

ProLiteracy Policy Update

A publication of ProLiteracy Worldwide

May 5, 2006

Revisions for Even Start “Dear Colleague” Letters

Shown below are two Even Start support letters that have been sent to House appropriators asking for funding of \$225 million for fiscal year 2007.

Also, listed below are ALFA lists of those who signed with party and state designation. A total of **92 Members** have signified their support in these letters. **81 Democrats and 11 Republicans.**

The Platts-Hinchey-Simmons-Johnson letter has 46 signers (37 Democrats and 11 Republicans):

Abercrombie, Neil (D-HI) *	Kuhl, Randy (R-NY)
Allen, Thomas (D-ME) *	Larsen, Rick (D-WA)
Baldwin, Tammie (D-WI) *	Larson, John (D-CT) *
Boren, Dan (D-OK)	Lewis, John (D-GA)
Brown, Sherrod (D-OH)*	Maloney, Carolyn (D-NY) *
Cardin, Ben (D-MD)	Marshall, Jim (D-GA)
Carson, Julia (D-IN)	McCarthy, Carolyn (D-NY) *
Case, ED (D-HI) *	McDermott, Jim (D-WA) *
Conyers, John (D-MI) *	McGovern, James (D-MA) *
Costa, Jim (D-CA)	McHugh, John (R-NY)
Cuellar, Henry (D-TX) *	Michaud, Michael (D-ME)
Davis, Danny (D-IL) *	Moore, Dennis (D-KS) *
Dent, Charlie (R-PA)	Osborne, Tom (R-NE)
Doggett, Lloyd (D-TX) *	Owens, Major (D-NY) *
Etheridge, Bob (D-NC) *	Payne, Donald (D-NJ) *
Evans, Lane (D-IL)	Platts, Todd (R-PA)
Filner, Bob (D-CA)	Pomeroy, Earl (D-ND)
Fitzpatrick, Michael (R-PA)	Reyes, Silvestre (D-TX) *
Foley, Mark (R-FL)	Shays, Chris (R-CT)
Gerlach, Jim (R-PA)	Simmons, Rob (R-CT)
Herseth, Stephanie (D-SD)*	Sullivan, John (R-OK)
Hinchey, Maurice (D-NY)	Tauscher, Ellen (D-CA)
Hinojosa, Ruben (D-TX) *	Thompson, Bennie (D-MS)
Holden, Tim (D-PA)	Woolsey, Lynn (D-CA) *

(* signed both Miller-Kildee and Platts-Simmons letters)

The Miller-Kildee letter has 66 signers, all Democrats:

Abercrombie (HI) *

Allen (ME) *

Baldwin (WI) *
Barrow (GA)
Becerra (CA)
Bordallo (GU)
Brown, Sherrod (OH)
Capps (CA)
Capuano (MA)
Case (HI) *
Cleaver (MO)
Conyers (MI) *
Cuellar (TX) *
Cummings (MD)
Davis, Danny (IL) *
Davis, Susan (CA)
Delahunt (MA)
Dingell (MI)
Doggett (TX) *
Eshoo (CA)
Etheridge (NC) *
Fattah (PA)
Gonzalez (TX)
Grijalva (AZ)
Gutierrez (IL)
Hastings, Alcee (FL)
Herseth (SD)
Hinojosa (TX) *
Holt (NJ)
Honda (CA)
Jefferson (LA)
Johnson, Eddie Bernice (TX)
Kildee (MI)
Kucinich (OH)

Larson, John (CT) *
Lee (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lynch (MA)
Maloney (NY) *
McCarthy (NY) *
McCollum (MN)
McDermott (WA) *
McGovern (MA) *
McIntyre (NC)
Miller, George (CA)
Moore, Dennis (KS) *
Moore, Gwen (WI)
Napolitano (CA)
Neal (MA)
Norton (DC)
Oberstar (MN)
Ortiz (TX)
Owens (NY) *
Pallone (NJ)
Payne (NJ) *
Price, David (NC)
Reyes (TX) *
Ross (AR)
Ryan, Tim (OH)
Sanchez, Linda (CA)
Scott, Bobby (VA)
Solis (CA)
Van Hollen (MD)
Watson (CA)
Wexler (FL)
Woolsey (CA) *

