

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 18, 2004

Honorable James T. Walsh
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Veterans
Affairs, Housing & Urban Development
H 143 Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Alan B. Mollohan
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Veterans Affairs, Housing & Urban
Development
2346 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Walsh and Ranking Member Mollohan:

We commend the Subcommittee for its commitment to affordable housing programs, and we hope we can count on your support this year. As the Subcommittee considers the FY05 Veterans Affairs, Housing & Urban Development Appropriations Act, we would like to express our strong support for fully funding the Housing Choice Voucher Program, and express our concern about the Flexible Voucher proposal.

The Housing Choice Voucher Program provides safe, affordable housing to more than two million American families, and is the only option for many families facing our nation's affordable housing crisis. The President's FY05 budget request makes deep cuts and significant programmatic changes to the Section 8 voucher program, which will undoubtedly impact the lives of low-income families across the nation.

It is estimated that the current budget proposal will underfund the Section 8 program by more than \$1.6 billion. Coupled with the proposed Flexible Voucher program, this inadequate funding level will require Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) to reduce support to families by either serving fewer families, making programmatic changes that reduce the level of subsidies provided, or both.

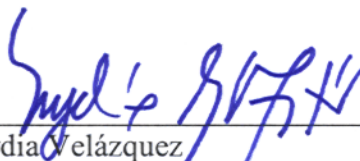
While we are concerned the cost of the Section 8 program is outpacing available resources, we believe the implementation of significant programmatic changes, such as those incorporated in the Flexible Voucher proposal should be vetted in the authorizing committees of jurisdiction before any further consideration in the House.

Further, we are concerned the Flexible Voucher proposal would allow housing authorities to reduce the level of subsidy provided to each assisted family, eliminating the rule that families pay no more than 30 percent of their income for rent. It also ends the "targeting" of 75 percent of scarce voucher resources to extremely low income families.

Voucher utilization rates for PHAs are at a record high, yet waiting lists for families seeking Section 8 assistance continues to grow. The Administration, however, is now asking these agencies to change program administration and operate with significantly less funding -- an impossible task for most PHAs.

We, therefore, urge you to provide full funding for the Housing Choice Voucher program in the FY05 VA-HUD Appropriations bill and protect the 2 million households that benefit from this most successful program.


Sincerely,



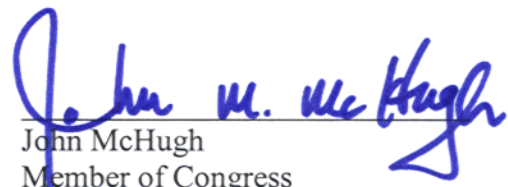
Nydia Velázquez
Member of Congress



Christopher Shays
Member of Congress



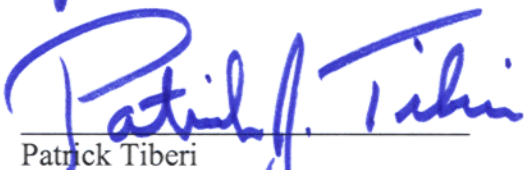
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



