

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2006

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, & Education
House Appropriations Committee
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, & Education
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey,

We would like to express our appreciation for the work that you have done to invest in America's health care infrastructure over the years. Millions of Americans have lived longer and healthier lives due to your work on the Subcommittee. And while this year will indeed prove difficult given the fiscal realities of our federal budget, we respectfully request that you provide an increase of \$181 million for the Consolidated Health Centers program in this year's Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations legislation.

The Health Centers program is a community-run health care delivery system that is open to all regardless of their ability to pay. And while health care costs have dramatically increased across the country, health centers have kept their costs well under those of other health care providers. Furthermore, study after study has shown that patients of health centers are healthier, and use hospital emergency rooms less than even patients of similar primary care providers. This is clearly a program that works and we wholeheartedly appreciate your efforts to expand this important program.

The increases provided during the past years have greatly enhanced the ability of health centers to care for additional patients. Health Centers are now the medical home for more than 15 million Americans. Unfortunately, many communities that have applied for health center funding have been denied due to the fierce competition for these new funds. Less than 25 percent of applications for a new health center site were funded last year – despite the fact that many qualified applicants had submitted improved applications for a second or even third time.

In 2001, President Bush called for the expansion of the Health Centers program to an additional 6 million people across the country, and the establishment of 1,200 new and expanded sites. And while we are within reach of that goal, there is still much more to be done to ensure adequate access to primary care for the 55 million people without a regular source of care today. The President has also set out the goal of establishing a community health center in every high-poverty county in America. We look forward to working with you in the years ahead to reach these important goals.

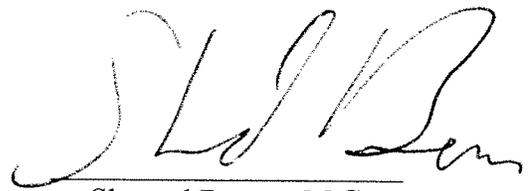
In addition to the expansion initiative, we appreciate the past recognition by the Subcommittee that funding should be made available for existing centers to meet the rising cost of delivering care to the underserved. We hope to work with the Subcommittee to encourage HHS to recognize the increasing costs borne by centers in an appropriate manner.

We know your subcommittee has a very difficult task ahead, but we strongly urge you to continue the health center expansion effort to those communities in need by increasing the federal funding for the Consolidated Health Centers program by \$181 million for FY07.

Thank you for considering our request and we look forward to working with you this year to further expand this important program.

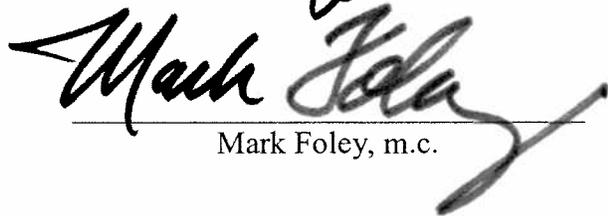
Sincerely,


Michael Bilirakis, M.C.


Sherrod Brown, M.C.

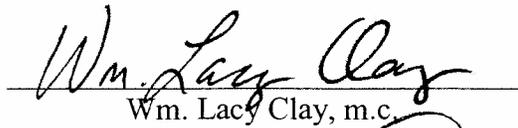

Zoe Lofgren, m.c.

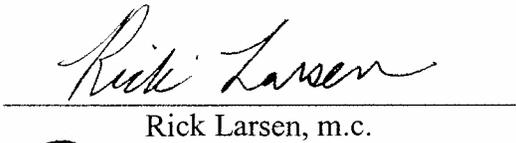

Steve Chabot, m.c.

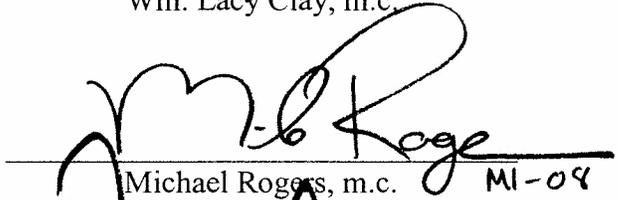

Mark Foley, m.c.

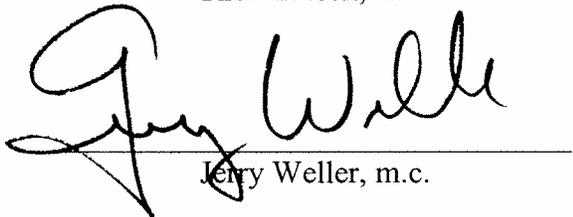

Robin Hayes, m.c.

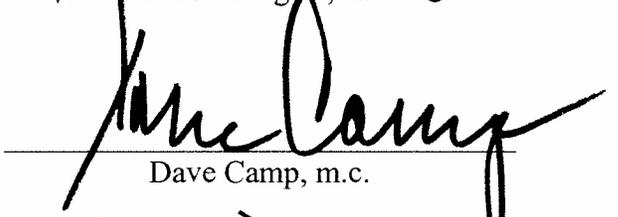

Carolyn McCarthy, m.c.

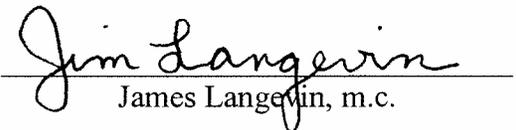

Wm. Lacy Clay, m.c.


Rick Larsen, m.c.

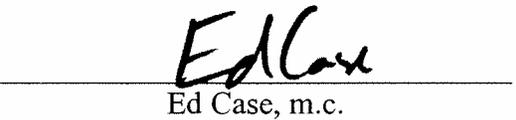

Michael Rogers, m.c. MI-08


Jerry Weller, m.c.


Dave Camp, m.c.

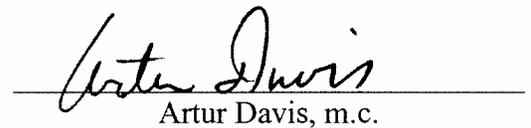

James Langevin, m.c.


Lloyd Doggett, m.c.


Ed Case, m.c.


Anna Eshoo, m.c.


Debbie Wasserman Schultz, m.c.


Artur Davis, m.c.


John Tierney, m.c.


Darrell Issa, m.c.

Robert Wexler

Robert Wexler, m.c.

Fortney Stark

Fortney Stark, m.c.

Robert Simmons

Robert Simmons, m.c.

Mark Udall

Mark Udall, m.c.

Dan Boren

Dan Boren, m.c.

Ed Whitfield

Edward Whitfield, m.c.

Tim Ryan

Tim Ryan, m.c.

Jim Gerlach

Jim Gerlach, m.c.

Frank A. LoBiondo

Frank LoBiondo, m.c.

Joseph Crowley

Joseph Crowley, m.c.

Adam Smith

Adam Smith, m.c.

Mike Ross

Mike Ross, m.c.

Charles Pickering

Charles Pickering, m.c.

Heather Wilson

Heather Wilson, m.c.

Sue Myrick

Sue Myrick, m.c.

Stephen Lynch

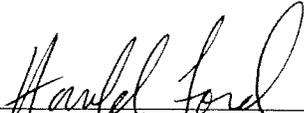
Stephen Lynch, m.c.

Mike Thompson

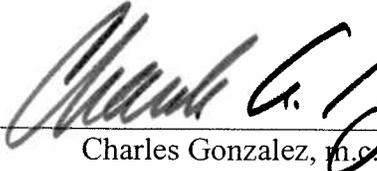
Mike Thompson, m.c.

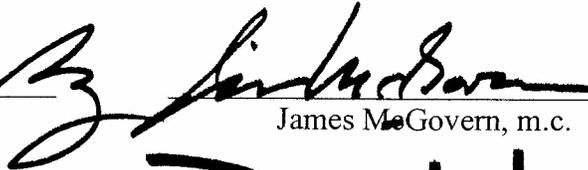
Timothy Murphy

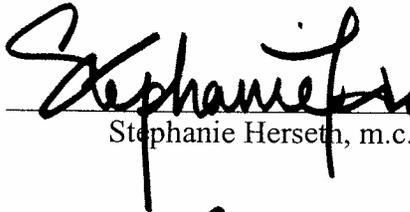
Timothy Murphy, m.c.


Harold Ford, m.c.


Randy Neugebauer, m.c.

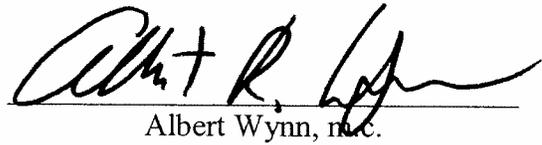

Charles Gonzalez, m.c.

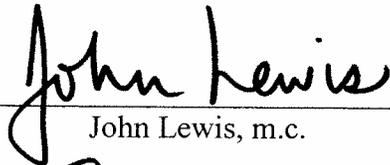

James McGovern, m.c.


Stephanie Herseth, m.c.

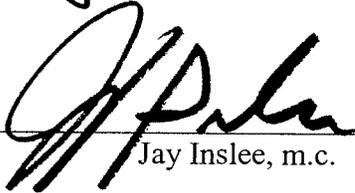

Brian Higgins, m.c.

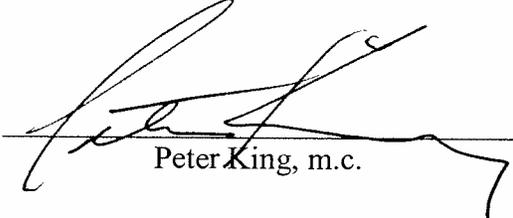

Ted Strickland, m.c.

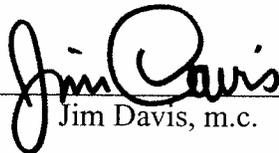

Albert Wynn, m.c.


John Lewis, m.c.

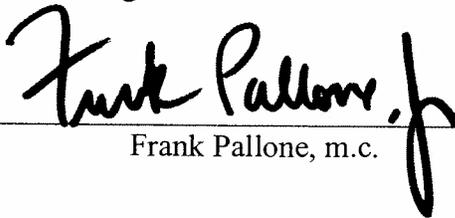

Dennis Cardoza, m.c.

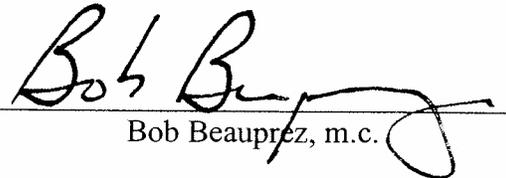

Jay Inslee, m.c.

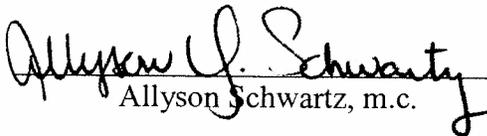

Peter King, m.c.

