

## CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS



July 7, 2011

President Barack Obama  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave.  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

The ongoing debt ceiling negotiations have distracted Congress from reducing unemployment and putting Americans back to work. As reflected in a June 24-28 poll conducted by *The New York Times* and CBS News, Americans agree that job creation is the most important issue facing the country – not deficit reduction. Yet, Congressional Republicans appear to believe that job creation has no role in the national conversation.

Although it is disappointing that Republicans in Washington have used the debt ceiling negotiations for political gain, the signatories of this letter know that failing to raise the debt ceiling is not an academic matter. We understand such a failure would cause lasting economic harm to families across the country, as well as to the global economy.

We write to share our viewpoint about what should be included in any final agreement on the debt ceiling.

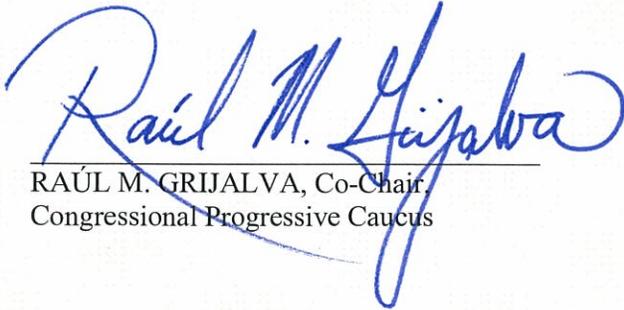
First, any cuts to Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid should be taken off the table. The individuals depending on these three programs deserve well-conceived improvements, not deep, ideologically driven cuts with harmful consequences. These cuts would hurt households and damage the country's economic recovery as well.

Second, revenue increases must be a meaningful part of any agreement. Tax breaks benefiting the very richest Americans should be eliminated as part of this deal. Republican insistence on protecting these tax breaks will force middle-class families to shoulder the burden of even deeper budget cuts, and this is unacceptable.

These points are essential for any deal on the debt ceiling, but more work to rebuild the economy will remain after these negotiations have concluded. We support The People's Budget introduced by the Congressional Progressive Caucus in April, which would bring the country into surplus by 2021 and invest more than \$1 trillion in job creation through public works, infrastructure upgrades and other popular measures. *The New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *The Economist* and many other publications have written favorably about the proposal, with Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman calling it "genuinely courageous."

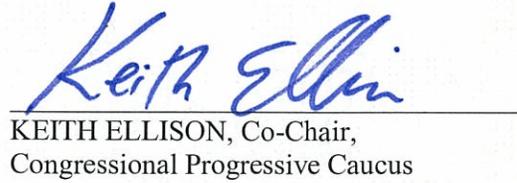
We stand ready to work with the Administration responsibly to increase the debt ceiling. The middle class has experienced enough pain during the last three years. Republicans are willing to inflict even more. We will not join them.

Sincerely,



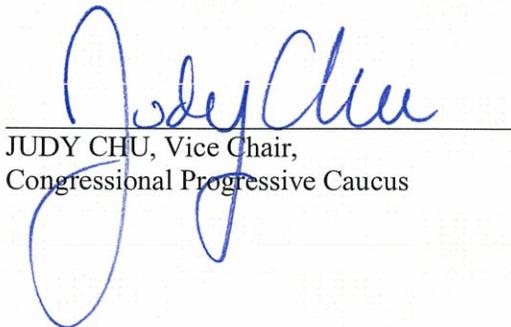
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RAÚL M. GRIJALVA, Co-Chair,  
Congressional Progressive Caucus



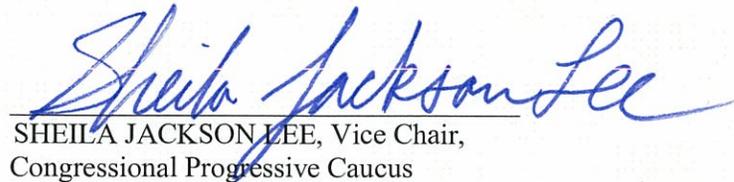
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KEITH ELLISON, Co-Chair,  
Congressional Progressive Caucus



