

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Senate Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Senate Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
House Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

September 24, 2012

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Speaker of the House Boehner, and Minority Leader Pelosi:

As the nation grapples with a stagnating economy and our fractured politics have – to date -- prevented reform or progress, we ask that you turn a corner and work together to avoid the devastating impact of sequester and to prevent a catastrophic failure for our entire nation. As you consider the terms of any deal, we hope that you keep in mind the long record of success that past deficit reduction deals have had, not only in reducing deficits, but in reducing poverty and improving our entire economy, at the same time.

As we take a hard look at our budget and attempt to make difficult choices about our nation's priorities, we must not make choices that hurt the most vulnerable Americans. Cuts should not increase poverty in America or put children and families at greater risk of falling through the cracks.

We do not have to. We have a strong record of bi-partisan reforms that have reduced our deficits while reducing poverty and lifting the entire economy. In 1985, we reduced deficits while expanding Medicaid and enacted the COBRA program to improve access to healthcare coverage for the unemployed. In 1990, we reduced deficits by \$482 billion while protecting the Earned Income Tax Credit and extended supplemental tax credits for families with young children. In 1993, we saved another \$433 billion while expanding the EITC and reducing childhood hunger. We have succeeded many times in the past and there is a way for us to do so again.

With a return to a historically consistent level of federal revenue, savings from reductions in forces in Afghanistan, sound and smart changes in spending on defense programs, and government wide reductions in waste, fraud and abuse, we can protect the vital programs that

vulnerable families rely on in hard times, while fully funding education and economic development programs that help ensure all American families have a viable pathway into the middle class.

This pathway is the embodiment of the American Dream, an idea beyond political affiliation and something we should all strive to bolster and protect. Further, getting many struggling Americans into good paying jobs and supporting them along this journey, adds more to the ranks of a prosperous middle class. This effort, in itself, contributes to deficit reduction and a stronger American economy in the long run.

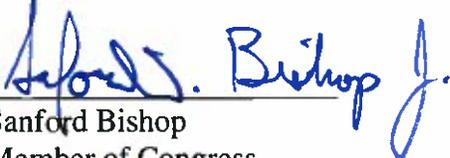
We can restore our economy and balanced budgets by putting the most vulnerable Americans first. We look forward to working with you in finding this pathway forward for all.

Sincerely,

 Barbara Lee Co-Chair Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus	 John Conyers Co-Chair Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus	 Mike Honda Co-Chair Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus
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 G.K. Butterfield Co-Chair Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus
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 Joe Baca Co-Chair Congressional Out of Poverty Caucus
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Sanford Bishop  
Member of Congress

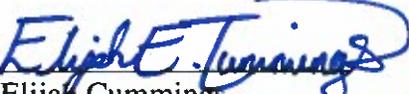
  
André Carson  
Member of Congress

  
Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

  
Hansen Clarke  
Member of Congress

  
William Lacy Clay  
Member of Congress

  
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

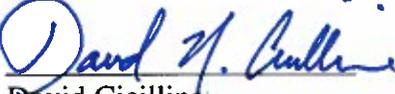
  
Elijah Cummings  
Member of Congress

  
Donna F. Edwards  
Member of Congress

  
Barney Frank  
Member of Congress

  
Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress

  
Donna M. Christensen  
Member of Congress

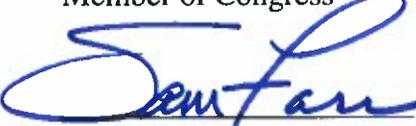
  
David Cicilline  
Member of Congress

  
Yvette Clarke  
Member of Congress

  
Emanuel Cleaver  
Member of Congress

  
Gerald E. Connolly  
Member of Congress

  
Keith Ellison  
Member of Congress

  
Sam Farr  
Member of Congress

  
Bob Filner  
Member of Congress

*Marcia Fudge*

Marcia Fudge  
Member of Congress

*Charles A. Gonzalez*

Charles A. Gonzalez  
Member of Congress

*Raúl M. Grijalva*

Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress

*Janice Hahn*

Janice Hahn  
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*Alcee Hastings*

Alcee Hastings  
Member of Congress

*Rush Holt*

Rush Holt  
Member of Congress

*Eddie Bernice Johnson*

Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress

*Henry C. Johnson*

Henry C. Johnson  
Member of Congress

*Dennis J. Kucinich*

Dennis J. Kucinich  
Member of Congress

*John Lewis*

John Lewis  
Member of Congress

*Carolyn B. Maloney*

Carolyn Maloney  
Member of Congress

*Gwen Moore*

Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress

*Jerrold Nadler*

Jerrold Nadler  
Member of Congress

*Eleanor A. Norton*

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

*John Olver*

John Olver  
Member of Congress

*Chellie Pingree*

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress

*Charles B. Rangel*

Charlie Rangel  
Member of Congress

*Silvestre Reyes*

Silvestre Reyes  
Member of Congress



Laura Richardson  
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress



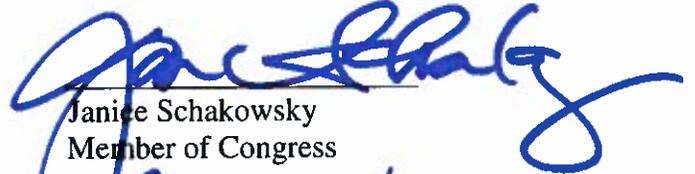
Bobby Rush  
Member of Congress



Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan  
Member of Congress



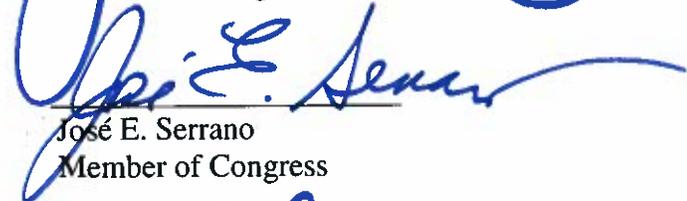
Linda T. Sanchez  
Member of Congress



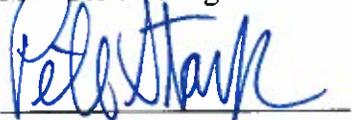
Janice Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Robert C. Scott  
Member of Congress



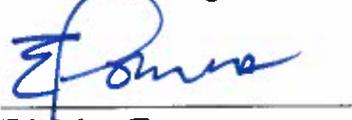
José E. Serrano  
Member of Congress



Pete Stark  
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



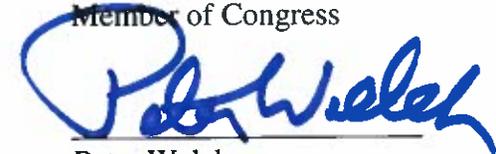
Edolphus Towns  
Member of Congress



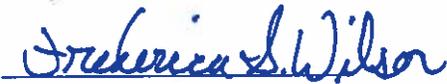
Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



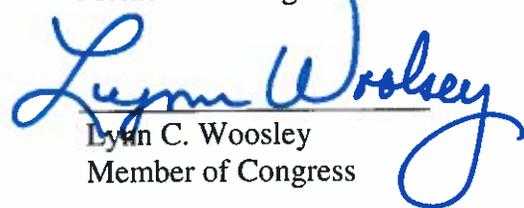
Melvin Watt  
Member of Congress



Peter Welch  
Member of Congress



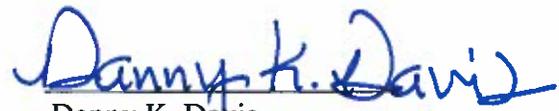
Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



Lynn C. Woosley  
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress