

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 2, 2014

The Honorable Ander Crenshaw  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations,  
Subcommittee on Financial Services  
B-300 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jose E. Serrano  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations,  
Subcommittee on Financial Services  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Crenshaw and Ranking Member Serrano:

We are writing to let you know of our strong support for funding the Drug Free Communities (DFC) program in FY 2015 at the FY 2014 appropriated level of \$92 million and for including funding from within the total amount appropriated for the training and technical assistance as specifically authorized by section 805 of P.L. 109-469.

This program warrants stable funding in FY 2015 because it has proven effective in reducing youth drug use and has the potential to do more. Indeed, the DFC program historically has only been able to fund one-third of qualified applicants—at a time when the drug problem is increasing. A reduction in funding would have the dangerous consequence of limiting our communities' ability to prevent youth drug use.

A national evaluation of the DFC program, conducted by ICF International, found that DFC coalitions have achieved significant reductions in youth substance abuse. In those communities where DFC coalitions exist, past 30 day use rates among middle school students for marijuana, alcohol and tobacco declined by 23%, 20% and 26%, respectively. Among high school students in DFC funded communities, past 30 day use rates for marijuana, alcohol and tobacco decreased by 4%, 10% and 17%, respectively.

The program has achieved impressive outcomes in communities throughout the country:

- In LaBelle, FL, the Drug Free Hendry County Coalition contributed to a **13.9% decrease** in past 30 day use of marijuana among middle school students, from 7.2% in 2010 to 6.2% in 2012.
- In Pinellas Park, FL, the Live Free! Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition of Pinellas County contributed to a **24.8% decrease** in past 30 day use of marijuana among 8<sup>th</sup> graders, from 14.5% in 2010 to 10.9% in 2012.
- In Binghamton, NY, the KYDS Coalition contributed to a **25% decrease** in lifetime use of marijuana among 7<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> graders, from 28% in 2002 to 21% in 2012.
- In Carmel, NY, the Putnam County Communities That Care Coalition contributed to a **34.4% decrease** in past 30 day use of prescription narcotics among high school students, from 3.2% in 2005 to 2.1% in 2012.

Other community anti-drug coalitions nationwide are achieving similar results (please see attachment).

While the DFC program is achieving measureable results at the local level, youth drug use is on the rise nationally. The latest (2013) Monitoring the Future (MTF) study found that at the national level: more 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade students are smoking marijuana than cigarettes every 30 days; 6.5% of high school seniors reported daily marijuana use, among the highest levels in 30 years; 38.8% of 10<sup>th</sup> graders reported the use of any illicit drug in their lifetime; and half of America's high school seniors have tried an illicit drug by the time they graduate, with 4 in 10 reporting the use of an illicit drug in the past year alone.

In addition, the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs continues to be an American epidemic, killing more people than traffic accidents. According to the latest MTF study, prescription drugs account for 5 of the 10 most frequently abused drugs in the past year by both 8<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders.

Preventing youth drug use is especially important in light of recent research funded by the National Institute of Drug Abuse, which found that those youth who were early, persistent marijuana users showed **a permanent drop in IQ of 8 points**. A loss of 8 IQ points could drop a person of average intelligence into the lowest third of the intelligence range. This research held true even when controlled for factors such as socioeconomic status. Considering that 6.5% of high school seniors are already smoking marijuana on a daily basis, and are therefore at risk of lowering their IQ scores, we must focus on preventing youth drug use if the United States is to remain a global leader.

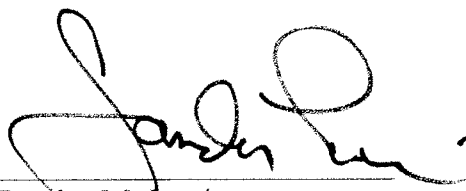
Given the host of negative consequences associated with youth drug use, it should come as no surprise that it is a top concern for Americans. According to an August 2013 C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health, for the fifth year in a row, American adults rated drug abuse a top health concern facing America's youth.

