

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 12, 2012

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama:

As members of Congress, we hear often from our constituents how important it is that our waterways are clean and protected. We applaud your administration's continued commitment to standing up for our nation's core environmental values, including the belief that all Americans deserve clean water.

We urge you to act quickly to restore critical Clean Water Act protections to America's waterways by finalizing guidelines developed by the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and by conducting a rulemaking in 2012 to strengthen these protections.

From the Chesapeake Bay to the Great Lakes, from the Everglades to Puget Sound, clean water is important to public health and vital to our economy and to our heritage. Every year millions of Americans enjoy our rivers, lakes and streams for swimming, fishing, boating, bird-watching, and vacation. Tens of millions of Americans depend on nearby lakes, rivers, creeks, coastal waters and wetlands for their livelihoods and for the health of their families and communities. Wetlands and headwater streams are critical to ensuring this nation's rivers and lakes remain healthy and clean.

Clean water is worth hundreds of billions of dollars when you attempt to quantify the economic value of safe drinking water, irrigation for farming, recreation and fishing. According to the United Nations Educational Science and Cultural Organization, lakes and rivers have an annual economic value of \$19,580 per hectare. The Great Lakes fisheries alone generate approximately \$7 billion in economic activity annually. Nationally, the commercial fishing industry generates more than \$100 billion in sales and supports more than 1.5 million jobs each year.

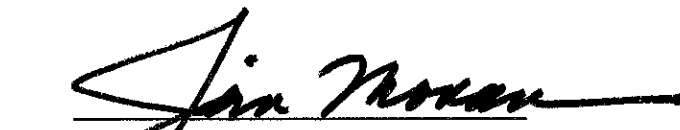
Passage of the Clean Water Act forty years ago was one of the most important and popular environmental laws in our nation's history, creating a legacy of cleaner water. Two

Supreme Court decisions: *Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers* and *Rapanos v. the United States*, however, have created significant confusion and uncertainty regarding the limits of federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act. The decisions have left almost 60 percent of our country's streams, at least 20 million acres of wetlands, and 117 million Americans' drinking water at increased risk of pollution. Only when we restore Clean Water Act protections can we truly continue our country's legacy of clean water.


We appreciate that your administration took an important step in this direction last year by proposing guidelines to help clarify and protect these waters. We believe finalizing these guidelines and undertaking a rulemaking to restore critical Clean Water Act protections to America's waterways is essential to ensure our waters are sufficiently protected.

Please protect America's legacy of clean water so that future generations may continue to benefit from these critical resources. We look forward to working with you to protect our nation's waterways for many years to come.