John McHugh
Member of Congress




Robert Menendez
Member of Congress



Patrick Tiberi
Member of Congress


Neil Abercrombie

Neil Abercrombie
Member of Congress


Anibal Acevedo-Vila

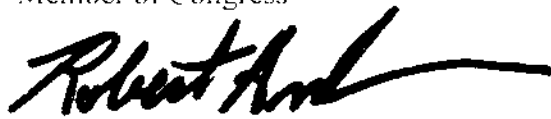
Anibal Acevedo-Vila
Member of Congress


Gary Ackerman

Gary Ackerman
Member of Congress


Thomas Allen

Thomas Allen
Member of Congress


Robert Andrews

Robert Andrews
Member of Congress


Joe Baca

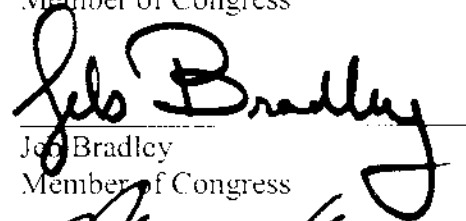
Joe Baca
Member of Congress


Brian Baird

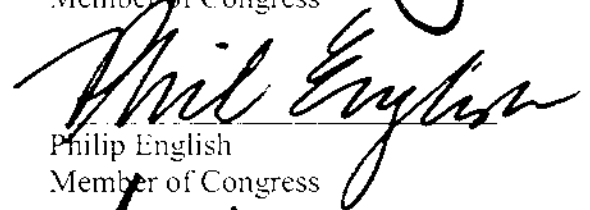
Brian Baird
Member of Congress


Sherwood Boehlert

Sherwood Boehlert
Member of Congress


Jon Bradley

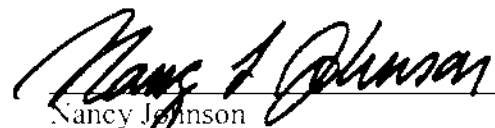
Jon Bradley
Member of Congress


Philip English

Philip English
Member of Congress


Amo Houghton

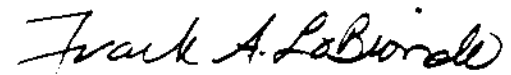
Amo Houghton
Member of Congress


Nancy Johnson

Nancy Johnson
Member of Congress


Jim Leach

Jim Leach
Member of Congress


Frank LoBiondo

Frank LoBiondo
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Tammy Baldwin

Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

Xavier Becerra

Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress

Shelley Berkley

Shelley Berkley
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Tim Bishop

Tim Bishop
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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.

Sanford Bishop, Jr.
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Earl Blumenauer

Earl Blumenauer
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Madeleine Bordallo

Madeleine Bordallo
Member of Congress

Robert Brady

Robert Brady
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George Ethercutt

George Ethercutt
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Tom Osborne

Tom Osborne
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Jim Ramstad

Jim Ramstad
Member of Congress

Rick Renzi

Rick Renzi
Member of Congress

Heana Ros-Lehtinen

Heana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress

Robert Simmons

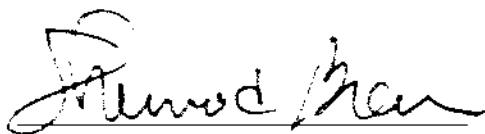
Robert Simmons
Member of Congress

Leonard Boswell

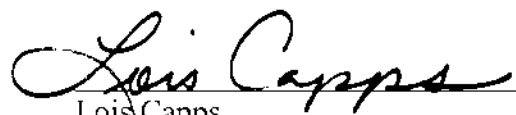
Leonard Boswell
Member of Congress

Corrine Brown

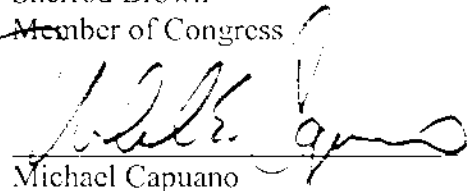
Corrine Brown
Member of Congress



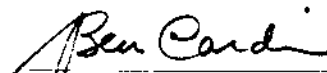
Sherrod Brown
Member of Congress



Lois Capps
Member of Congress



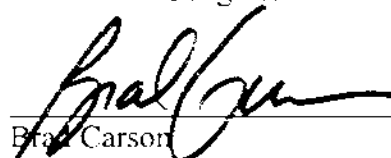
Michael Capuano
Member of Congress



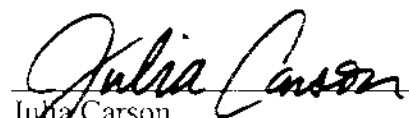
Benjamin Cardin
Member of Congress



Dennis Cardoza
Member of Congress



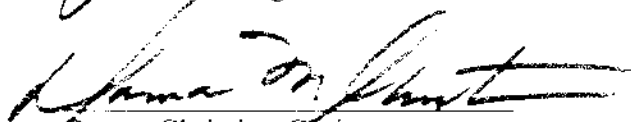
Brad Carson
Member of Congress



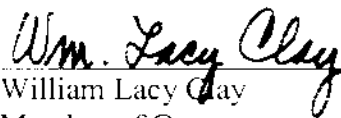
Julia Carson
Member of Congress



Ed Case
Member of Congress



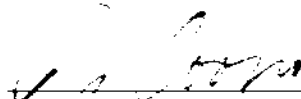
Donna Christian-Christensen
Member of Congress