The DFC program is uniquely structured to ensure effectiveness, outcomes and sustainability. It requires a community to demonstrate local commitment before becoming eligible to receive federal funds. All grantees are required to provide a dollar-for-dollar match in non-federal funds, up to the maximum grant amount of \$125,000 per year. The required emphasis on local data collection, community buy-in and participation among multiple sectors, including schools, law enforcement, parents, media and business, is central to DFC coalitions being able to achieve outcomes in reducing youth drug use. This emphasis also allows DFC coalitions to respond rapidly and effectively at the local level to emerging drug trends such as heroin, meth, K2, spice, bath salts and the misuse and abuse of prescription drugs.


Considering that the DFC program has successfully reduced substance abuse at the local level, even as rates at the national level are rising, it is absolutely essential that this program is funded in FY 2015 at the FY 2014 appropriated level of \$92 million. Level funding will ensure the maximum number of communities are equipped to effectively reduce youth drug use.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

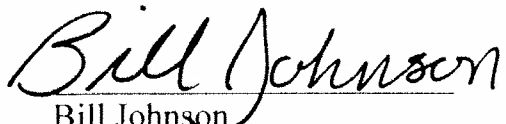
Sincerely,

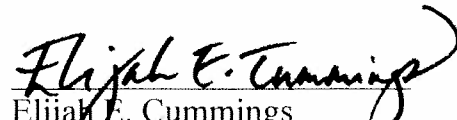



Sander M. Levin  
Member of Congress




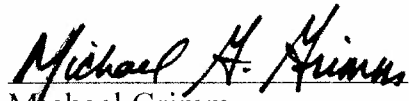
Michael G. Fitzpatrick  
Member of Congress

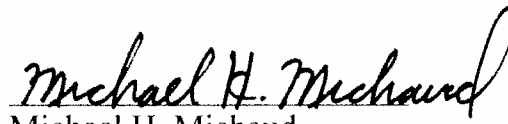
  
Bill Johnson  
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Elijah E. Cummings  
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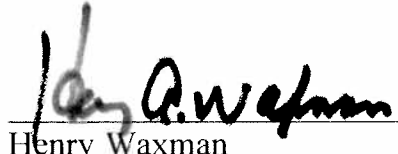
  
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Jim McDermott  
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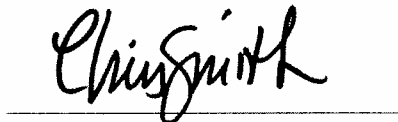
  
Michael Grimm  
Member of Congress

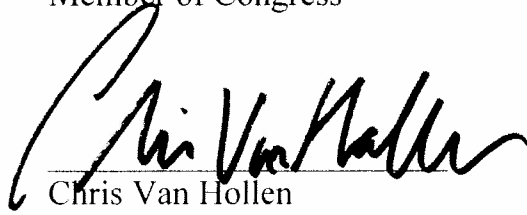
  
Michael H. Michaud  
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Shelley Moore Capito  
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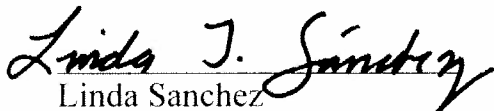
  
Henry Waxman  
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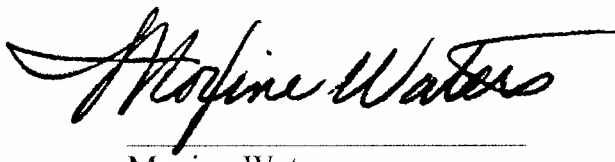
  
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Karen Bass  
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*Joyce Beatty*