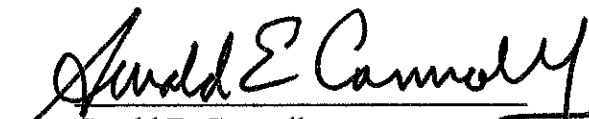
Sincerely,



James P. Moran



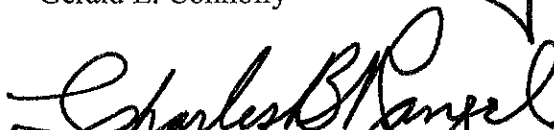
Louise M. Slaughter



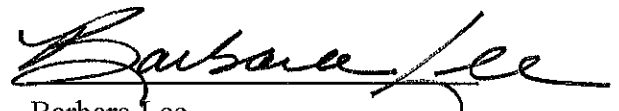
Gerald E. Connolly



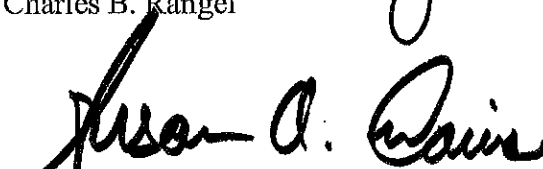
Earl Blumenauer



Charles B. Rangel



Barbara Lee




Susan A. Davis



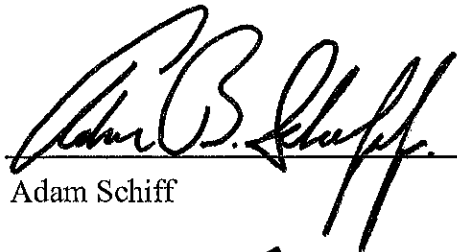
Betty McCollum



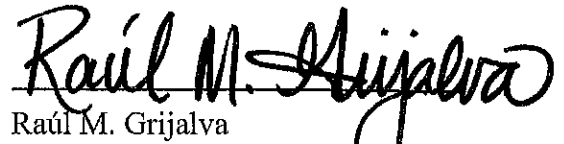
David N. Cicilline



Eddie Bernice Johnson



Adam Schiff



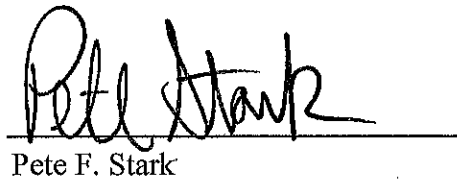
Raúl M. Grijalva



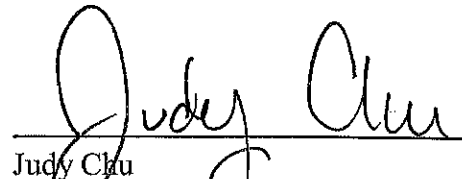
Jackie Speier



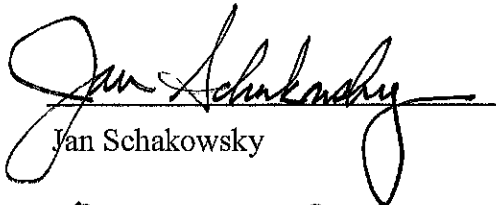
Zoe Lofgren



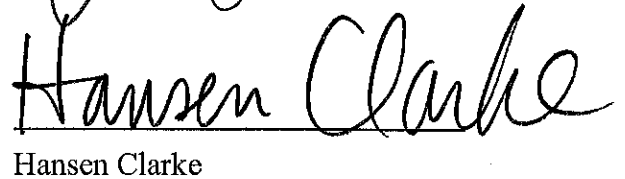
Pete F. Stark




Judy Chu



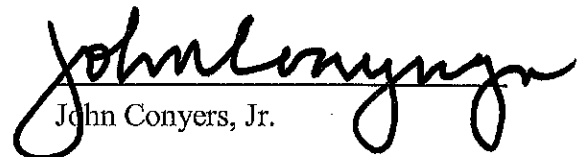
Jan Schakowsky



Hansen Clarke



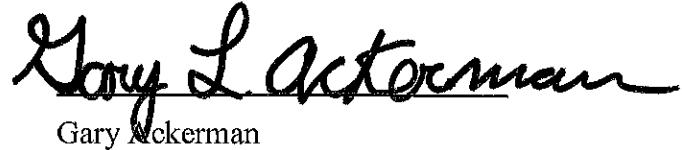
Rosa L. DeLauro



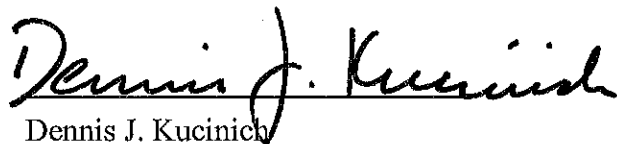
John Conyers, Jr.



