

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 25, 2011

The Honorable Eric Holder
U.S. Attorney General
United States Department of Justice
Robert F. Kennedy Building
950 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20530


Dear Attorney General Holder:

We are concerned about the restrictive voter photo identification legislation pending or already signed into law in a number of states. Many of these bills only have one true purpose, the disenfranchisement of eligible voters—especially the elderly, young voters, students, minorities, and low-income voters. Approximately 11 percent of voting-age citizens in the country—or more than 20 million individuals—lack government-issued photo identification. We urge you to protect the voting rights of Americans by using the full power of the Department of Justice to review these voter identification bills and scrutinize their implementation.

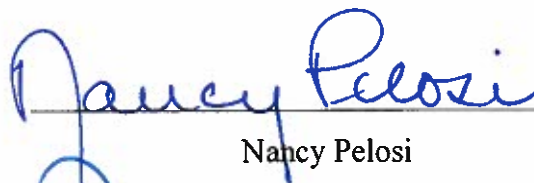
The Voting Rights Act vests significant authority in the Department to ensure laws are not implemented in a discriminatory manner. Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act requires preclearance by the Department when there is an attempt to change any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting in covered jurisdictions. In Section 5 jurisdictions, whenever photo identification legislation is considered, the Department should closely monitor the legislative process to track any unlawful intent evinced by the proceedings. In jurisdictions not covered by Section 5, the Department should exercise vigilance in overseeing whether these laws are implemented in a way that discriminates against protected classes in violation of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

Restrictive voter photo identification legislation has the potential to block millions of eligible American voters, and thus suppress the right to vote. We urge you to exercise your authority to examine these laws so that voting rights are not jeopardized. We also request that you brief us on the efforts the Department is undertaking to ensure these new laws are implemented in accordance with the Voting Rights Act.

