

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

June 8, 2005

The Honorable Joseph Knollenberg
Chairman
Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury
and Housing and Urban Development,
the Judiciary, District of Columbia
Committee on Appropriations
2357 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John W. Olver
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Transportation, Treasury
and Housing and Urban Development,
the Judiciary, District of Columbia
Committee on Appropriations
2357 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Knollenberg and Ranking Member Olver:

We are writing to express our strong support for \$2.0 billion in federal funding for Amtrak in the Fiscal Year 2006 Transportation, Treasury and Housing and Urban Development, the Judiciary, District of Columbia Appropriations Bill.

In his Fiscal Year 2006 Budget, the President proposed to bankrupt Amtrak by providing no federal support for capital or operating expenses. We believe this plan is shortsighted, and is unfair to the 25 million people who ride Amtrak each year. Bankrupting Amtrak would effectively end intercity passenger rail service in this country, with no guarantee it could be resumed in the future.

Amtrak provides a vital service throughout the United States, easing congestion on our roads and at our airports, adding to our transportation options in times of national emergency, providing much-needed mobility for those who can't drive and prefer not to fly, and serving as the link to the rest of the country for many small and rural communities. In addition, Amtrak's operations are integral to nearly 850,000 daily riders of commuter rail. An Amtrak bankruptcy would strand these riders and force them onto roads, where the additional congestion would worsen commutes for everyone, resulting in less productive time at work and less quality time for families at home.

While some take a look at Amtrak's recent financial and operating problems and argue that it needs to be weaned off federal support, we see a system that has been starved of funding for far too long. By giving Amtrak only enough money to limp by from year to year, we merely invite additional equipment malfunctions and service disruptions. The Department of Transportation Inspector General reports that there is a \$5 billion backlog in deferred maintenance on the Northeast Corridor alone. Unless serious funds are committed to address this backlog, serious problems will continue to occur.

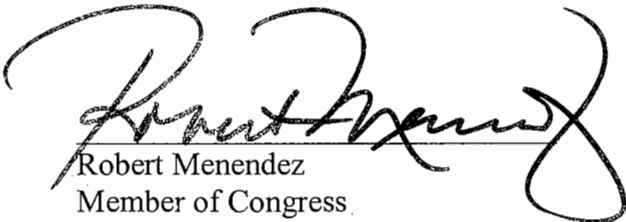
In the past 35 years combined, Amtrak has received less federal money than we will spend on highways in just this fiscal year. The federal government has established robust funding mechanisms for highways, aviation, and mass transit, and Congress has always properly supported investment in these modes. However, Amtrak has been forced to beg for money year after year, and rarely gets what it needs because of expectations that it should be profitable. The fact is that almost no intercity passenger rail services in the world turn an operating profit, and *all* are dependent on government support for capital expenses. Holding Amtrak to an unrealistic standard simply delays making real progress in improving intercity rail in this country.

Amtrak has demonstrated that with adequate support, it can be very successful. In California, for example, enhanced investment in rail corridors has resulted in ridership increases of up to 150% in the past six years. Even in the absence of increased support, Amtrak has seen record levels of ridership in each of the past two years.

We believe very strongly in the future of Amtrak, but know that a positive future requires a serious commitment from Congress in the present. The DOT Inspector General has reported that a funding level of \$1.5 billion would only be enough to maintain the status quo, and therefore we respectfully request that you provide \$2.0 billion for Amtrak in FY06, which would be a good first step to putting American intercity passenger rail back on track for success.

Thank you for consideration of this request.