(* signed both Miller-Kildee and Platts-Simmons letters)

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 8, 2006

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health
and Human Services, and Education
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health
and Human Services, and Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

As you know, funding for the William F. Goodling Even Start Family Literacy Program was cut in the fiscal year 2006 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill by 56 percent. This decrease created significant hardships for many Even Start centers throughout the country. Unfortunately, for the fourth consecutive year, the Administration's budget proposal does not include any funding for this program. We are writing to ask that you restore funding back to the 2005 level of \$225 million for Even Start in the fiscal year 2007 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

Even Start is the only federal education program that teaches literacy skills to both parents and children alike. Because this program has received substantial funding cuts for the past three years, even more local programs face closure, or a severe decline in services they are able to offer. Even Start provides parents with the skills necessary to teach their children and improve their lives. Eliminating or reducing funding will leave thousands of families without the necessary language skills vital in obtaining a job, thus supporting their families.

The Department of Education cites compelling statistics that show Even Start families are the most in need:

- Even Start serves an estimated 50,000 families nationwide in 1,200 state-administrated projects.
- 84% of Even Start's families are at or below Federal poverty levels.
- Even Start families are significantly poorer than Head Start families. Nearly half of Even Start families have an annual household income of under \$6,000, in comparison to only 13% of Head Start of families.
- 84% of Even Start adults do not have a high school diploma or GED; 44% of Even Start parents do not have above a 9th grade education.

Parents participating in Even Start acquire important skills to become their child's first and most important teacher. Nothing can make up for a lack of parental support. The goals of *No Child Left Behind* will not be fully achieved if we leave the parents behind. Over 70 % of Even Start participants are minority families. As such, the program directly helps with NCLB's requirements to close the achievement gap among target populations. Even Start is also a good fit with the Reading First initiative because Even Start serves children ages zero to eight including the most important ages of birth to three years. No other federal education program provides these kinds of services during the early childhood years.

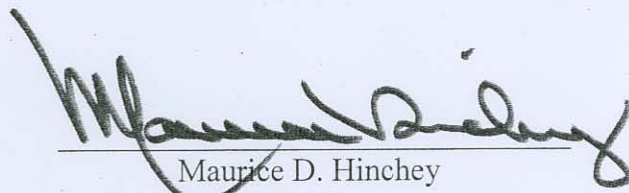
Finally, a Texas A&M University study found that parents who participated in Even Start were more often employed than those parents in the same socio-economic group that had not participated in the program. The study also confirmed that employment jumped from 17% before enrollment to 51% after program completion. Wages increased by more than 25%.

We ask that you join with us to support the restoration of funding for Even Start at \$225 million, equal to the fiscal year 2005 funding level. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Todd Russell Platts
Member of Congress



Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress



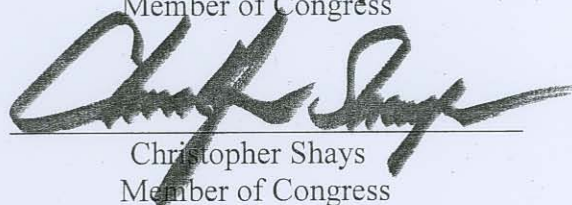
Rob Simmons
Member of Congress



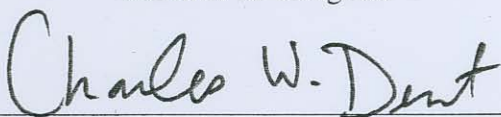
Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Ruben Hinojosa
Member of Congress