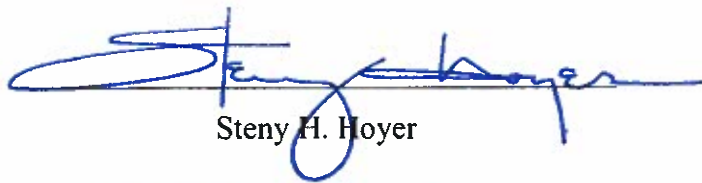
Sincerely,



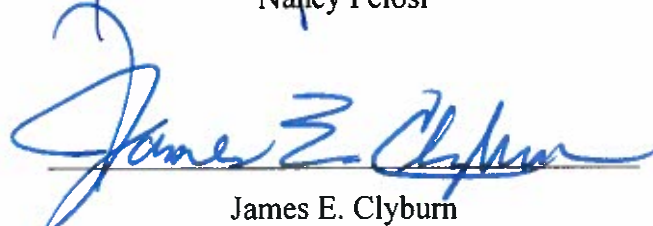
Marcia L. Fudge



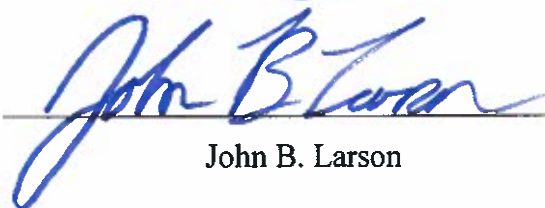
Nancy Pelosi



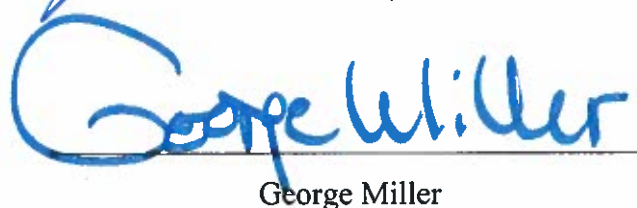
Steny H. Hoyer



James E. Clyburn



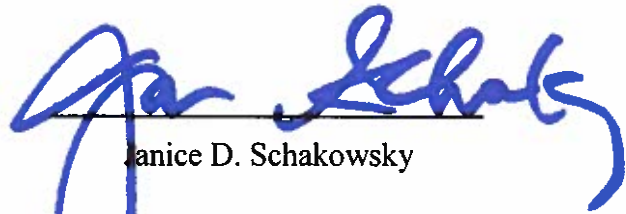
John B. Larson



George Miller



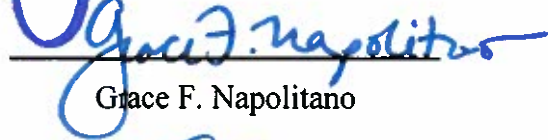
Tim Ryan



Janice D. Schakowsky



Keith Ellison



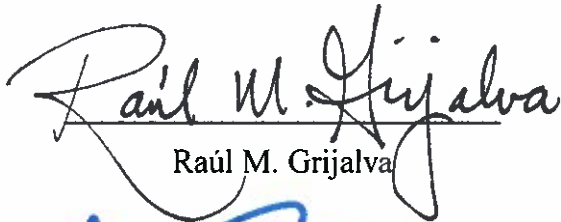
Grace F. Napolitano



Emanuel Cleaver



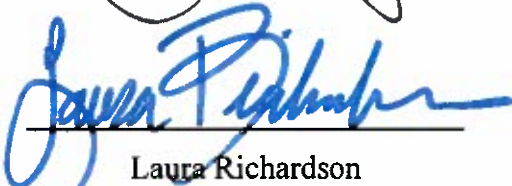
André Carson



Raúl M. Grijalva



Maxine Waters



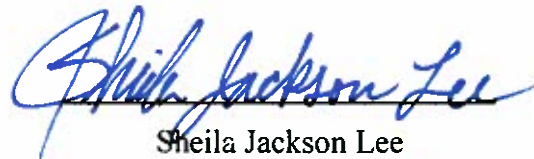
Laura Richardson



Lucille Roybal-Allard



Silvestre Reyes



Sheila Jackson Lee



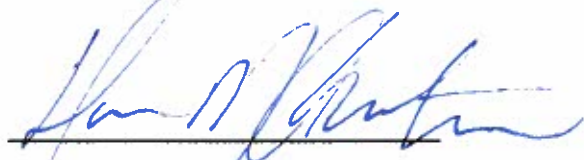
Yvette D. Clarke



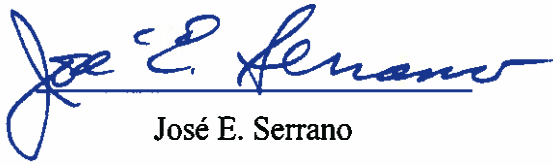
Bob Filner



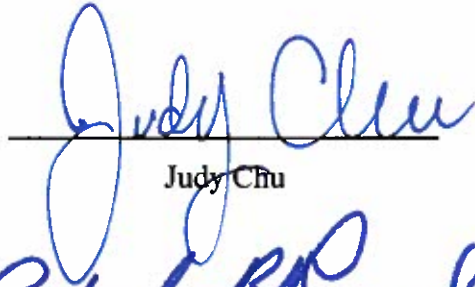
Barbara Lee



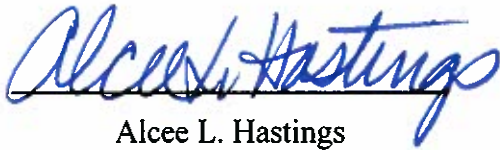
Donna M. Christensen



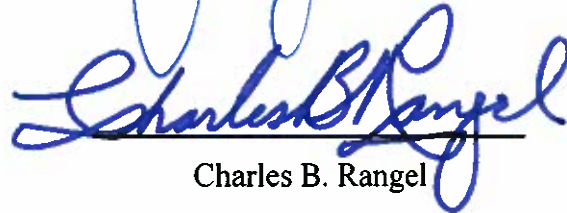
José E. Serrano



Judy Chu



Alcee L. Hastings



Charles B. Rangel



Karen Bass



Frederica S. Wilson



Melvin L. Watt



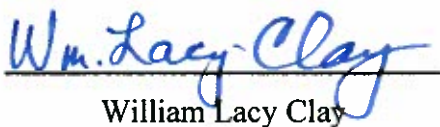
Eleanor Holmes Norton



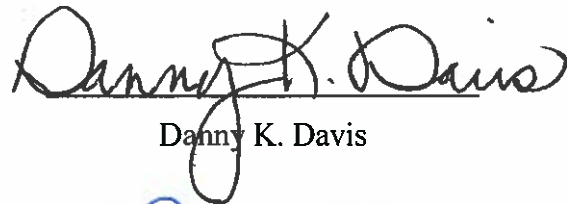
Bennie G. Thompson



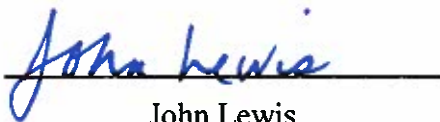
G. K. Butterfield



William Lacy Clay