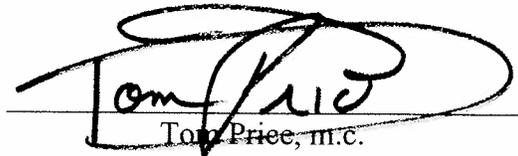

Jim Davis, m.c.

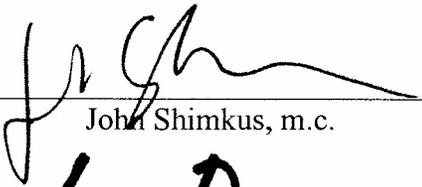

Michael Michaud, m.c.

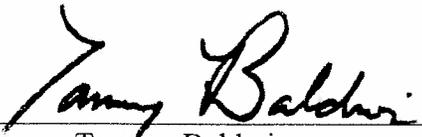

Frank Pallone, m.c.


Bob Beauprez, m.c.

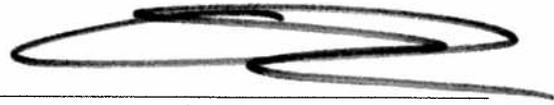

Allyson Schwartz, m.c.

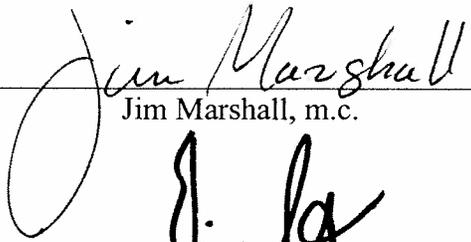

Tom Price, m.c.

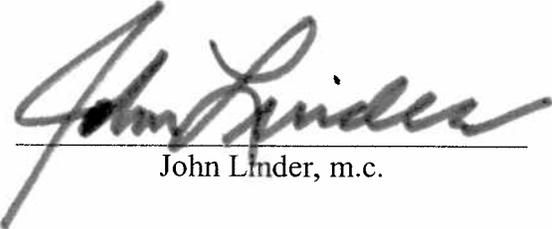

John Shimkus, m.c.

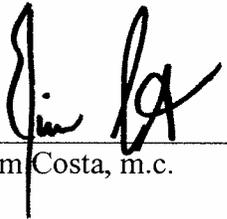

Tammy Baldwin, m.c.

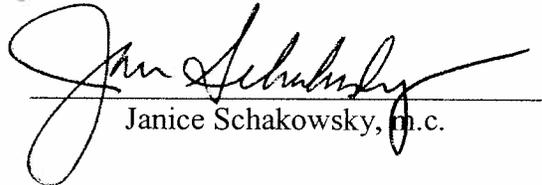

Michael Rogers, m.c.


David Wu, m.c.

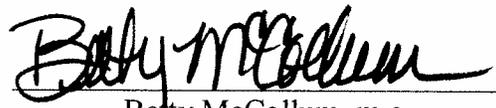

Jim Marshall, m.c.

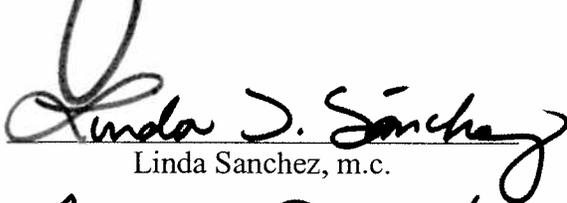

John Linder, m.c.


Jim Costa, m.c.

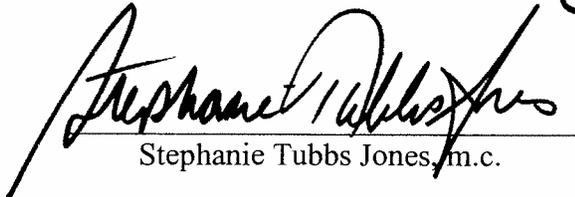

Janice Schakowsky, m.c.


John Larson, m.c.

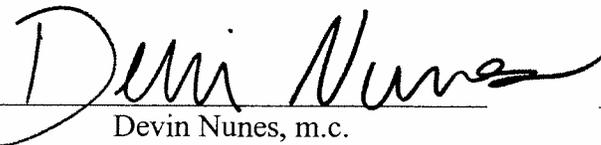

Betty McCollum, m.c.

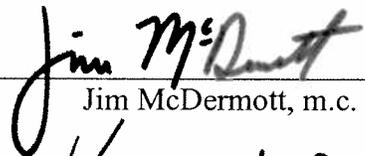

Linda Sanchez, m.c.


Todd Platts, m.c.

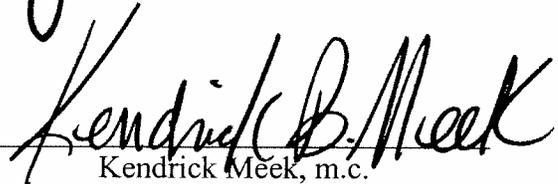

Stephanie Tubbs Jones, m.c.

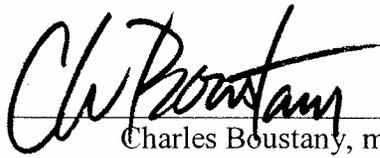

Ellen Tauscher, m.c.

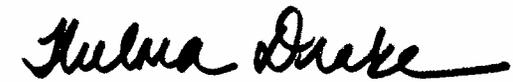

Devin Nunes, m.c.


Jim McDermott, m.c.


Rush Holt, m.c.


Kendrick Meek, m.c.

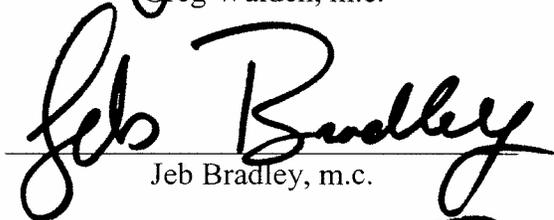

Charles Boustany, m.c.

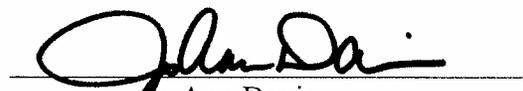

Thelma Drake, m.c.

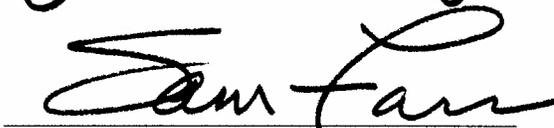

Xavier Becerra, m.c.

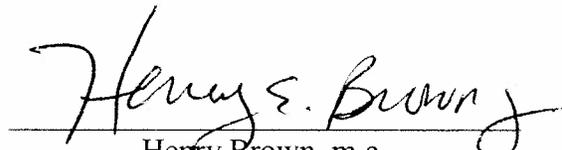

Greg Walden, m.c.


Anthony Weiner, m.c.


Jeb Bradley, m.c.


Ann Davis, m.c.


Sam Farr, m.c.


Henry Brown, m.c.


Jim Matheson, m.c.

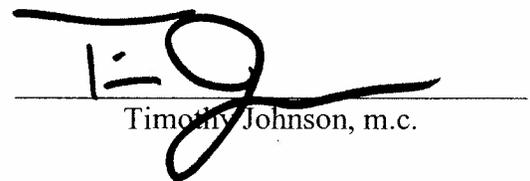

Christopher Shays, m.c.

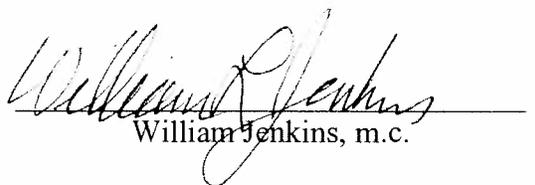

Dave Reichert, m.c.

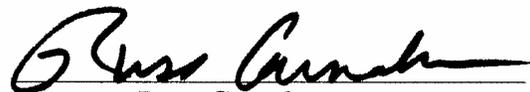

Thomas Allen, m.c.


Susan Davis, m.c.


Paul Gillmor, m.c.


Timothy Johnson, m.c.


William Jenkins, m.c.


Russ Carnahan, m.c.

Mike Castle

Michael Castle, m.c.

Gwen Moore

Gwen Moore, m.c.

Clay Shaw

E. Clay Shaw, m.c.

Phil English

Philip English, m.c.

Vito Fossella

Vito Fossella, m.c.

Chris Van Holler

Chris Van Hollen, m.c.

Judy Biggert

Judy Biggert, m.c.

Brian Baird

Brian Baird, m.c.

Rahm Emanuel

Rahm Emanuel, m.c.

Leonard Boswell

Leonard Boswell, m.c.

Doc Hastings

Doc Hastings, m.c.

Robert B. Aderholt

Robert Aderholt, m.c.

John Spratt

John Spratt, m.c.

Raul M. Grijalva

Raul Grijalva, m.c.

Henry Cuellar

Henry Cuellar, m.c.

Neil Abercrombie

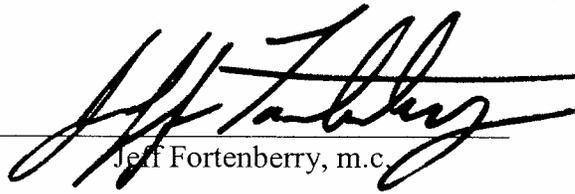
Neil Abercrombie, m.c.

Ron Kind

Ron Kind, m.c.

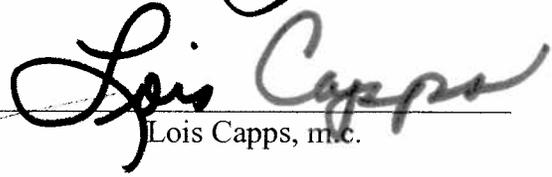
Pete Sessions

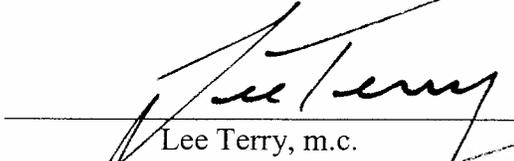
Pete Sessions, m.c.


Jeff Fortenberry, m.c.

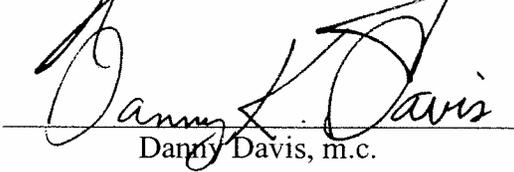

Emanuel Cleaver, m.c.