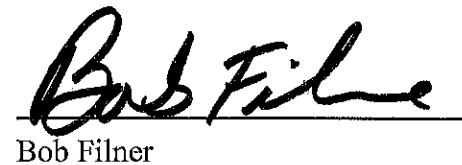
Mike Quigley




Gary Ackerman



Dennis J. Kucinich



Bob Filner



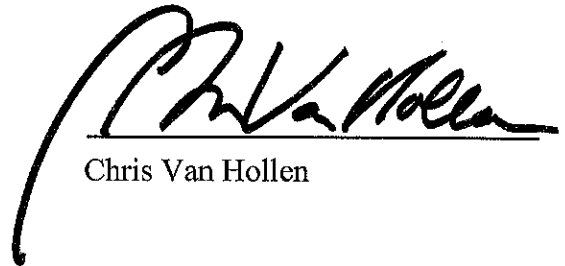
Henry Waxman



Maxine Waters



Michael Honda



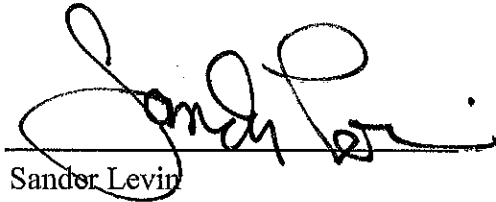
Chris Van Hollen



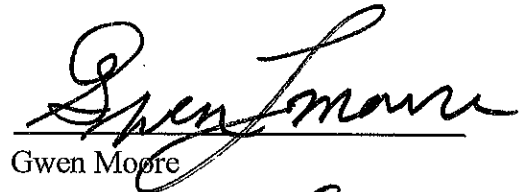
Carolyn McCarthy



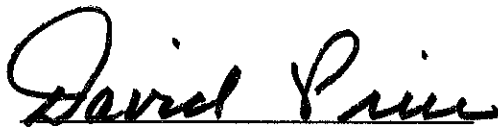
Robert C. Scott



Sander Levin



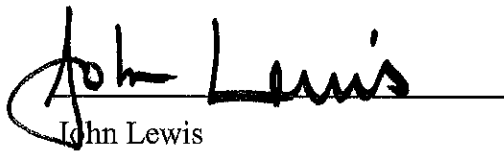
Gwen Moore



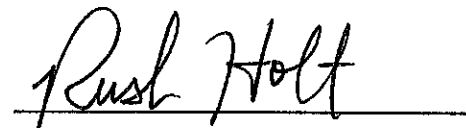
David E. Price



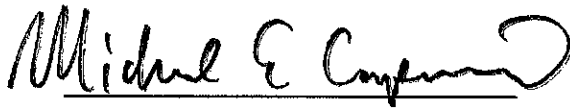
Sam Farr



John Lewis



Rush Holt



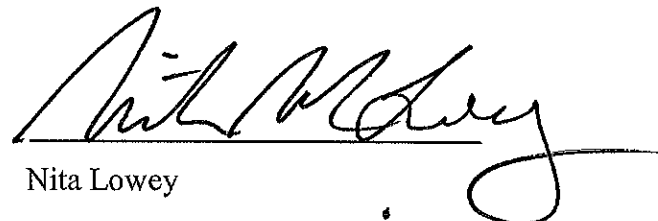
Michael E. Capuano



Jesse L. Jackson Jr.



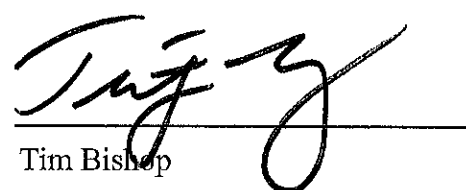
Marcia L. Fudge



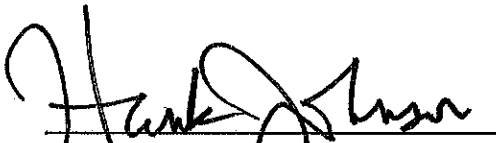
Nita Lowey

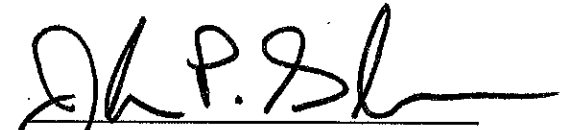



Diana DeGette




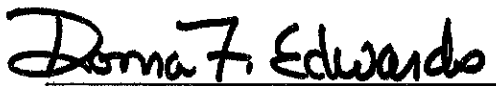
Tim Bishop


Henry C. Johnson Jr.