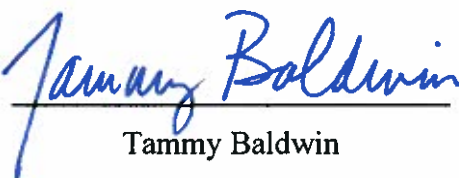
Danny K. Davis



John Lewis



Gwen Moore



Tammy Baldwin



Jesse L. Jackson, Jr.



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott



Donald M. Payne



Michael M. Honda



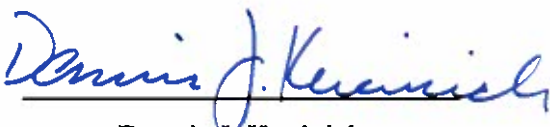
Betty McCollum



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.



Robert A. Brady



Dennis J. Kucinich



Edolphus Towns



Anna G. Eshoo



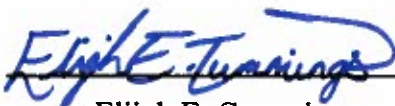
Steve Cohen



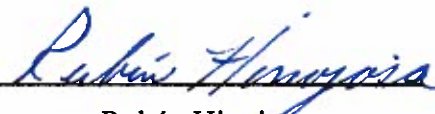
Corrine Brown



Luis V. Gutierrez



Elijah E. Cummings



Rubén Hinojosa



Joe Baca



Chellie Pingree

Betty Sutton

Betty Sutton

Terri Sewell

Terri A. Sewell

Charles A. Gonzalez

Charles A. Gonzalez

Pete Stark

Fortney Pete Stark

Peter Welch

Peter Welch

Brad Miller

Brad Miller

Ben Ray Lujan

Ben Ray Lujan

Loretta Sanchez

Loretta Sanchez

Carolyn B. Maloney

Carolyn B. Maloney

Donna F. Edwards

Donna F. Edwards

Dale E. Kildee

Dale E. Kildee

Henry A. Waxman

Henry A. Waxman

Doris O. Matsui

Doris O. Matsui

James P. McGovern

James P. McGovern

Eni F.H. Faleomavaega

Eni F.H. Faleomavaega

Eliot L. Engel

Eliot L. Engel



Earl Blumenauer



Hansen Clarke



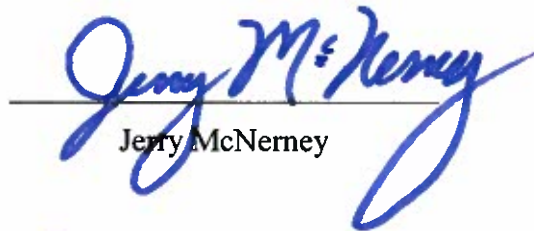
Gary L. Ackerman



John Garamendi



Russ Carnahan



Jerry McNerney



Rush D. Holt



Bill Pascrell, Jr.



Robert E. Andrews



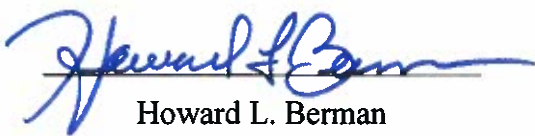
Peter A. DeFazio



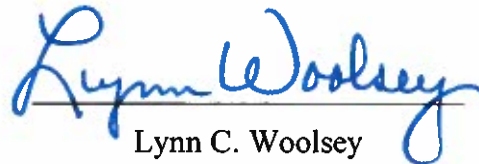
Zoe Lofgren



Paul Tonko



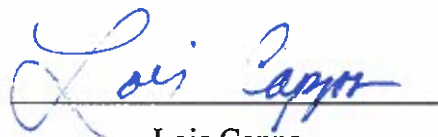
Howard L. Berman




Lynn C. Woolsey



Michael H. Michaud



Lois Capps



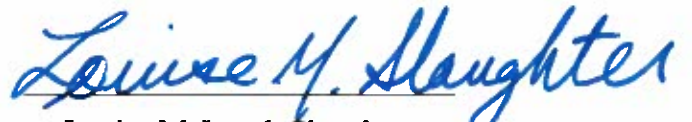
Xavier Becerra



Rosa L. DeLauro



Steve Israel




Louise McIntosh Slaughter



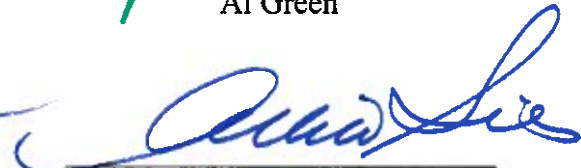
Chris Van Hollen



Al Green




Cedric L. Richmond




Albio Sires



Sam Farr



Jim McDermott



Jim Cooper




Gregory W. Meeks




Nydia Velázquez




Marcy Kaptur



Eddie Bernice Johnson



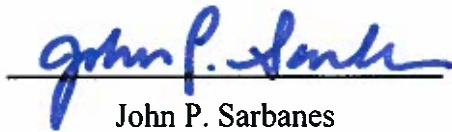
Theodore E. Deutch



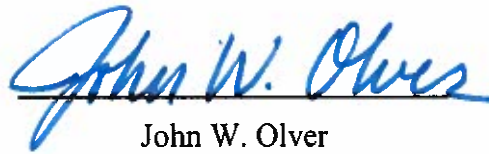
Lloyd Doggett



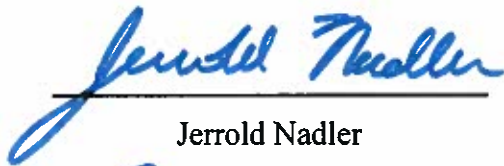
Linda T. Sánchez



John P. Sarbanes



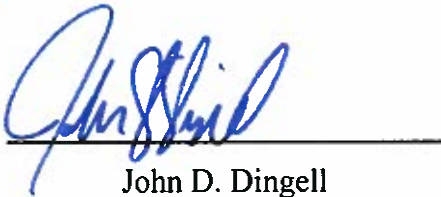
John W. Olver



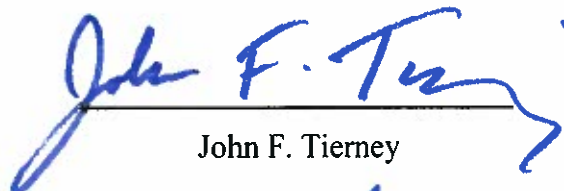
Jerrold Nadler



John C. Carney



John D. Dingell



John F. Tierney



James A. Himes



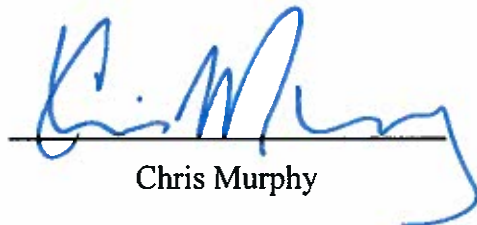
Chaka Fattah



David E. Price



Ed Pastor



Chris Murphy