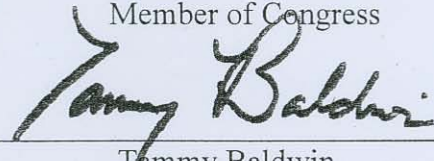
Christopher Shays
Member of Congress



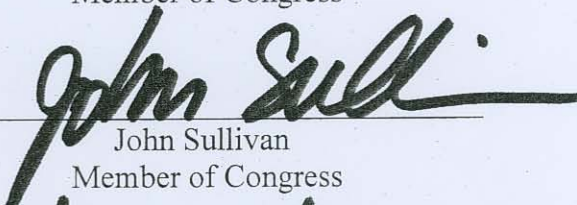
Charles W. Dent
Member of Congress



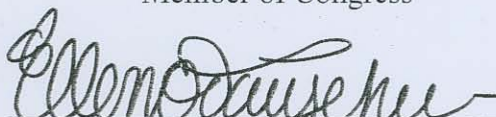
Donald M. Payne
Member of Congress



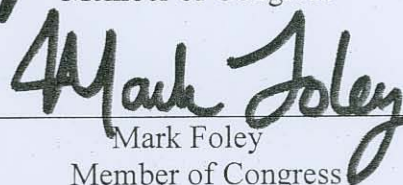
Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress



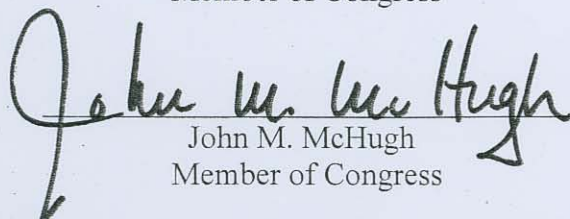
John Sullivan
Member of Congress



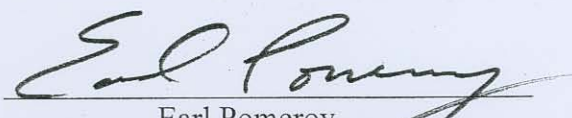
Ellen O. Tauscher
Member of Congress



Mark Foley
Member of Congress



John M. McHugh
Member of Congress



Earl Pomeroy
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



John R. "Randy" Kuhl Jr.
Member of Congress

Tim Holden

Tim Holden
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Major R. Owens

Major R. Owens
Member of Congress

Jim Gerlach

Jim Gerlach
Member of Congress

Tom Osborne

Tom Osborne
Member of Congress

John Conyers Jr.

John Conyers Jr.
Member of Congress

Michael G. Fitzpatrick

Michael G. Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress

Dennis Moore

Dennis Moore
Member of Congress

Silvestre Reyes

Silvestre Reyes
Member of Congress

Henry Cuellar

Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress

Lane Evans

Lane Evans
Member of Congress

Lloyd Doggett

Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

Dan Boren

Dan Boren
Member of Congress

Jim Marshall

Jim Marshall
Member of Congress

John Lewis

John Lewis
Member of Congress

Michael H. Michaud

Michael H. Michaud
Member of Congress

Lynn C. Woolsey

Lynn C. Woolsey
Member of Congress

James P. McGovern

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Jim Costa

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Julia Carson

Julia Carson
Member of Congress

Carolyn McCarthy

Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

John B. Larson

John Larson
Member of Congress

Rick Larsen

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

Tom Allen

Thomas H. Allen
Member of Congress

Ben Cardin

Benjamin L. Cardin
Member of Congress

Bob Filner

Bob Filner
Member of Congress

Ed Case

Ed Case
Member of Congress

Bob Etheridge

Bob Etheridge
Member of Congress

Neil Abercrombie

Neil Abercrombie
Member of Congress

Stephanie Herseth

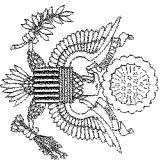
Stephanie Herseth
Member of Congress

Sherrod Brown

Sherrod Brown
Member of Congress

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BOBBY JINDAL, LOUISIANA
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THELMA D. DRAKE, VIRGINIA
JOHN R. "RANDY" KUH, JR., NEW YORK



COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2181 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6100

MAJORITY (202) 225-4527
MINORITY (202) 225-3725

<http://edworkforce.house.gov>

April 27, 2006

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DAVID WU, OREGON
RUSH D. HOLT, NEW JERSEY
SUSAN A. DAVIS, CALIFORNIA
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DANNY K. DAVIS, ILLINOIS
PAUL M. GRALAVA, ARIZONA
CHRIS VAN HOLLEN, MARYLAND
TIM RYAN, OHIO
TIMOTHY H. BISHOP, NEW YORK

The Honorable Ralph Regula
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
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The Honorable David R. Obey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula and Ranking Member Obey:

We are writing to urge you to restore funding to the Even Start Family Literacy Programs at the Fiscal 2005 level of \$225 million.