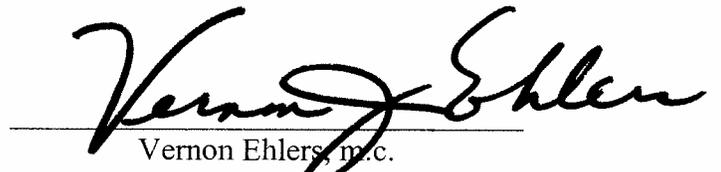

Virgil Goode, m.c.

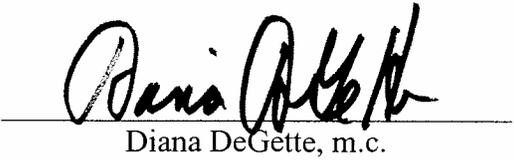

Lois Capps, m.c.

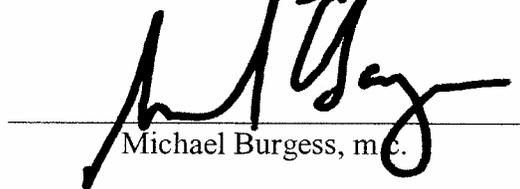

Lee Terry, m.c.

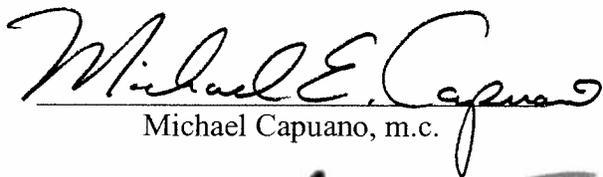

Michael Honda, m.c.

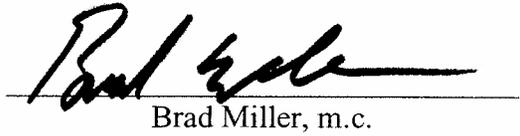

Danny Davis, m.c.

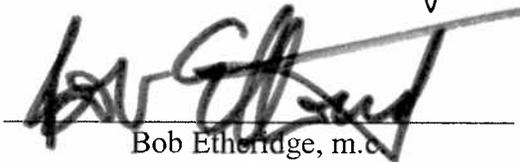

Vernon Ehlers, m.c.

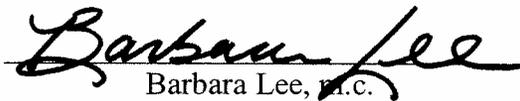

Diana DeGette, m.c.


Michael Burgess, m.c.

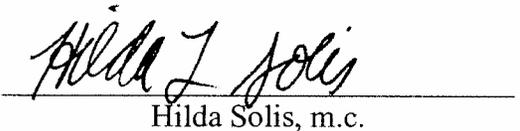

Michael Capuano, m.c.

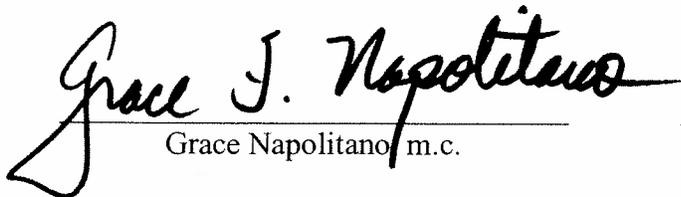

Brad Miller, m.c.

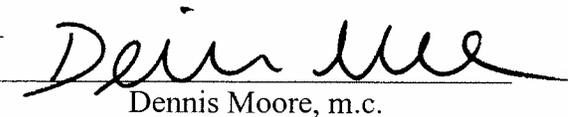

Bob Etheridge, m.c.


Barbara Lee, m.c.


Ted Poe, m.c.


Hilda Solis, m.c.


Grace Napolitano, m.c.


Dennis Moore, m.c.

Dennis J. Kucinich

Dennis Kucinich, m.c.

Henry Waxman

Henry Waxman, m.c.

Dale E. Kildee

Dale Kildee, m.c.

George Miller

George Miller, m.c.

Edward J. Markey

Edward Markey, m.c.

Ben Cardin

Benjamin Cardin, m.c.

Peter DeFazio

Peter DeFazio, m.c.

Donald M. Payne

Donald Payne, m.c.

James E. Clyburn

James Clyburn, m.c.

Michael McNulty

Michael McNulty, m.c.

Eleanor H. Norton

Eleanor Holmes Norton, m.c.

Jim Saxton

Jim Saxton, m.c.

David Price

David Price, m.c.

Howard L. Berman

Howard Berman, m.c.

Jim Leach

Jim Leach, m.c.

Donald h. Manzullo

Donald Manzullo, m.c.

Rick Boucher

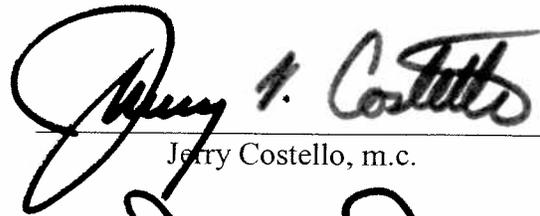
Rick Boucher, m.c.

Edolphus Towns

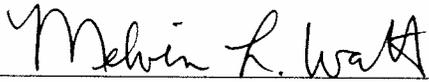
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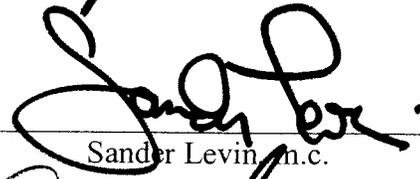
Bernard Sanders, m.c.



