



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Doug LaMalfa  
Member of Congress



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Robert J. Menendez  
Member of Congress