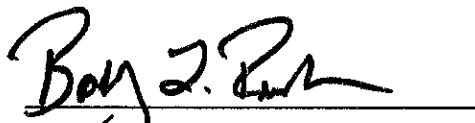

John P. Sarbanes

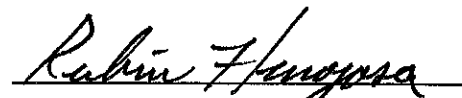

Howard L. Berman


Donna M. Christensen

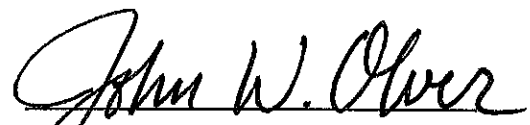

Donna F. Edwards

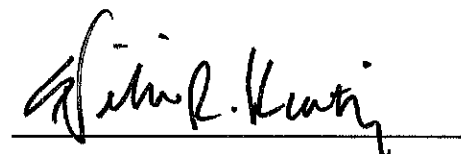

Steve Cohen


Bobby L. Rush



Rubén Hinojosa

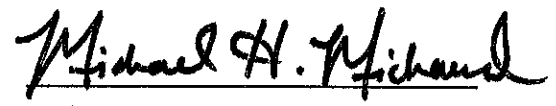

Elijah Cummings

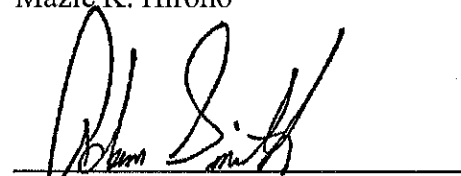

John W. Olver

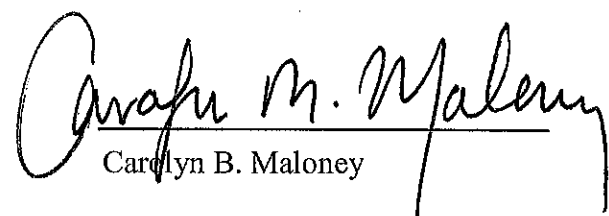

William R. Keating


Jared Polis


Mazie K. Hirono

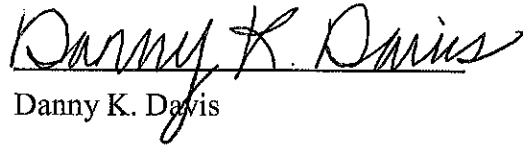

Mike Michaud


Adam Smith

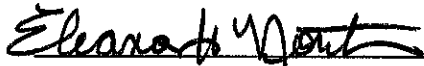

Carolyn B. Maloney



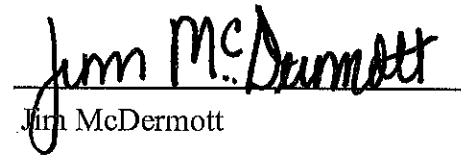
Luis V. Gutierrez



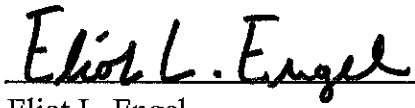
Danny K. Davis



Eleanor Holmes Norton




Jim McDermott



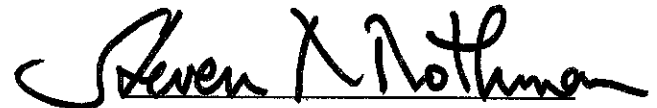
Eliot L. Engel



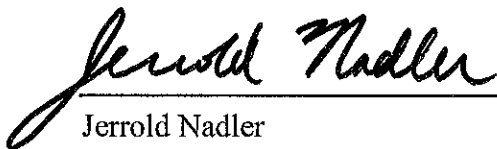
William Clay Jr.



Bill Pascrell, Jr.



Steven Rothman



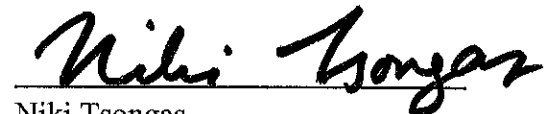
Jerrold Nadler



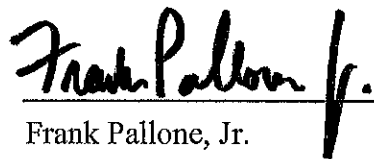
Keith Ellison



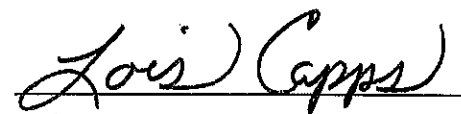
Dale Kildee



Niki Tsongas



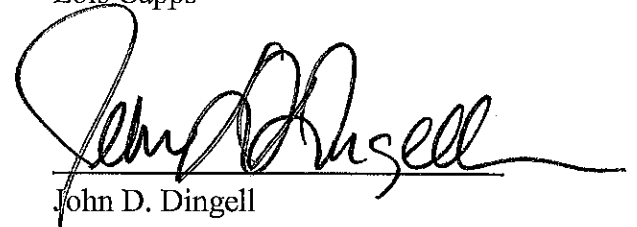
Frank Pallone, Jr.



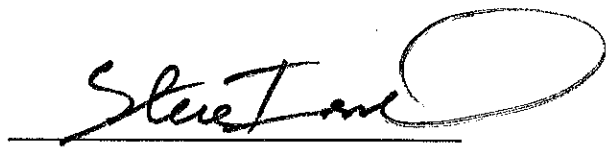
Lois Capps



Dutch Ruppersberger



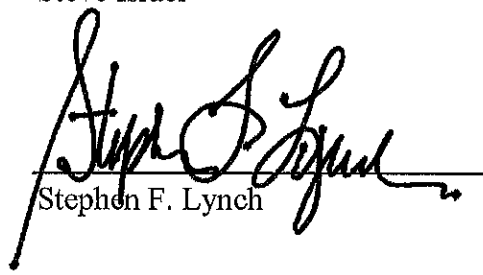
John D. Dingell

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Israel", written over a horizontal line.

Steve Israel

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Castor", written over a horizontal line.

Kathy Castor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen F. Lynch", written over a horizontal line.

Stephen F. Lynch