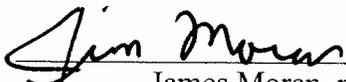
Jerry Costello, m.c.



Melvin Watt, m.c.



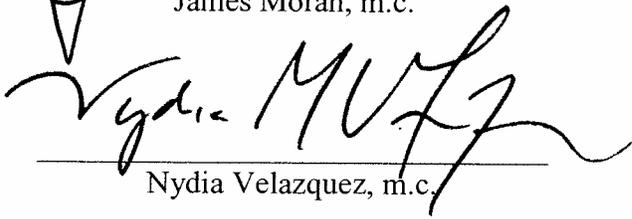
Sander Levin, m.c.



James Moran, m.c.



Chaka Fattah, m.c.



Nydia Velazquez, m.c.



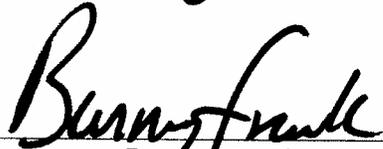
Bart Gordon, m.c.



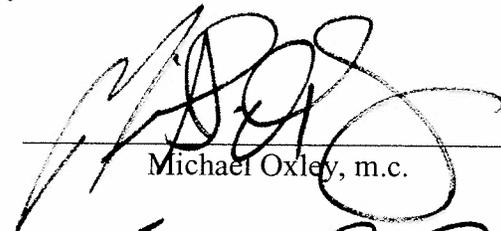
Sherwood Boehlert, m.c.



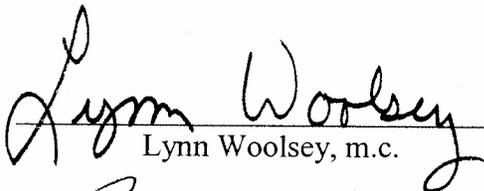
Nick Rahall, m.c.



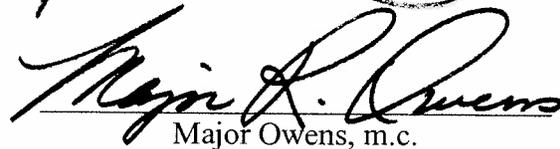
Barney Frank, m.c.



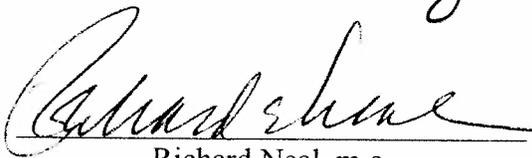
Michael Oxley, m.c.



Lynn Woolsey, m.c.



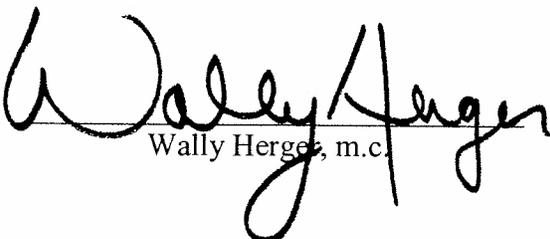
Major Owens, m.c.



Richard Neal, m.c.



Doris Matsui, m.c.



Wally Herge, m.c.



Gene Taylor, m.c.

Carolyn B. Maloney
Carolyn Maloney, m.c.

Jim Oberstar
James Oberstar, m.c.

John McHugh
John McHugh, m.c.

Luis V. Gutierrez
Luis Gutierrez, m.c.

Jerrold Nadler
Jerrold Nadler, m.c.

Cliff Stearns
Cliff Stearns, m.c.

Gene Green
Gene Green, m.c.

Chris Smith
Christopher Smith, m.c.

Frank Lucas
Frank Lucas, m.c.

Nancy Johnson
Nancy Johnson, m.c.

Thomas Davis
Thomas Davis, m.c.

Bobby L. Rush
Bobby Rush, m.c.

Bart Stupak
Bart Stupak, m.c.

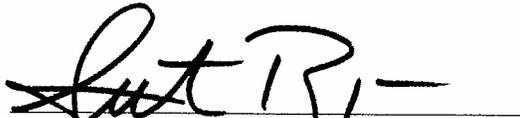
Ron Lewis
Ron Lewis, m.c.

Alcee Hastings
Alcee Hastings, m.c.

Bob Filner
Bob Filner, m.c.

Charles Rangel
Charles Rangel, m.c.

Darlene Hooley
Darlene Hooley, m.c.


Silvestre Reyes, m.c.


Ruben Hinojosa, m.c.


Sheila Jackson Lee, m.c.

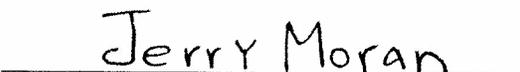

Bill Pascrell, m.c.

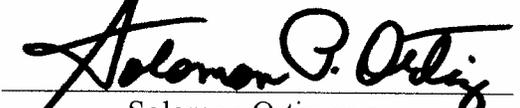

Mike McIntyre, m.c.

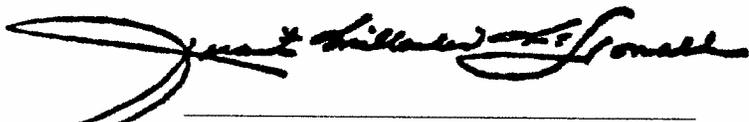

Norman Dicks, m.c.


Robert Andrews, m.c.