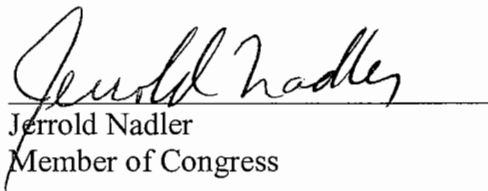
Sincerely,



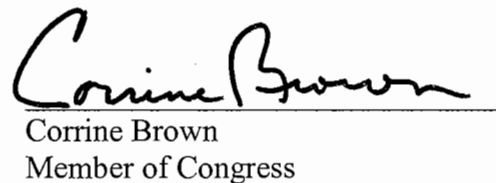
Robert Menendez
Member of Congress



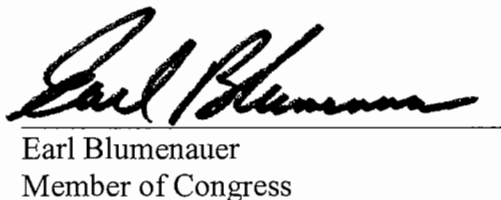
James L. Oberstar
Member of Congress




Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



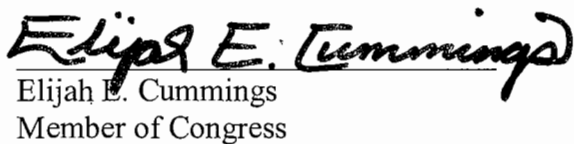
Corrine Brown
Member of Congress



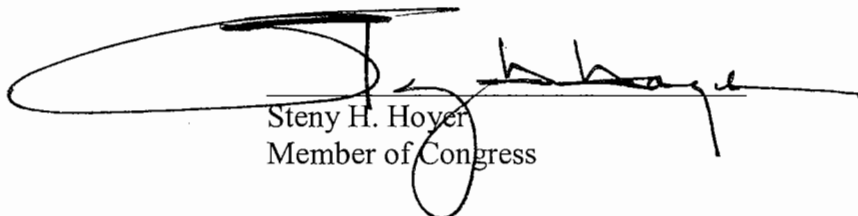
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Allyson Y. Schwartz
Member of Congress



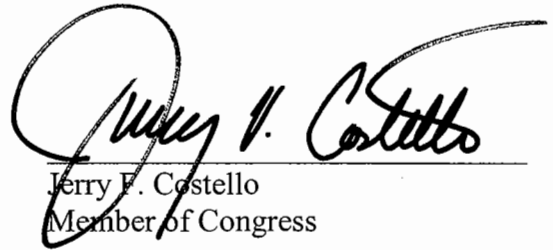
Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress



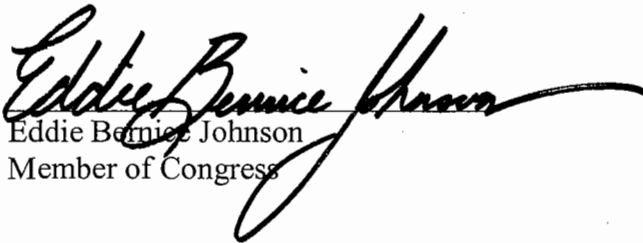
Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



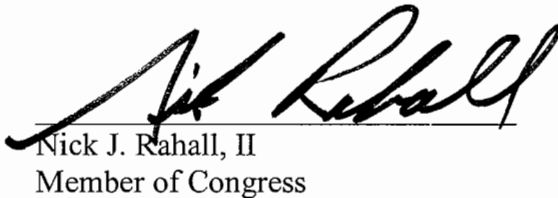
Jerry F. Costello
Member of Congress



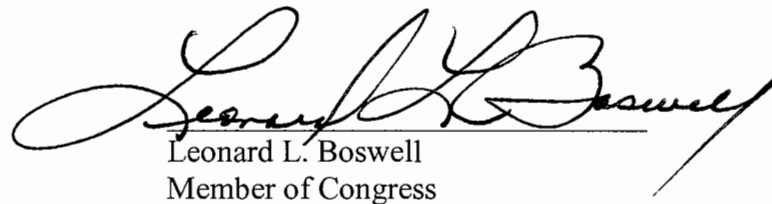
Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress



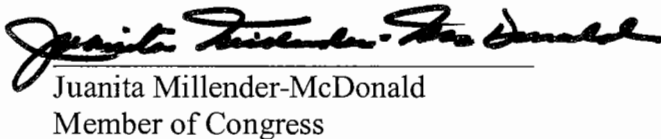
Julia Carson
Member of Congress



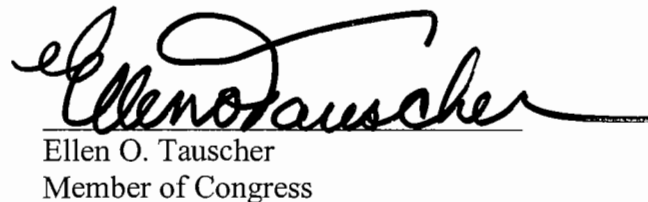
Nick J. Rahall, II
Member of Congress



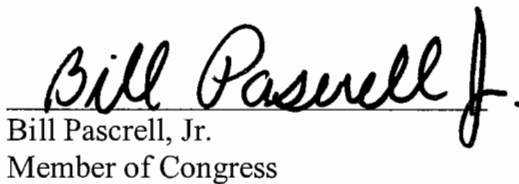
Leonard L. Boswell
Member of Congress



Juanita Millender-McDonald
Member of Congress



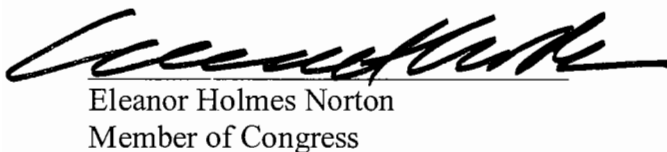
Ellen O. Tauscher
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Tim Holden
Member of Congress



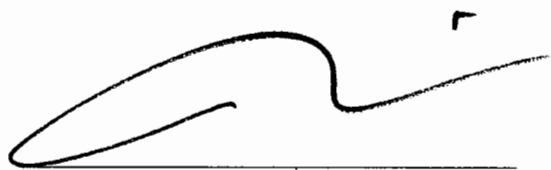
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



