

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2006

His Excellency Vladimir V. Putin
President of the Russian Federation
4 Staraya Square
Moscow 103132 Russia

Dear President Putin,

We write as members of the United States Congress to express our dismay over the riots and violence against gay and lesbian marchers in Moscow during a gay pride parade in late May.

It seems to us evident that any government of the people would seek to protect all people, so we were very disappointed that Moscow mayor Luzhkov claimed in denying the parade permit that he would not be able to ensure the safety of the marchers.

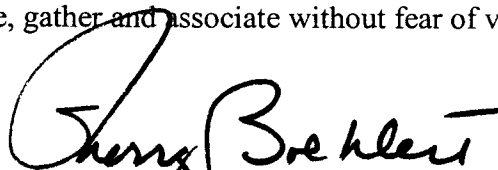
We believe that the mayor's public statements and his banning of the parade itself -- as well as the fact that provocative and violently anti-gay statements by religious leaders and others went unrepudiated by elected officials -- helped create a situation in which violence against gay and lesbian people was in fact more likely to happen, if not inevitable.

In fact, given reports that some police stood by while gay and lesbian marchers were attacked, it is difficult for us to believe that the police were unable to protect the marchers, but instead were simply unwilling to do so.

We hope you agree that violence against people based on sexual orientation -- people who are doing no harm to anyone else - is outrageous and not acceptable. We urge you to publicly make clear this sentiment to those who would seek to do harm to gay and lesbian individuals, to public officials and civil leaders who provoke or inadequately respond to such violence, and to the gay and lesbian citizens of Moscow and beyond who deserve to live, gather and associate without fear of violence.



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REP. SHERROD BOEHLERT



REP. TOM LANTOS



REP. MICHAEL N. CASTLE



REP. JAMES A. LEACH



REP. NITA M. LOWEY

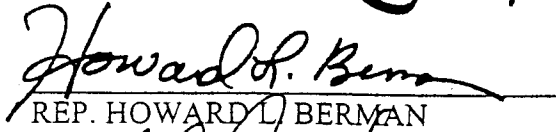


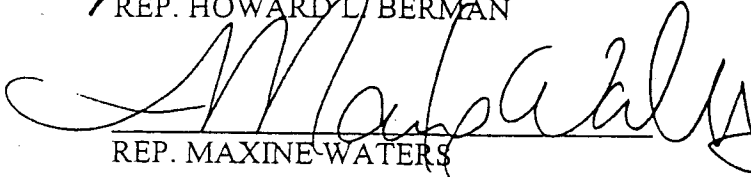
REP. GARY L. ACKERMAN

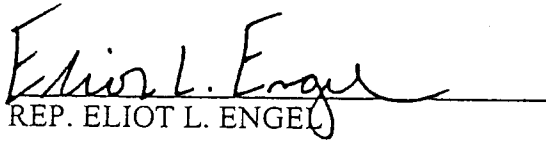


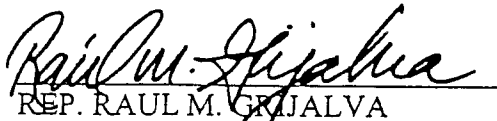
REP. CHRISTOPHER SHAYS


REP. STENY H. HOYER

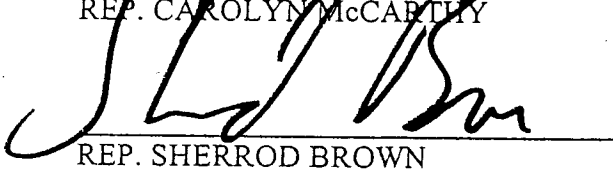

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REP. MAXINE WATERS


REP. ELIOT L. ENGEL

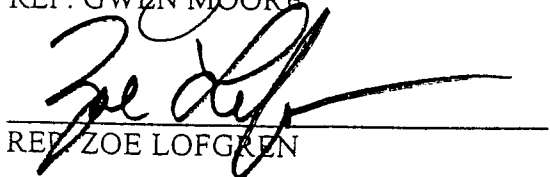

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REP. CAROLYN MCCARTHY


REP. SHERROD BROWN


REP. KENDRICK B. MEEK


REP. GWEN MOORE

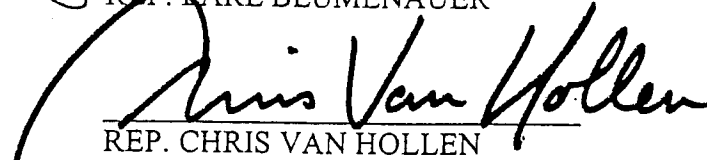

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REP. JIM KOLBE


REP. ROBERT WEXLER


REP. EARL BLUMENAUER


REP. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

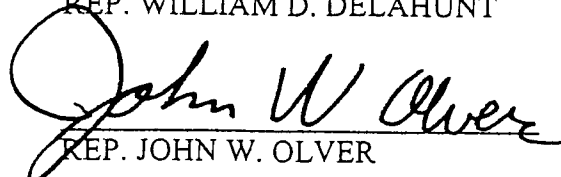

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REP. JIM McDERMOTT

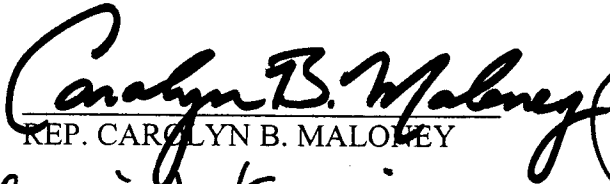

REP. BARBARA LEE

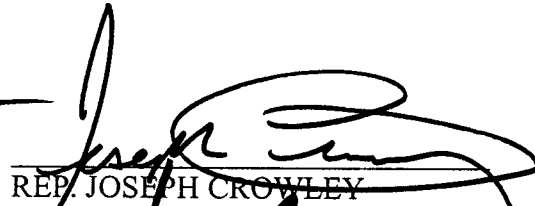

REP. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ

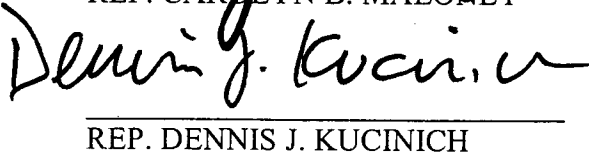

REP. WILLIAM D. DELAHUNT

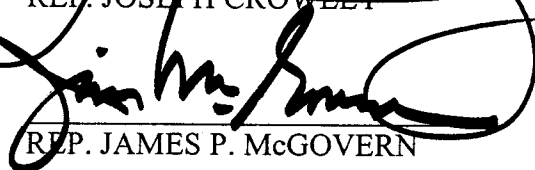

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REP. JOSEPH CROWLEY


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REP. JAMES P. McGOVERN


REP. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN


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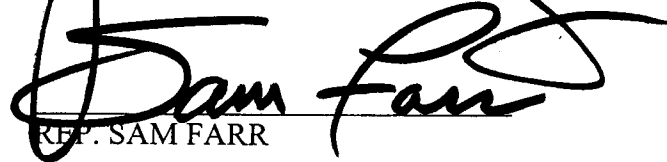

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REP. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY


REP. RUBÉN HINOJOSA


REP. SAM FARR


REP. TAMMY BALDWIN


REP. LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD

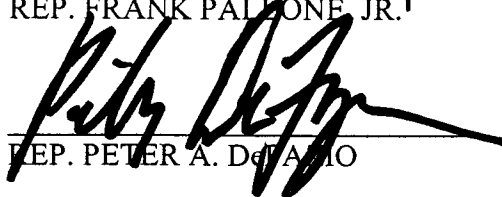

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