Louise McIntosh Slaughter, m.c.


Jerry Moran, m.c.


Solomon Ortiz, m.c.


Juanita Millender-McDonald, m.c.


Barbara Lee


Earl Blumenauer, m.c.


Charles Norwood, m.c.

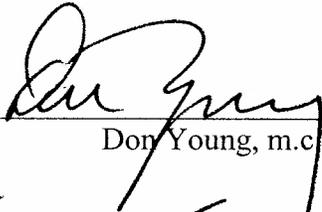

William Delahunt, m.c.



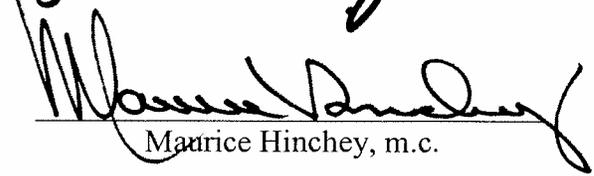
Jim McCrery, m.c.



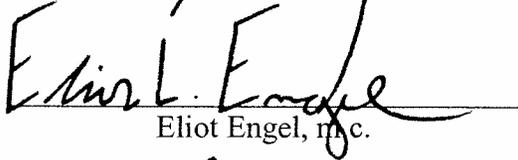
John Conyers, m.c.



Don Young, m.c.



Maurice Hinchey, m.c.



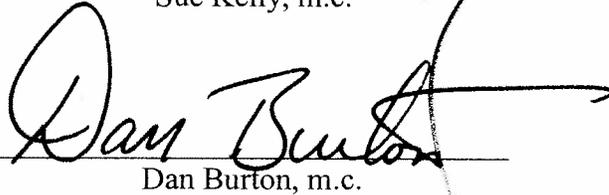
Eliot Engel, m.c.



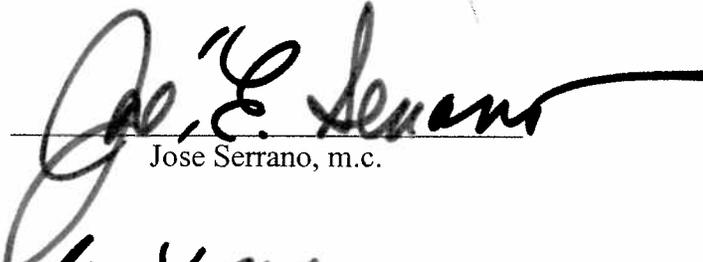
Bennie Thompson, m.c.



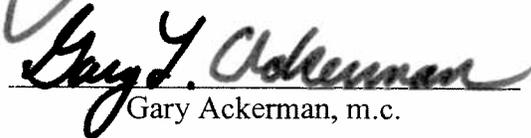
Sue Kelly, m.c.



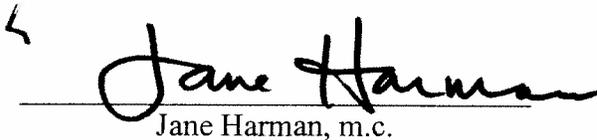
Dan Burton, m.c.



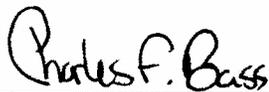
Jose Serrano, m.c.



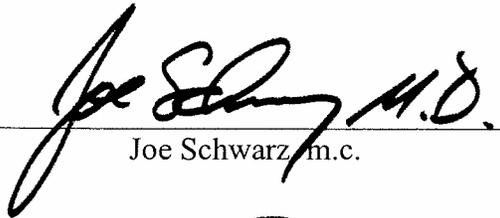
Gary Ackerman, m.c.

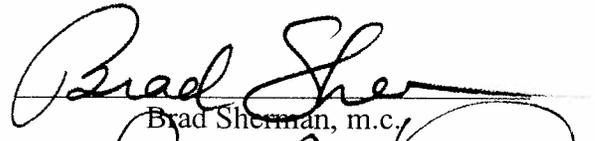


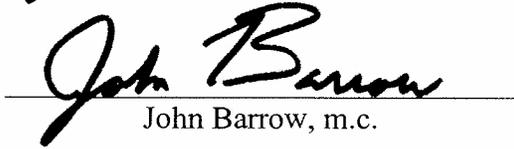
Jane Harman, m.c.

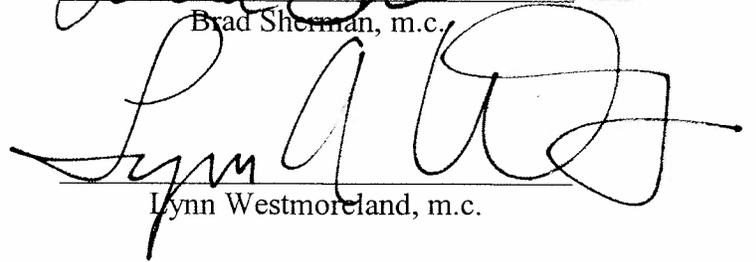


Charles Bass, m.c.


Joe Schwarz, m.c.

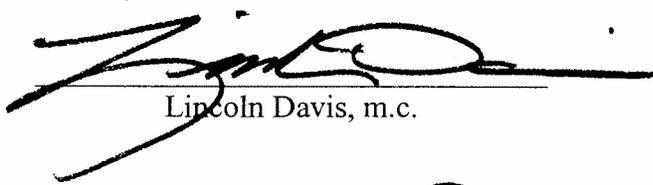

Brad Sherman, m.c.

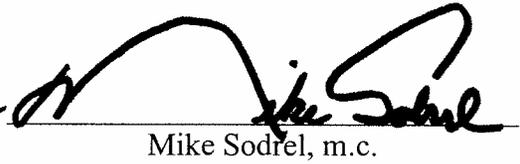

John Barrow, m.c.

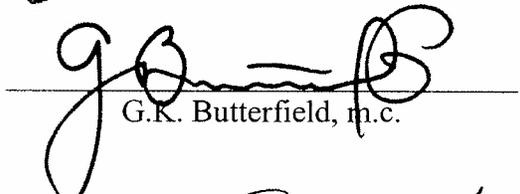

Lynn Westmoreland, m.c.


Charlie Melancon, m.c.

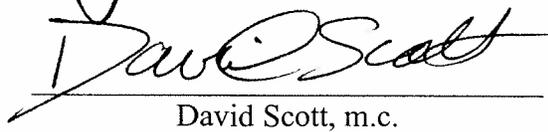

Bobby Scott, m.c.

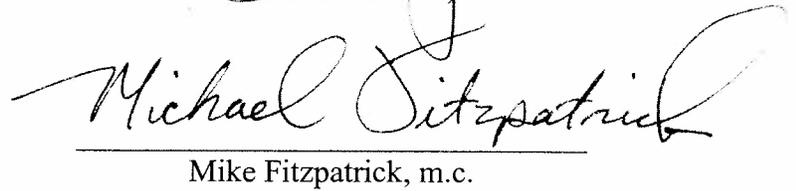

Lincoln Davis, m.c.

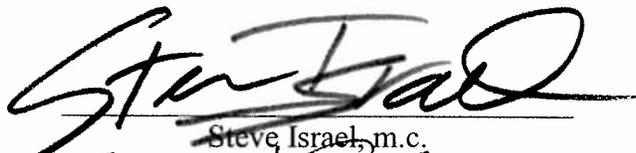

Mike Sodrel, m.c.

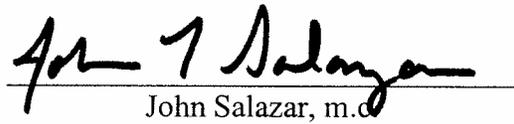

G.K. Butterfield, m.c.

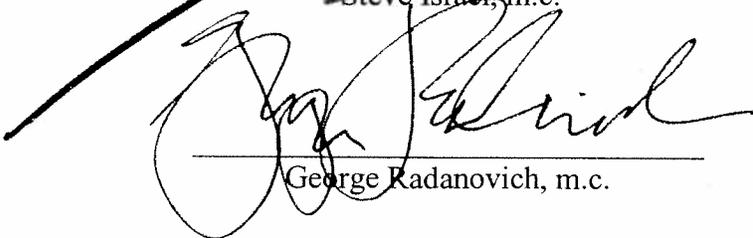

Eddie Bernice Johnson, m.c.


David Scott, m.c.


Mike Fitzpatrick, m.c.


Steve Israel, m.c.


John Salazar, m.c.


George Radanovich, m.c.


Julia Carson, m.c.


Melissa Bean, m.c.

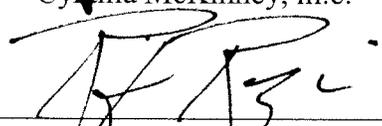

Jim Cooper, m.c.


Michael Ferguson, m.c.

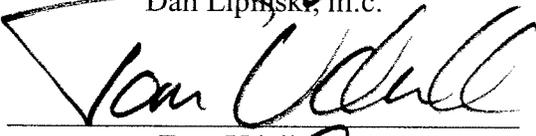

Bob Goodlatte, m.c.

Cyne:


Cynthia McKinney, m.c.

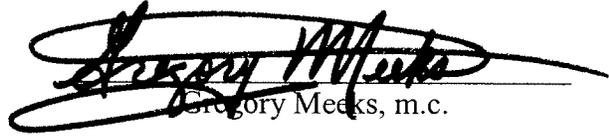

Rick Renzi, m.c.

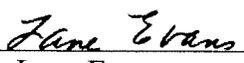

Dan Lipinski, m.c.

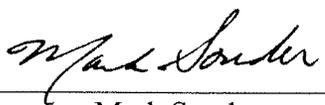

Tom Udall, m.c.

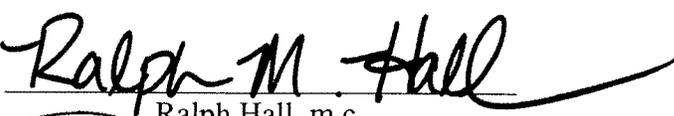

Al Green, m.c.

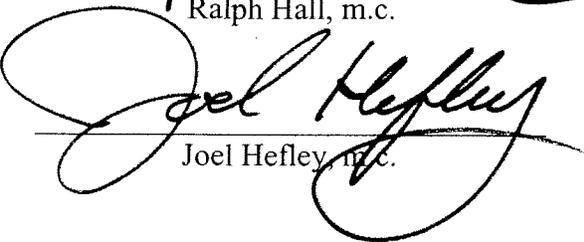

C.A. Ruppertsberger, m.c.


Gregory Meeks, m.c.


Lane Evans, m.c.


Mark Souder, m.c.


Ralph Hall, m.c.


Joel Hefley, m.c.