

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 26, 2018

Mr. Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write in strong opposition to your recent Executive Order on poverty¹ which will make it harder for people to access critical services such as healthcare, nutrition, and housing. The policies outlined in the Executive Order will do nothing to reduce poverty in the United States, and instead are an attack on the social safety net that serves as a lifeline for millions of Americans.

Time and again, research has shown that tying strict work requirements to welfare programs does not result in poverty reduction. The Executive Order references changes that were enacted in 1996, such as the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program. However, recent analysis has shown that the mandatory work requirements of TANF have not meaningfully increased employment over time. In fact, most people subject to the TANF work requirements remained poor, and many became even poorer.²

The misconception that stronger work requirements are the answer to poverty and unemployment rests on the flawed belief that disadvantaged people will only work if the government forces them to. In reality, there are complex economic barriers that prevent people from working, even though they want to. These barriers have been shown to include a lack of adequate skills or work experience that employers seek, unaffordable child care services, social disadvantages that make identifying and applying for jobs difficult, or other unmet personal needs that make employment unattainable.³ Mandating work requirements does not solve these issues, and in many cases only exacerbates them.

Over fifty-three years ago, President Lyndon B. Johnson and Congress worked together to create a social safety net that made lifting families out of poverty a national priority. With a strong

¹ Exec. Order No. 13828, Vol. 83 No. 72 C.F.R. 15941 (2018).

² LaDonna Pavetti, *Work Requirements Don't Cut Poverty, Evidence Shows*, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (June 7, 2016).

³ *Ibid.*

focus on helping people in their time of need, these leaders worked together to create programs to help end hunger, create good paying jobs, provide health care, and make sure our children get a good education. These social safety net programs have worked to fight poverty, and we stand ready to protect them.

The American people would be far better served if you and Congressional Republicans joined with us as we focus on economic policies that will create jobs and raise wages, instead of blaming people for needing a helping hand. Therefore, we urge you to revoke the Executive Order.

Sincerely,



Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



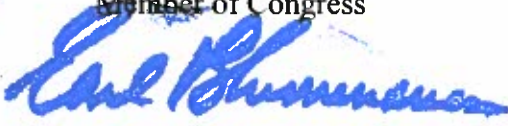
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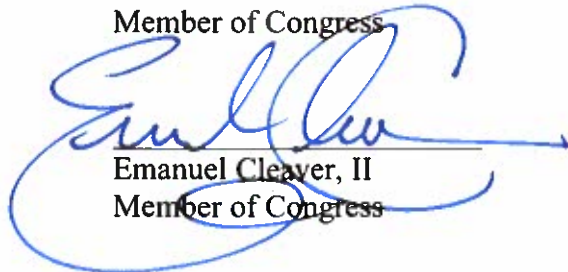
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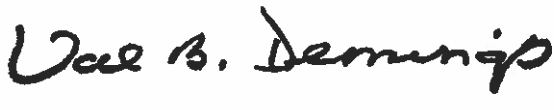

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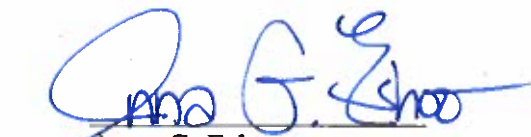

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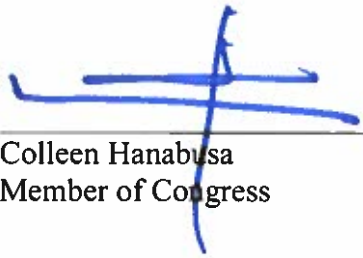

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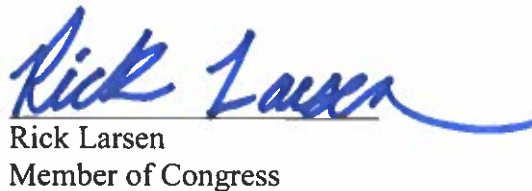
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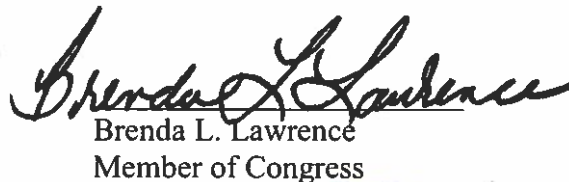
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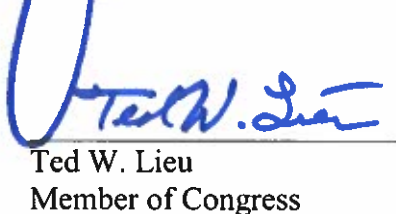
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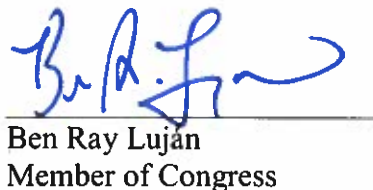
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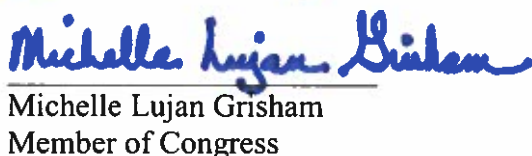
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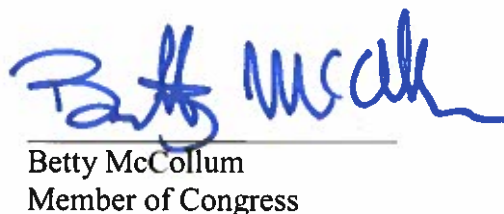
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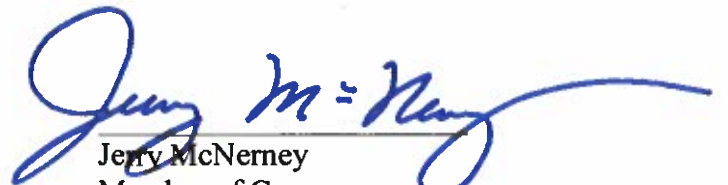
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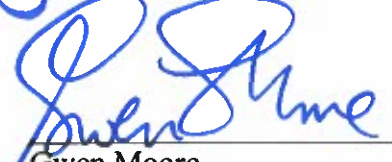
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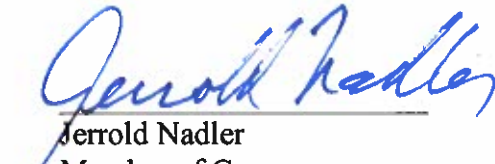
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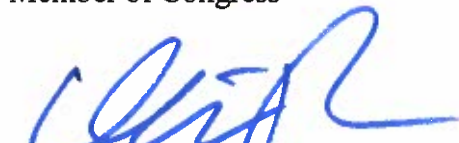
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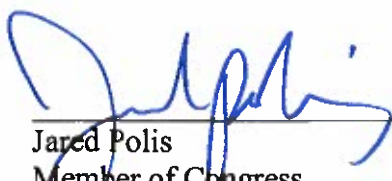
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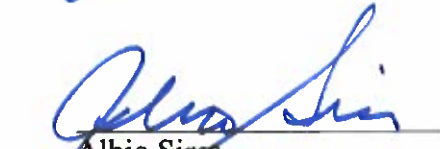

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