For the past several years, the President has recommended eliminating the Even Start Family Literacy program, using the results of its Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) questionnaire as a central justification. Earlier this month, the effectiveness of PART as a budget tool was questioned by the Majority Staff Director of the House Government Reform Subcommittee on Government Management, Finance and Accountability.

As reported by GovExec, the Majority Staff Director noted that Even Start

“... was originally established by Congress to boost adult reading levels, but its PART evaluation is based largely on the number of participants who obtain general equivalency degrees. As a result, the program received an ineffective rating in 2002 and OMB recommended that its funding be zeroed out.” (*GovExec, OMB program assessments viewed as flawed budget tool, April 4, 2006*)

Meanwhile, over half of the Even Start programs in the county—including 20 of the only 28 programs serving the Native American community—will face termination by July 1, 2006 because of the budget decisions based on the PART analysis.

The Even Start Family Literacy Program is a comprehensive family literacy program, which serves both parents and young children who are most in need. The programs provide adult education, parenting education, early childhood education, and interactive parent and child literacy activities. More than 40 million adults have basic literacy skills or limited proficiency in English that interferes with their ability to participate fully in work, family and community activities. Current funding, which includes Even Start and other programs, reaches only 2.8 million of these adults each year, and thousands more are on waiting lists.

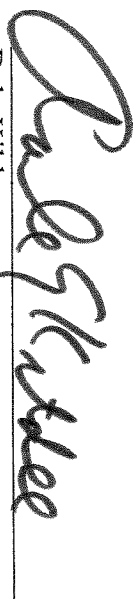
Given this new information, we believe it is imperative to revisit the Even Start funding request and to restore funding for this effective and successful program—as demonstrated by several independent analyses.

Thank you for your consideration of this emergency request.

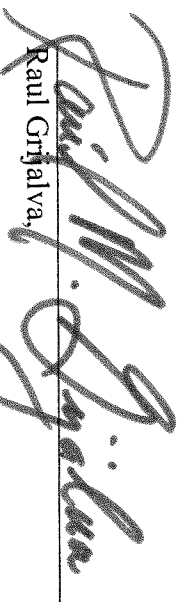
Sincerely,



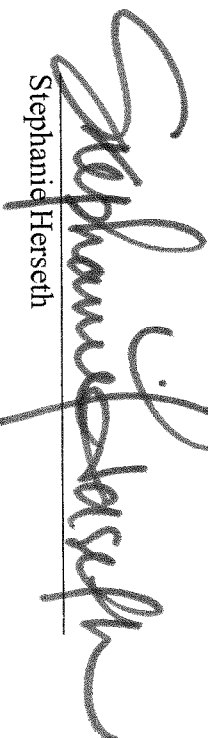
George Miller
Senior Democratic Member
Committee on Education and the Workforce



Dale Kildee
Senior Democratic Member
Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness



Raul Grijalva,



Stephanie Herseth



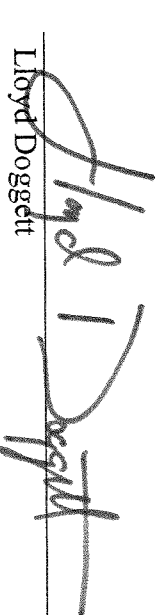
Carolyn McCarthy



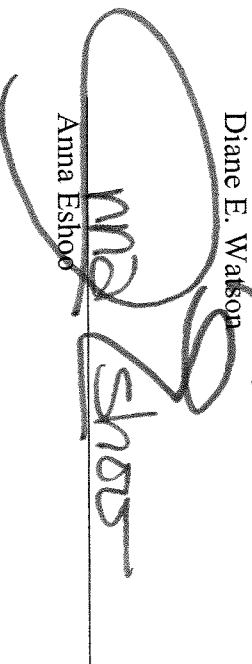
Ed Case



Diane E. Watson



Lloyd Doggett



Anna Eshoo

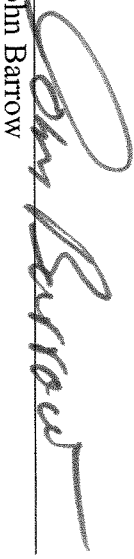


Robert Wexler

Tim Ryan



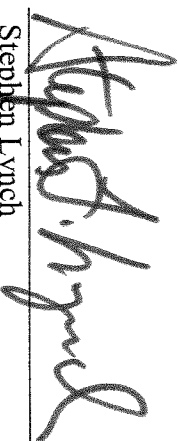
John Barrow



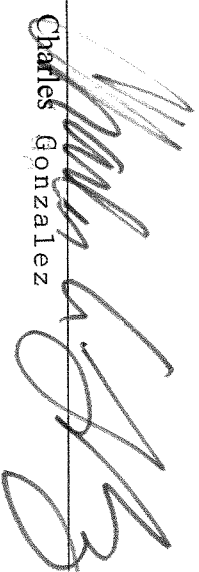
Mike Ross



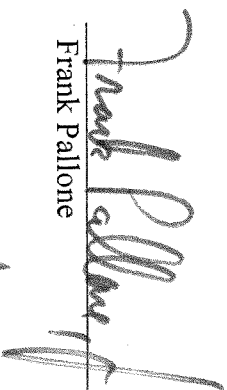
Stephen Lynch



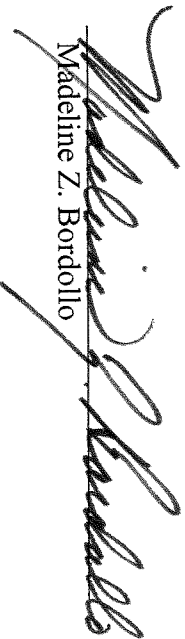
Charles Gonzalez



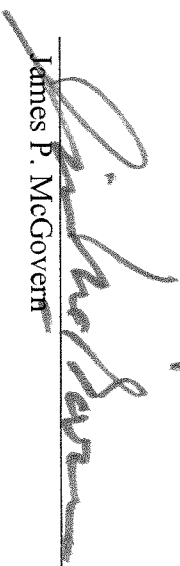
Frank Pallone



Madeline Z. Bordollo



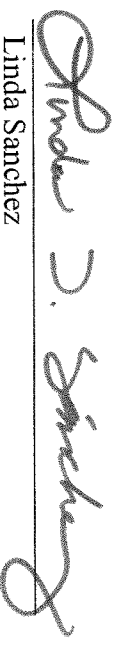
James P. McGovern



John Larson



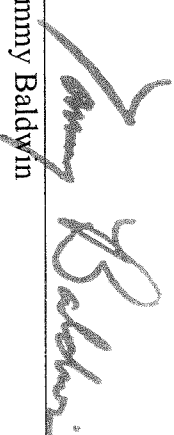
Linda Sanchez



Rush Holt



Tammy Baldwin



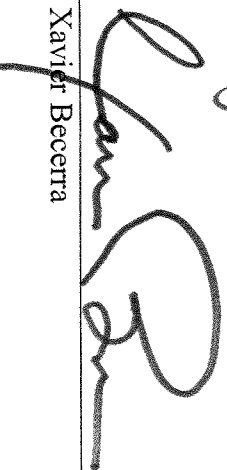
Betty McCollum



Jim McDermott



Xavier Becerra



Tom Allen



Robert Scott

Susan Davis

Henry Cuellar

Gwen Moore

Chris VanHollen

Neil Abercrombie

Eddie Bernice Johnson

Danny Davis

Michael Capuano

Bob Etheridge

Grace Napolitano

Emanuel Cleaver

Lois Capps

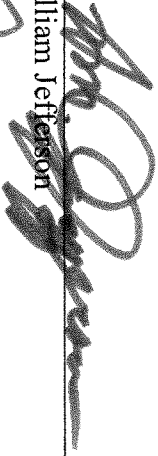
Michael Honda

Barbara Lee

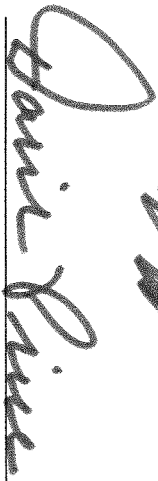
Hilda Solis

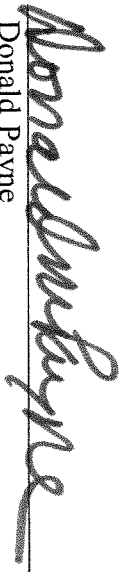
Dennis Moore

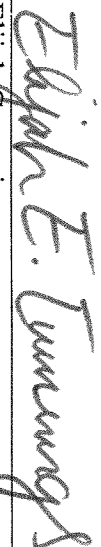
Dennis Kucinich


William Jefferson



Eleanor Holmes Norton



David Price

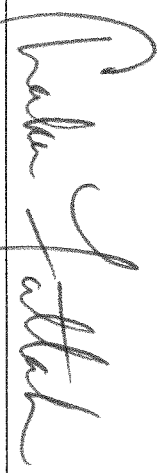

Donald Payne

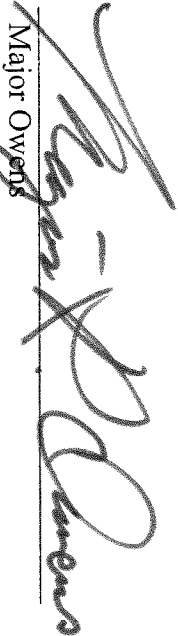

Elijah E. Cummings


Lynn Woolsey



Richard Neal



Sander Levin

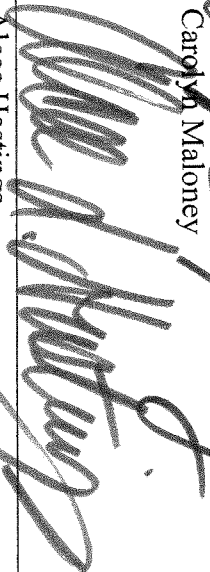

Chaka Fattah

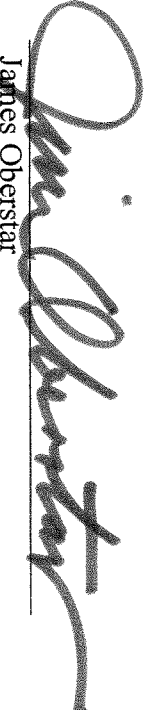

Major Owens

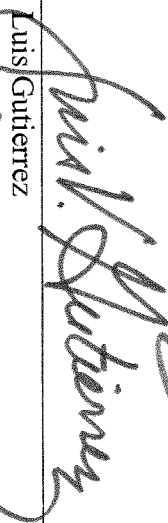

John Dingell

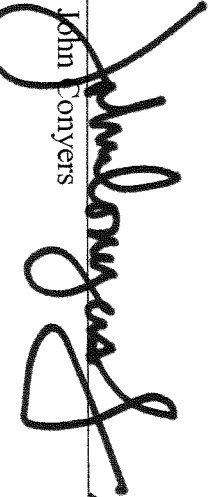

Carolyn Maloney



Sherrod Brown


Alcee Hastings


James Oberstar


Luis Guterrez


John Conyers


Silvestre Reyes

Mike McIntyre

Mike McIntyre

Bill Delahunt

William Delahunt

Ruben Hinojosa

Ruben Hinojosa

Solomon P. Ortiz

Solomon Ortiz