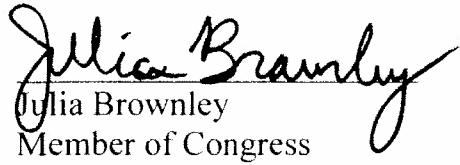
Joyce Beatty  
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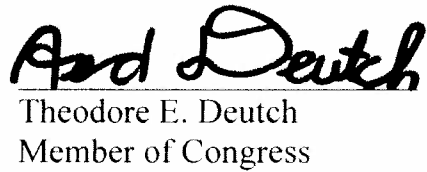
*James P. McGovern*

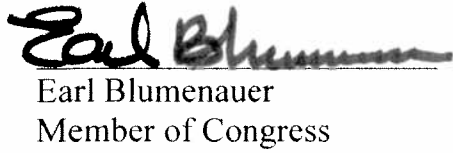
James P. McGovern  
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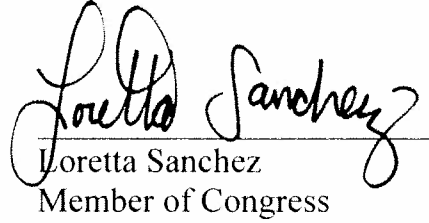
*Suzanne Bonamici*

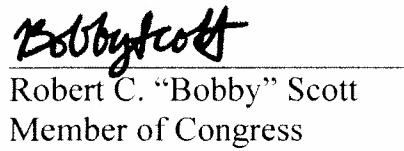
Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

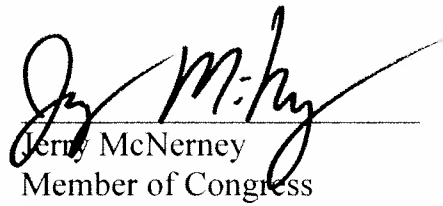
  
Julia Brownley  
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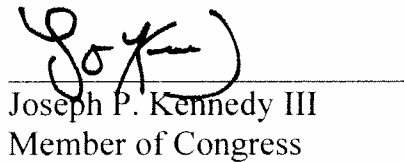
  
Theodore E. Deutch  
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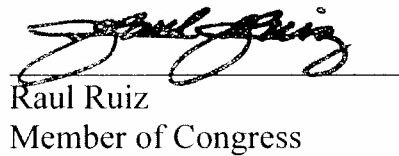
  
Earl Blumenauer  
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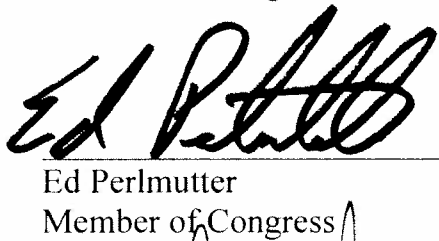
  
Loretta Sanchez  
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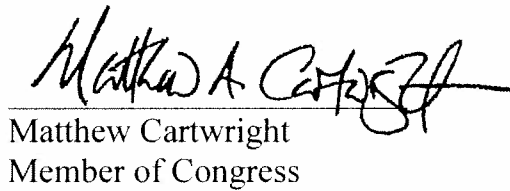
  
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
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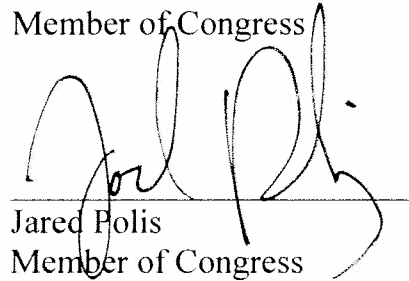
  
Jerry McNerney  
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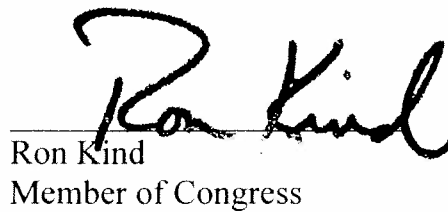
  
Joseph P. Kennedy III  
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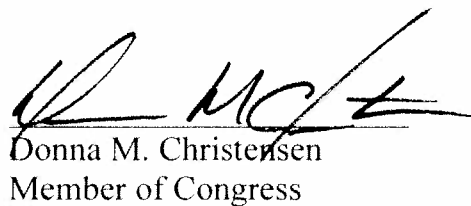
  
Raul Ruiz  
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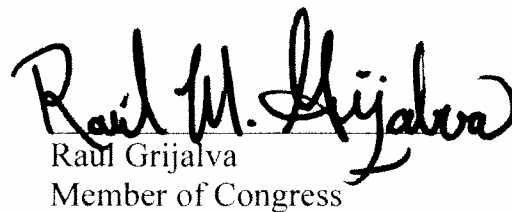
  
Ed Perlmutter  
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Matthew Cartwright  
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Jared Polis  
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Ron Kind  
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Donna M. Christensen  
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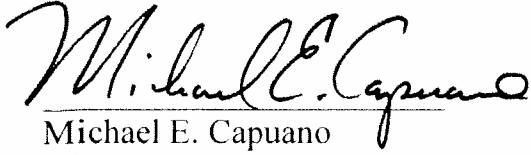
  
Raul Grijalva  
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Dave Loebsack  
Member of Congress



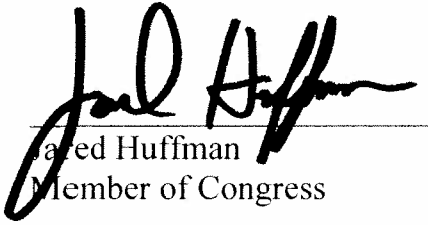
Carol Shea-Porter  
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Michael E. Capuano  
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Gary Peters  
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Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



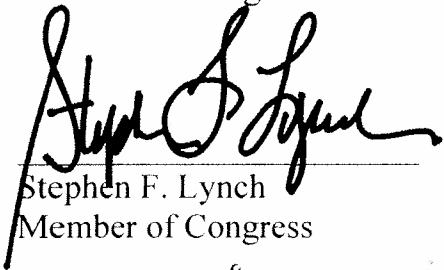
Gloria Negrete McLeod  
Member of Congress



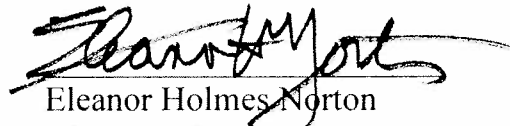
Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress



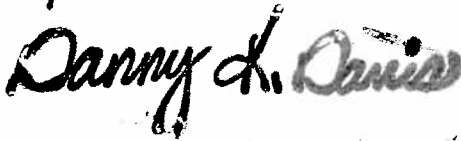
Rick Larsen  
Member of Congress



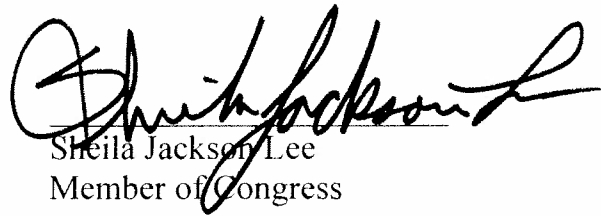
Stephen F. Lynch  
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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



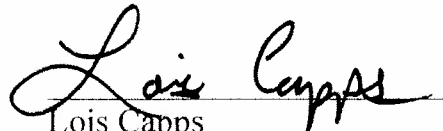
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



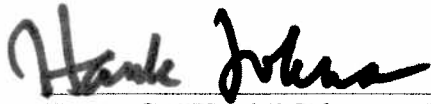
Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



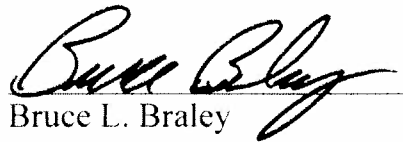
Al Green  
Member of Congress



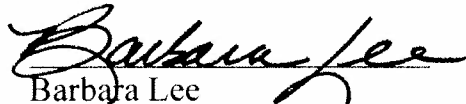
Lois Capps  
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