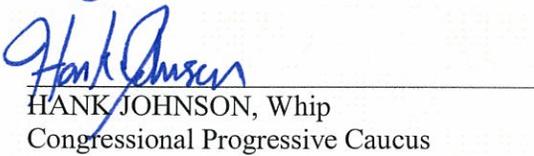
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JUDY CHU, Vice Chair,  
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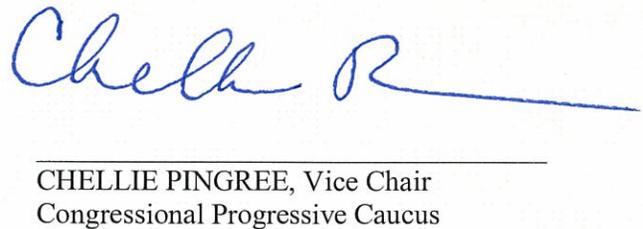
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SHEILA JACKSON LEE, Vice Chair,  
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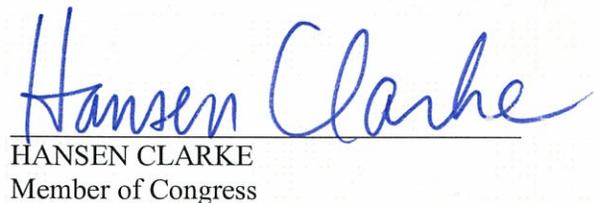
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CHELLIE PINGREE, Vice Chair  
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MICHAEL CAPUANO  
Member of Congress



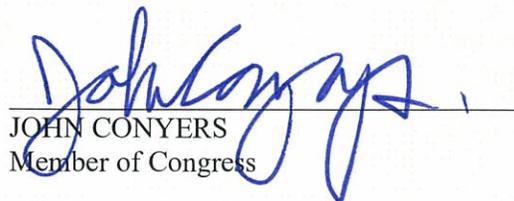
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HANSEN CLARKE  
Member of Congress



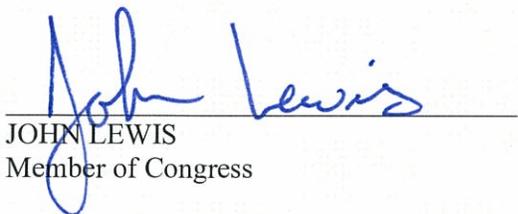
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Member of Congress



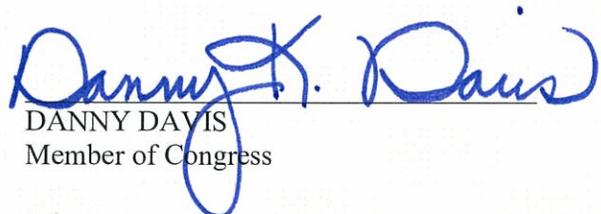
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Member of Congress



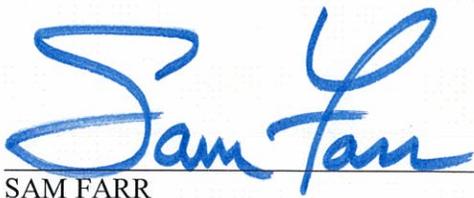
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Member of Congress



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DANNY DAVIS  
Member of Congress



SAM FARR  
Member of Congress



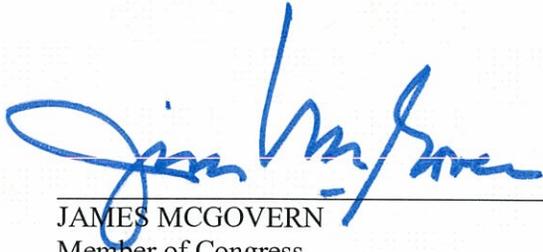
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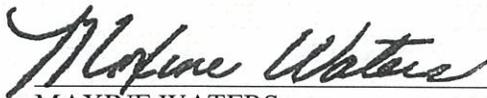
ED PASTOR  
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