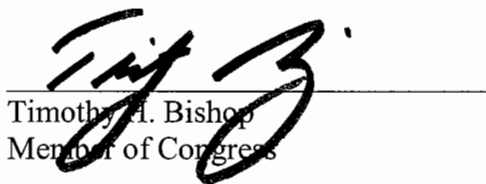
Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress



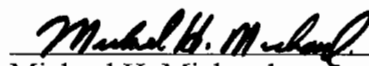
Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



Anthony D. Weiner
Member of Congress



Timothy H. Bishop
Member of Congress



Michael H. Michaud
Member of Congress



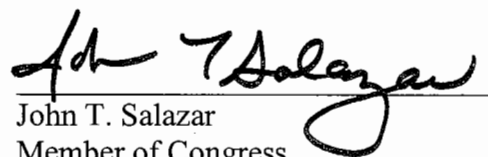
Ben Chandler
Member of Congress



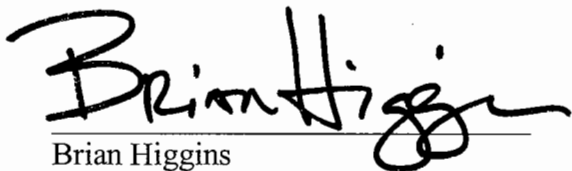
Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress



Russ Carnahan
Member of Congress



John T. Salazar
Member of Congress



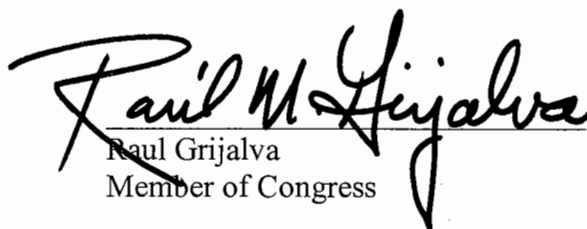
Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



Diane E. Watson
Member of Congress



Bernard Sanders
Member of Congress



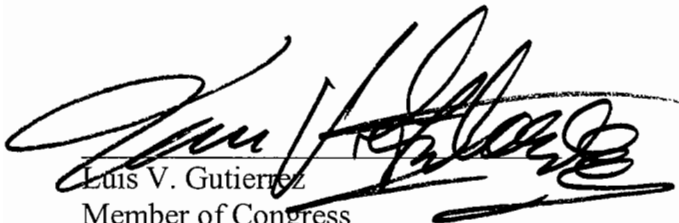
Raul Grijalva
Member of Congress



Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Member of Congress



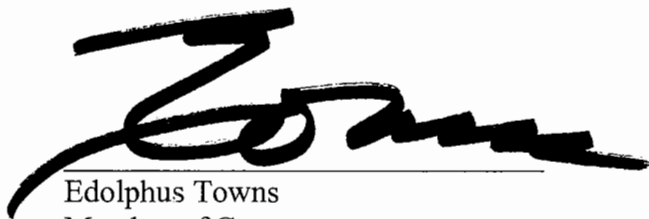
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



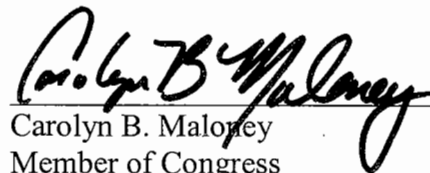
Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



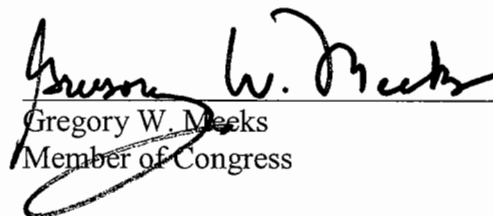
Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress



Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



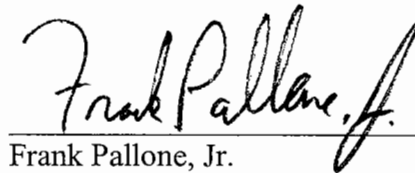
Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



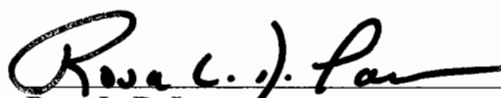
Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Vic Snyder
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



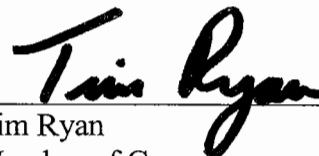
Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress



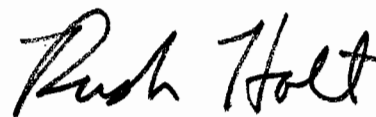
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



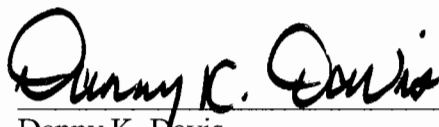
Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress



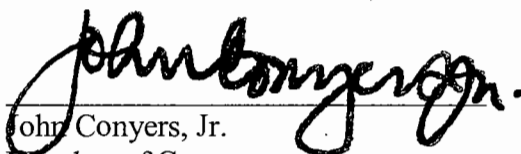
Rush D. Holt
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



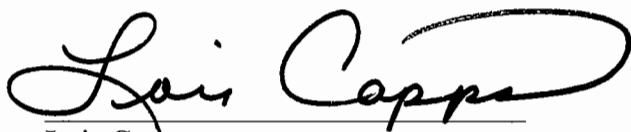
Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress



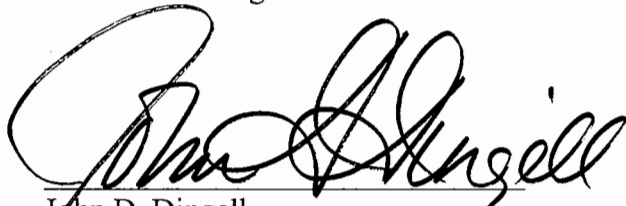
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



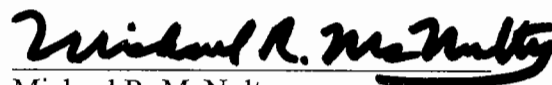
Lois Capps
Member of Congress



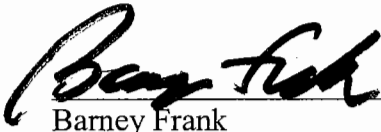
Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress



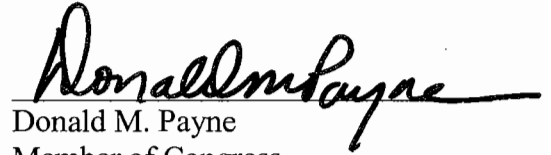
John D. Dingell
Member of Congress



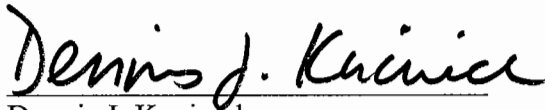
Michael R. McNulty
Member of Congress



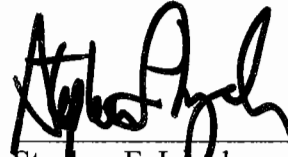
Barney Frank
Member of Congress



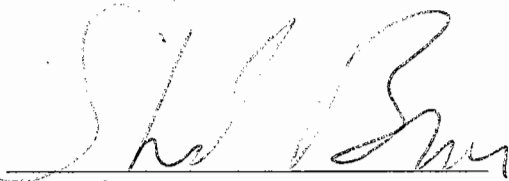
Donald M. Payne
Member of Congress



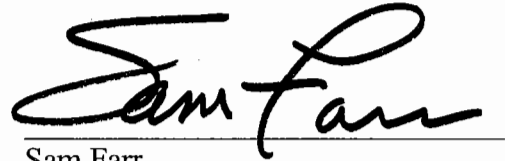
Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Sherrod Brown
Member of Congress



Sam Farr
Member of Congress



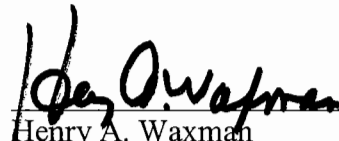
Earl Pomeroy
Member of Congress



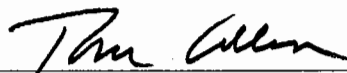
Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress



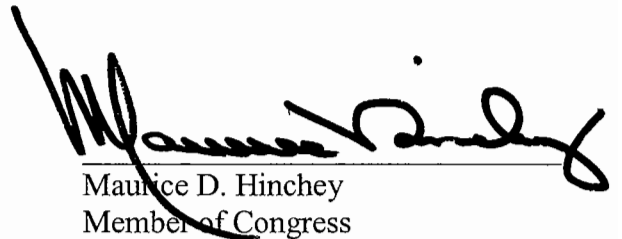
Jim Costa
Member of Congress




Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress




Thomas H. Allen
Member of Congress

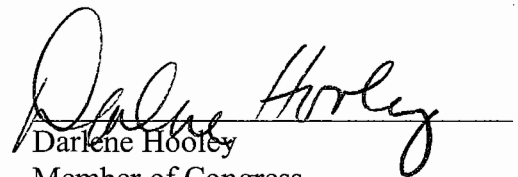


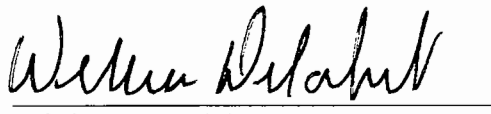
Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress

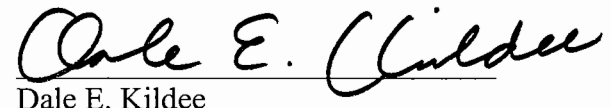

Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress


C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger
Member of Congress

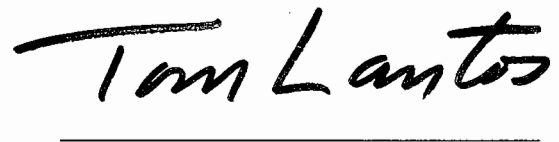

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress


Darlene Hooley
Member of Congress

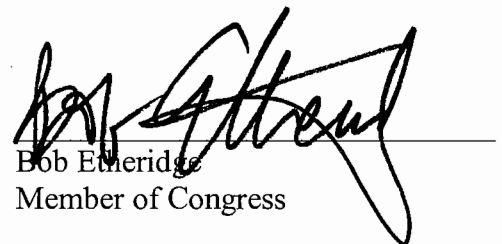

William D. Delahunt
Member of Congress


Dale E. Kildee
Member of Congress



Gary L. Ackerman
Member of Congress



Tom Lantos
Member of Congress

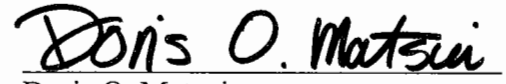

James R. Langevin
Member of Congress

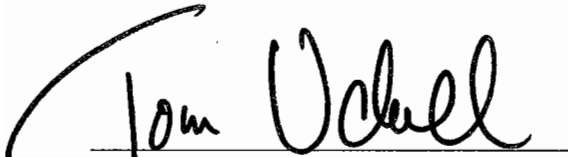

Bob Etheridge
Member of Congress

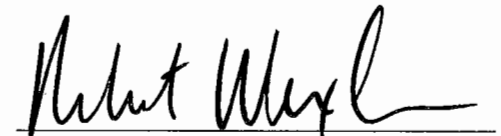

Robert E. Andrews
Member of Congress


Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress


Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress



Tom Udall
Member of Congress

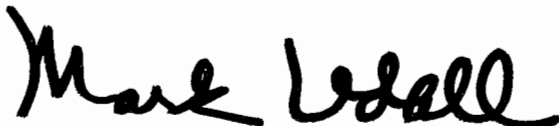

Robert Wexler
Member of Congress

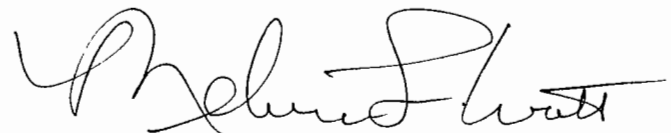

Betty McCollum
Member of Congress


Benjamin L. Cardin
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

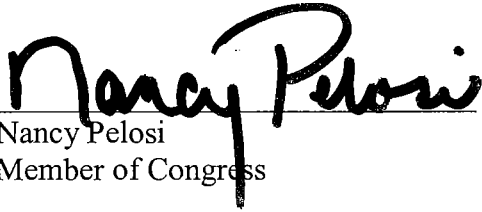

David E. Price
Member of Congress


Mark Udall
Member of Congress

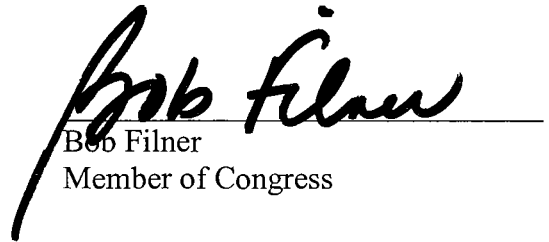

Melvin L. Watt
Member of Congress


Daniel Lipinski
Member of Congress

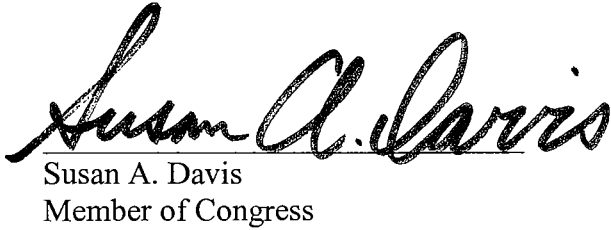

James F. Moran
Member of Congress



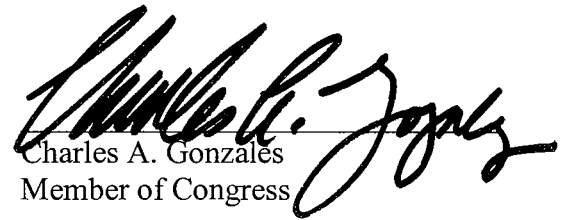
Nancy Pelosi
Member of Congress



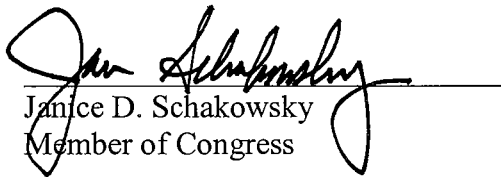
Bob Filner
Member of Congress



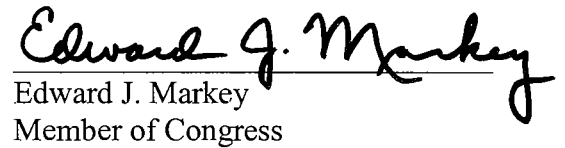
Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress



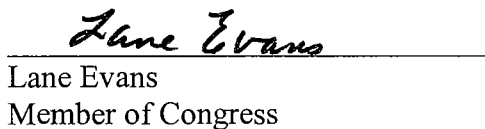
Charles A. Gonzales
Member of Congress



Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress



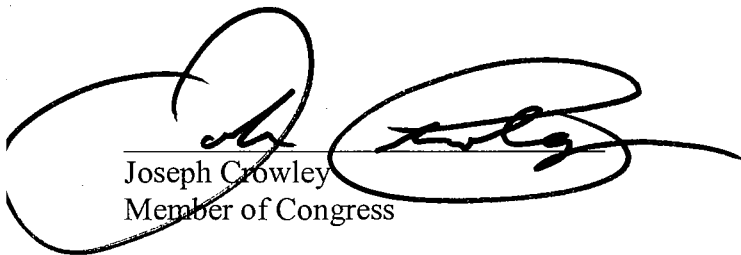
Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress



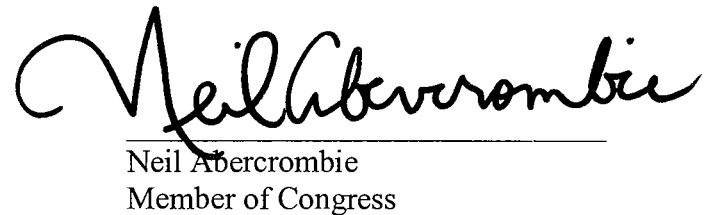
Lane Evans
Member of Congress



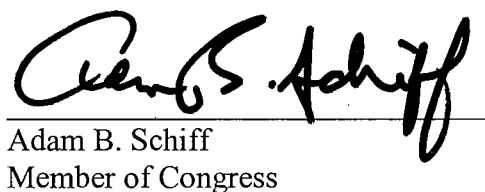
Steve Israel
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



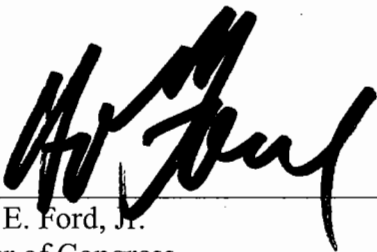
Neil Abercrombie
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Patrick J. Kennedy
Member of Congress



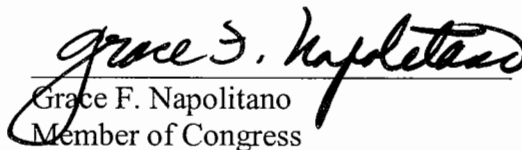
Harold E. Ford, Jr.
Member of Congress



Majorca Owens
Member of Congress



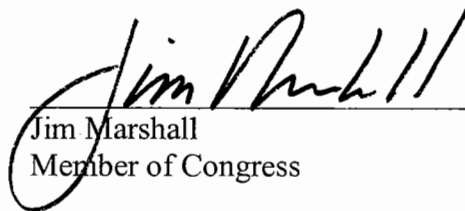
Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



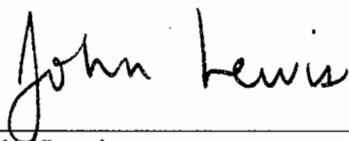
Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress



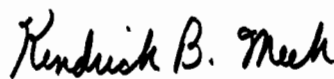
Ted Strickland
Member of Congress



Jim Marshall
Member of Congress



John Lewis
Member of Congress



Kendrick B. Meek
Member of Congress



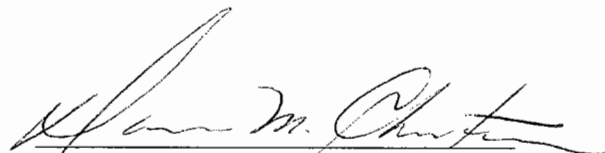
Bart Stupak
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress




John Barrow
Member of Congress



Donna M. Christensen
Member of Congress



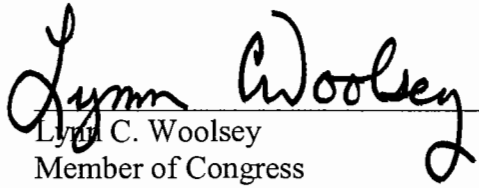
William J. Jefferson
Member of Congress



Brad Miller
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



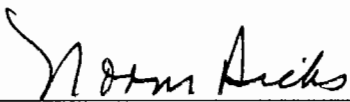
Lynn C. Woolsey
Member of Congress



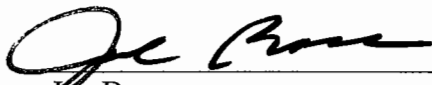
George Miller
Member of Congress




Howard L. Berman
Member of Congress



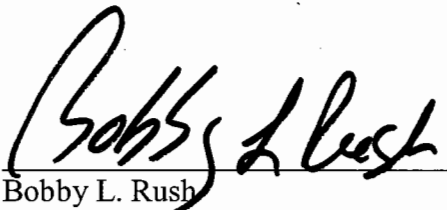
Norman D. Dicks
Member of Congress



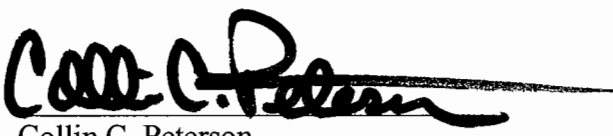
Joe Baca
Member of Congress



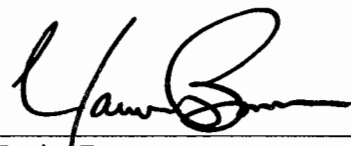
Solomon P. Ortiz
Member of Congress



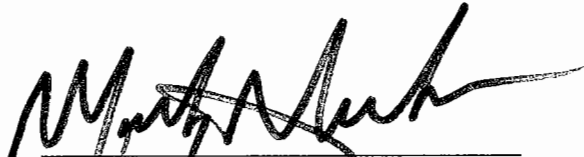
Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



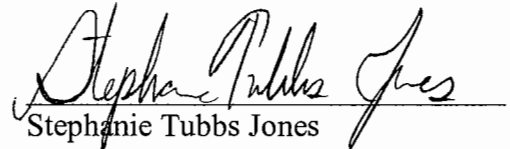
Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress



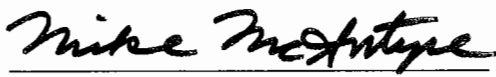
Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress



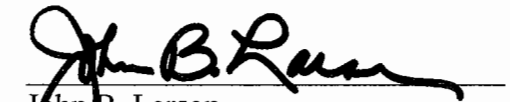
Martin T. Meehan
Member of Congress



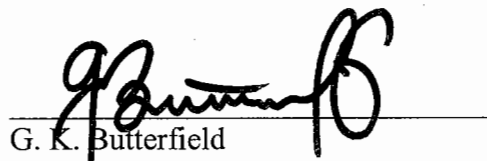
Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Member of Congress



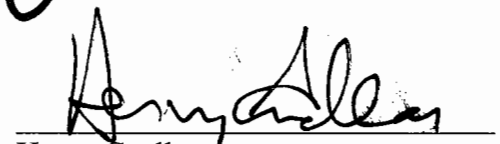
Mike McIntyre
Member of Congress



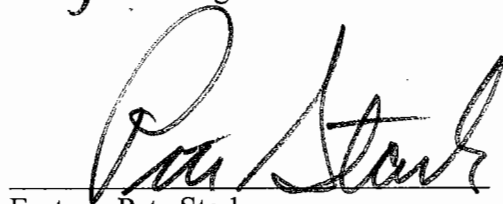
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



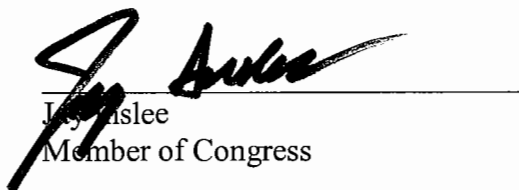
Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress



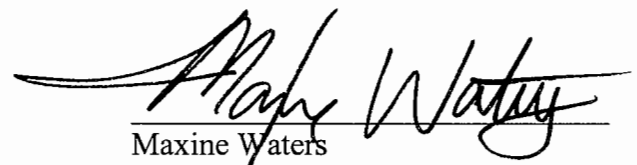
Fortney Pete Stark
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress




Jay Inslee
Member of Congress



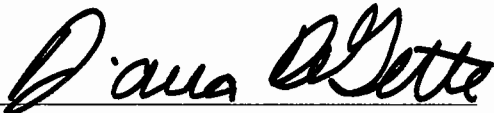
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



David Wu
Member of Congress



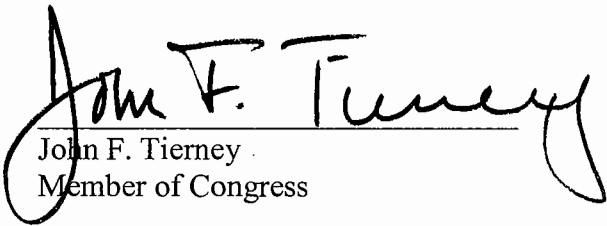
Mike Ross
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



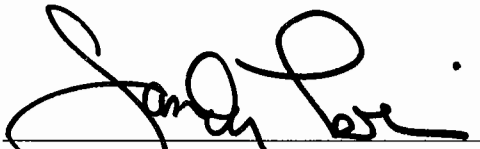
Dennis Moore
Member of Congress



John F. Tierney
Member of Congress



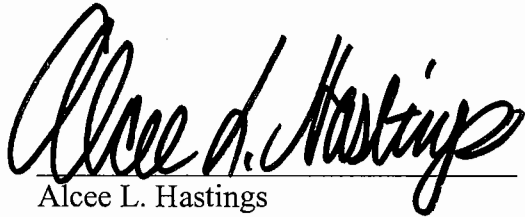
Rahm Emanuel
Member of Congress



Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress




Linda Sánchez
Member of Congress



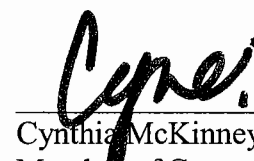
Robert C. Scott
Member of Congress



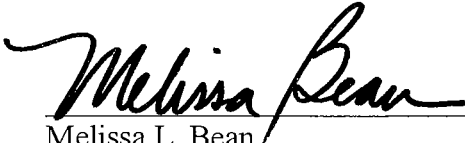
Hilda L. Solis
Member of Congress



Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress



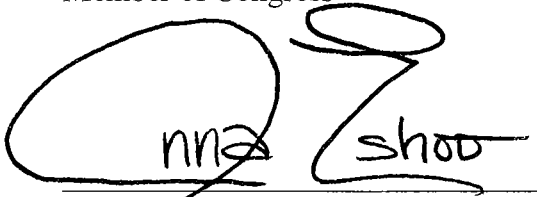
Cynthia McKinney
Member of Congress



Melissa L. Bean
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Michael F. Doyle
Member of Congress



Charlie Melancon
Member of Congress



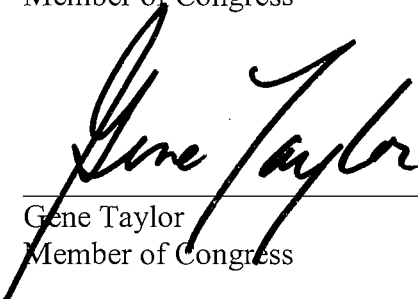
Albert Russell Wynn
Member of Congress



Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Gene Green
Member of Congress



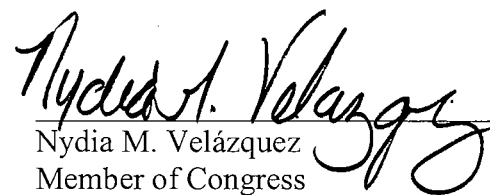
Gene Taylor
Member of Congress



Carolyn C. Kilpatrick
Member of Congress



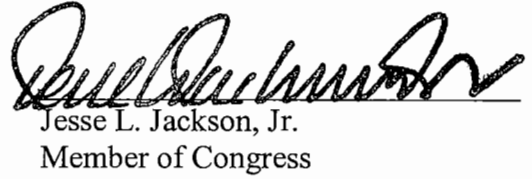
Al Green
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



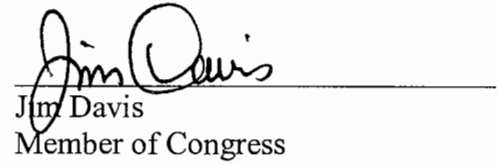
Sheila Jackson-Lee
Member of Congress



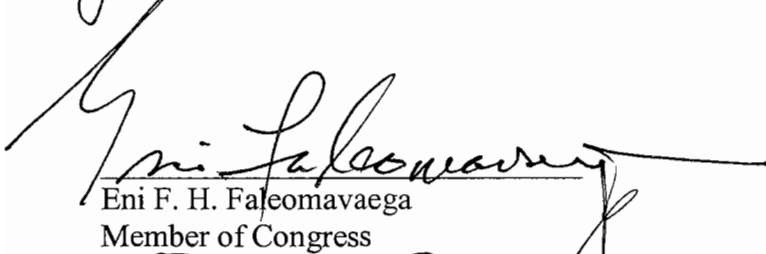
Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.
Member of Congress



John M. Spratt, Jr.
Member of Congress



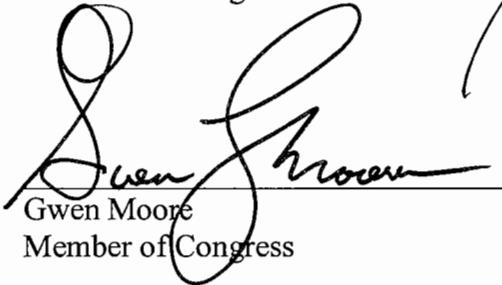
Jim Davis
Member of Congress



Eni F. H. Faleomavaega
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Gwen Moore
Member of Congress