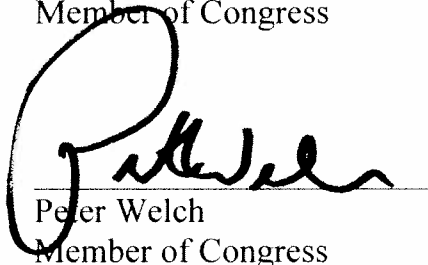
Bruce L. Braley  
Member of Congress



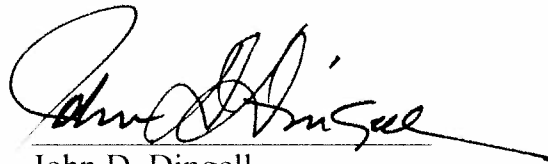
Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



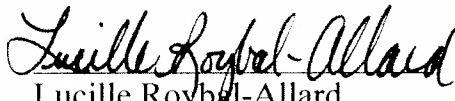
Chaka Fattah  
Member of Congress



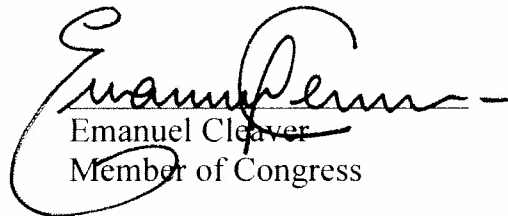
Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



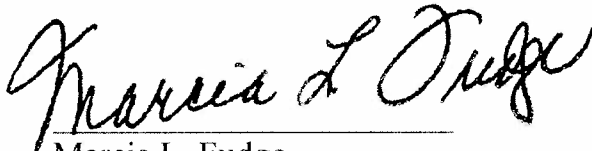
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Member of Congress



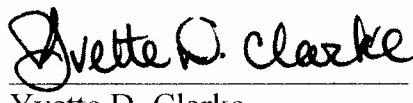
Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress



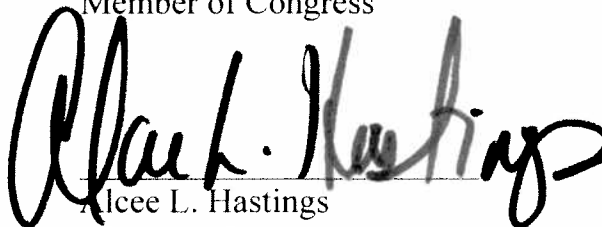
Emanuel Cleaver  
Member of Congress



Marcia L. Fudge  
Member of Congress



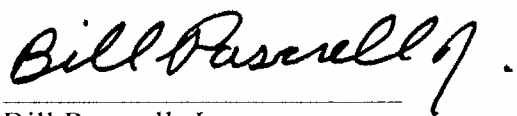
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Member of Congress



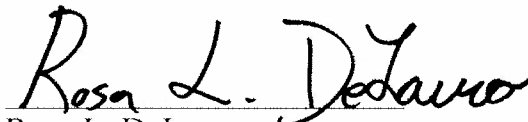
Alice L. Hastings  
Member of Congress



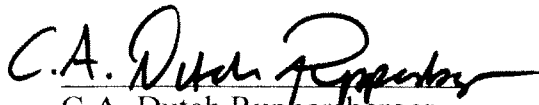
Charles B. Rangel  
Member of Congress

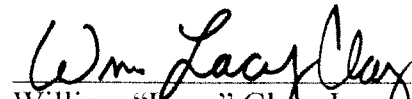


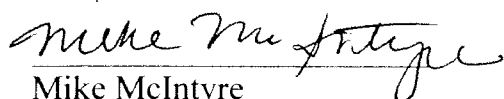
Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress

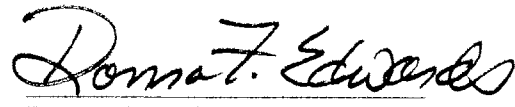



Rosa L. DeLauro  
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C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger  
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William "Lacy" Clay, Jr.  
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