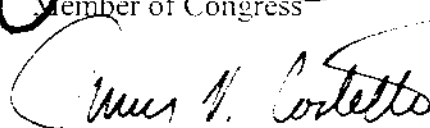
William Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



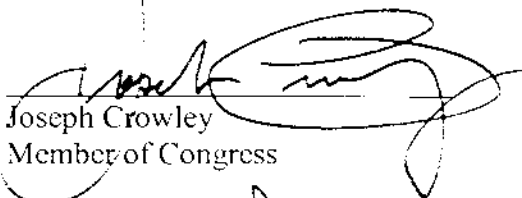
John Conyers
Member of Congress



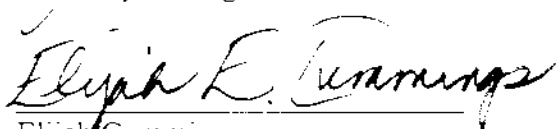
Jim Cooper
Member of Congress



Jerry Costello
Member of Congress



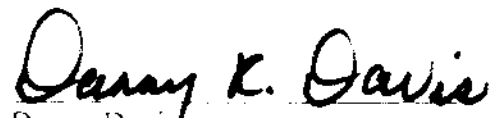
Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



Elijah Cummings
Member of Congress



Artur Davis
Member of Congress



Danny Davis
Member of Congress

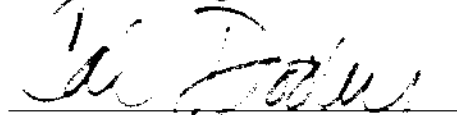



Jim Davis
Member of Congress

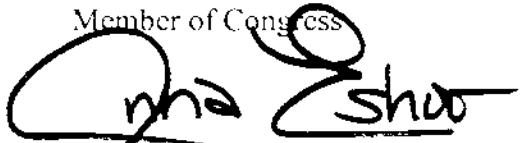

Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress


William Delahunt
Member of Congress


Peter Deutsch
Member of Congress

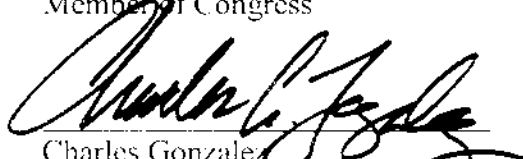

Calvin Dooley
Member of Congress

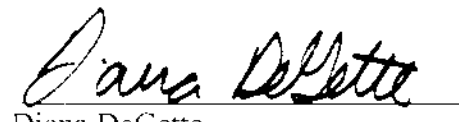

Rahm Emanuel
Member of Congress

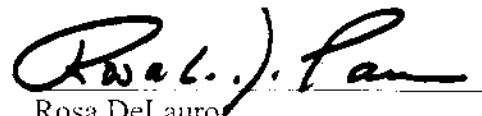

Anna Eshoo
Member of Congress

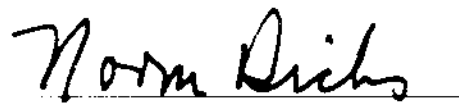

Bob Filner
Member of Congress


Barney Frank
Member of Congress

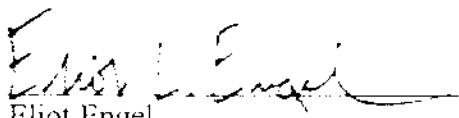

Charles Gonzalez
Member of Congress

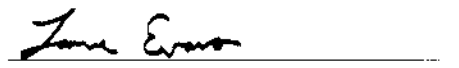

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

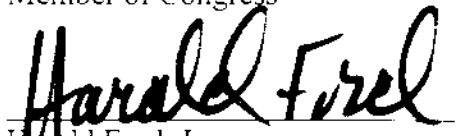

Rosa DeLauro
Member of Congress



Norman Dicks
Member of Congress

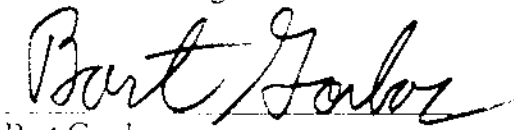

Mike Doyle
Member of Congress

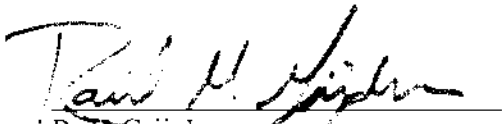

Eliot Engel
Member of Congress

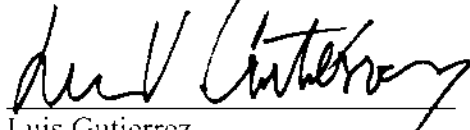

Lane Evans
Member of Congress


Harold Ford, Jr.
Member of Congress

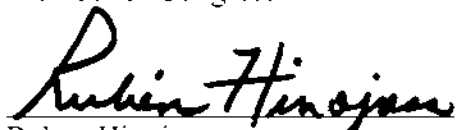

Martin Frost
Member of Congress



Bart Gordon
Member of Congress



Raul Grijalva
Member of Congress

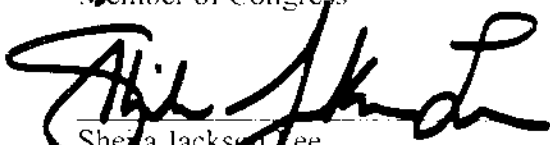

Luis Gutierrez
Member of Congress

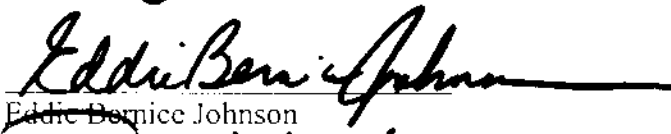

Baron Hill
Member of Congress

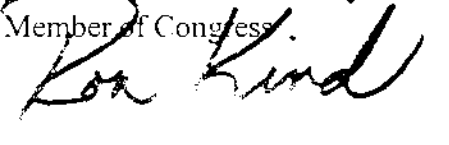

Ruben Hinojosa
Member of Congress

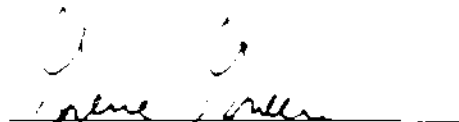

Michael Honda
Member of Congress

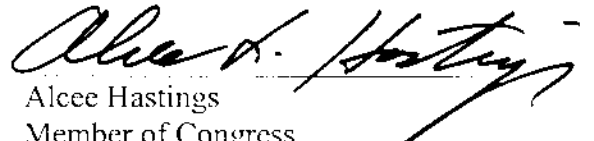

Jay Inslee
Member of Congress

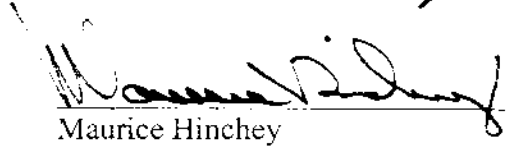

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

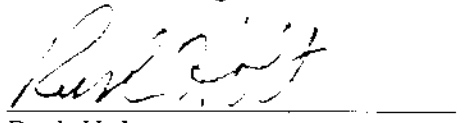

Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress

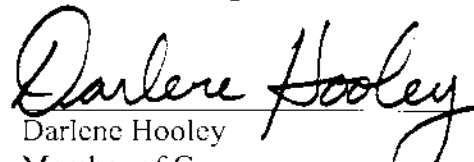

Ron Kind
Member of Congress

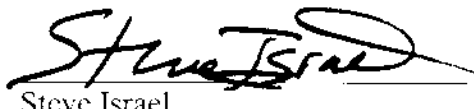

Gene Green
Member of Congress


Alcee Hastings
Member of Congress


Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress



Rush Holt
Member of Congress


Darlene Hooley
Member of Congress


Steve Israel
Member of Congress


Chris Johnson
Member of Congress


Dale Kildee
Member of Congress


Jerry Kiecicka
Member of Congress

Dennis J. Kucinich

Dennis Kucinich
Member of Congress

Jim Langevin

James Langevin
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Zoe Lofgren

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

Stephen Lynch

Stephen Lynch
Member of Congress

Karen McCarthy

Karen McCarthy
Member of Congress

Jim McDermott

Jim McDermott
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Michael A. McNulty

Michael McNulty
Member of Congress

Nick Lampson

Nicholas Lampson
Member of Congress

Tom Lantos

Tom Lantos
Member of Congress

John B. Larson

John Larson
Member of Congress

William Lipinski

William Lipinski
Member of Congress

Ken Lucas

Ken Lucas
Member of Congress

Carolyn McCarthy

Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress

James McGovern

James McGovern
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney

Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress

Edward G. Markey

Edward Markey
Member of Congress

Robert J. Matsui

Robert Matsui
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks

Gregory Meeks
Member of Congress

Juanita Millender-McDonald

Juanita Millender-McDonald
Member of Congress

Dennis Moore

Dennis Moore
Member of Congress

Grace J. Napolitano

Grace Napolitano
Member of Congress

Eleanor Norton

Eleanor Norton
Member of Congress

John W. Olver

John Olver
Member of Congress

Frank Pallone, Jr.

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

Jim Matheson

Jim Matheson
Member of Congress

Marty Meehan

Marty Meehan
Member of Congress

Michael H. Michaud

Michael Michaud
Member of Congress

Brad Miller

Brad Miller
Member of Congress

James Moran

James Moran
Member of Congress

Richard E. Neal

Richard Neal
Member of Congress

James Oberstar

James Oberstar
Member of Congress

Major Owens

Major Owens
Member of Congress

Donald W. Payne

Donald Payne
Member of Congress

Nancy Pelosi

Nancy Pelosi
Member of Congress

Collin C Peterson

Collin Peterson
Member of Congress

Earl Pomeroy

Earl Pomeroy
Member of Congress

Nick Rahall, II

Nick Rahall, II
Member of Congress

Charles Rangel

Charles Rangel
Member of Congress

Silvestre Reyes

Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress

Ciro Rodriguez

Ciro Rodriguez
Member of Congress

Mike Ross

Mike Ross
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

Bobby L. Rush

Bobby Rush
Member of Congress

Tim Ryan

Tim Ryan
Member of Congress

Martin Olor Cabal

Martin Sabo
Member of Congress

Linda J. Sanchez

Linda Sanchez
Member of Congress

Loretta Sanchez

Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress

Bernard Sanders

Bernard Sanders
Member of Congress

Jan Schakowsky

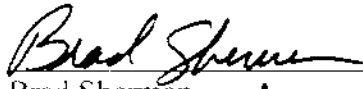
Janice Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Adam Schiff

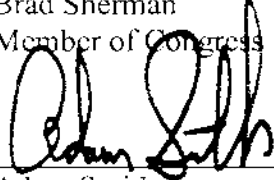
Adam Schiff
Member of Congress

David Scott

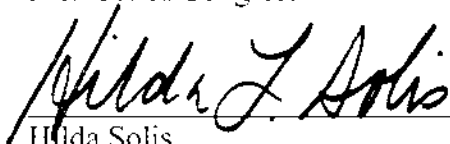
David Scott
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



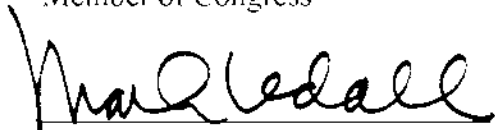
Hilda Solis
Member of Congress



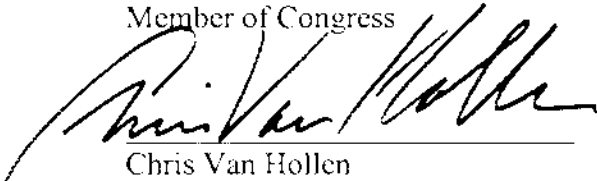
Ted Strickland
Member of Congress



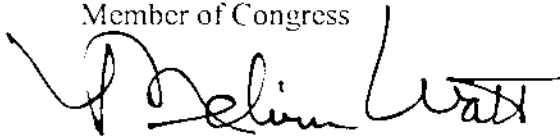
Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress



Mark Udall
Member of Congress



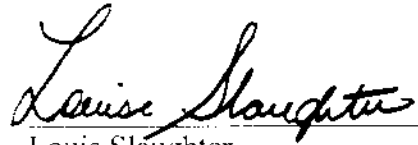
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



Melvin Watt
Member of Congress



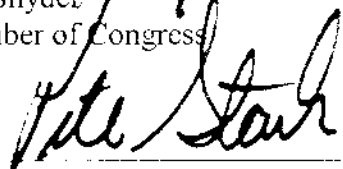
Anthony Weiner
Member of Congress



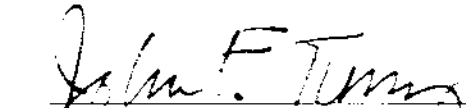
Louis Slaughter
Member of Congress



Vic Snyder
Member of Congress



Fortney Stark
Member of Congress



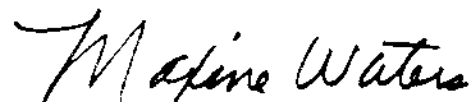
John Tierney
Member of Congress



Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Member of Congress



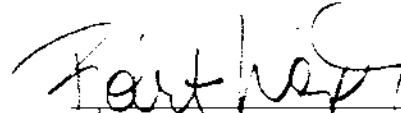
Tom Udall
Member of Congress



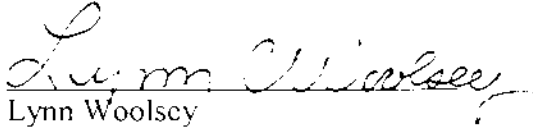
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



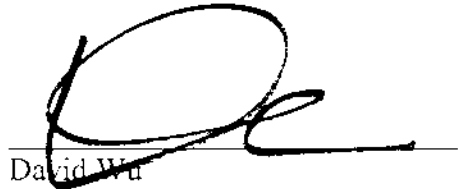
Henry Waxman
Member of Congress



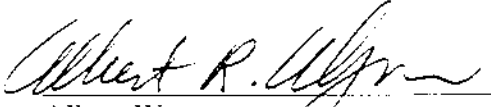
Robert Wexler
Member of Congress



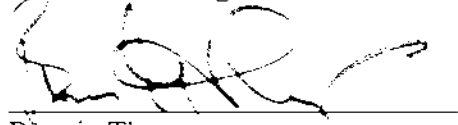
Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress



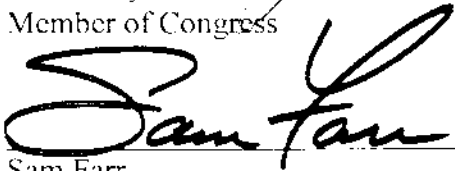
David Wu
Member of Congress



Albert Wynn
Member of Congress



Bennie Thompson
Member of Congress



Sam Farr
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell Jr.
Bill Pascrell
Member of Congress

Solomon Ortiz
Solomon Ortiz
Member of Congress