

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 21, 2013

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Chairman
Budget Committee, 207 Cannon
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairman
Budget Committee, 624 Dirksen
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
Ranking Member
Budget Committee, B-71 Cannon
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Ranking Member
Budget Committee, 624 Dirksen
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Ryan, Chairman Murray, Ranking Member Van Hollen and Ranking Member Sessions:

As we begin to recover from the first government shutdown in 17 years and as you continue to conference on a budget for fiscal year 2014, we write to urge you to consider the sacrifices already made by our dedicated federal employees and to take proposals to further reduce their pay and benefits off the negotiating table.

Over the past three years, our hardworking middle-class federal workers have suffered through relentless attacks on their pay and benefits and have contributed more than their fair share towards helping reduce the federal budget deficit. They have endured:

- a 3-year pay freeze reducing their pay by nearly \$100 billion over 10 years;
- a drastic reduction in their retirement benefits (new hires); and
- sequester-imposed furloughs.

The recent 16-day government shutdown caused additional hardship for federal employees. Nearly 3,000 more federal workers made “financial hardship” withdrawals from their Thrift Savings Plans during the lockout as compared to October of last year. Those employees who made the withdrawals are not allowed to contribute to their accounts for six months and also will lose their agency’s matching contributions for that time period. The emotional stress and financial difficulties that our public servants have undergone as a result of the endless assaults and manufactured crises are beyond measure.

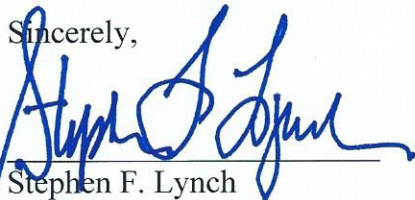
These men and women of our civil service provide vital services to the American people. They are the doctors and nurses who care for our wounded veterans, our transportation security personnel who ensure safe travel for millions of Americans, the inspectors who safeguard our food and water supplies, the customs and border patrol agents who protect our borders, the Nobel-prize winning scientists who research life-saving cures for diseases, and public servants who make sure our seniors and most vulnerable in our society receive the benefits they need.

Our public servants have sacrificed enough and we ask that you take this into consideration in your discussions as you search for a path forward on the budget. The budget should not be about cutting the pay and retirement and healthcare benefits of middle-income workers. We urge the budget conferees instead to find common ground based on creating jobs and investing in our nation's education, research, and infrastructure for the benefit of all Americans.

We hope that the budget conference committee will be able to reach agreement and look forward to evaluating a bipartisan spending plan that will fund the government through at least the current fiscal year and prevent another government shutdown.

Thank you for your consideration.

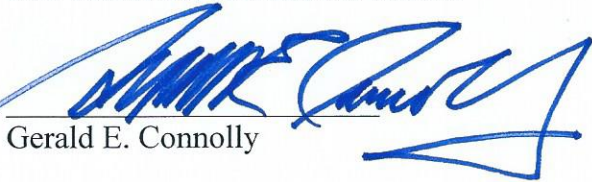
Sincerely,



Stephen F. Lynch
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Federal Workforce,
U.S. Postal Service and the Census



Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and
Government Reform



Gerald E. Connolly



Eleanor Holmes Norton



James P. Moran



Donna F. Edwards



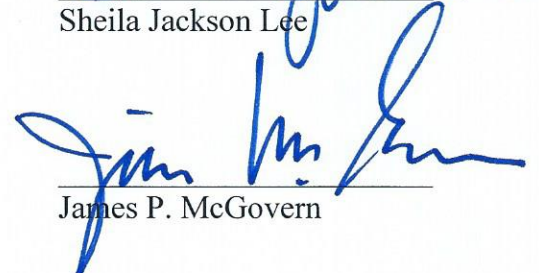
Peter DeFazio



Sheila Jackson Lee



Earl Blumenauer



James P. McGovern

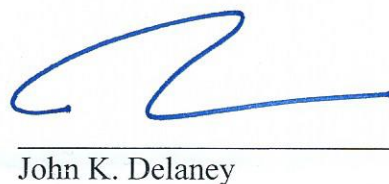

Barbara J. Lee

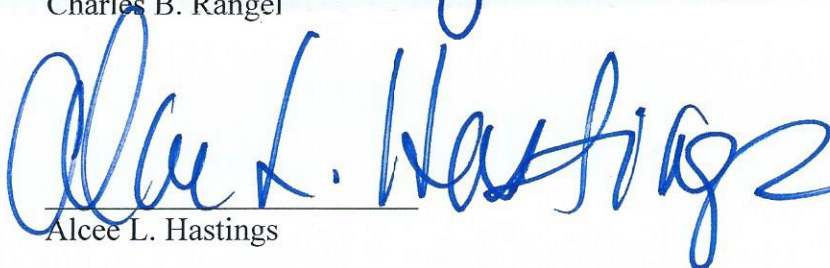

Marcia L. Fudge

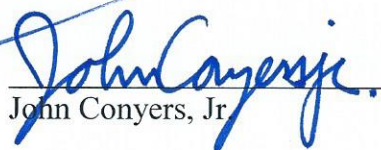

Cheri Bustos

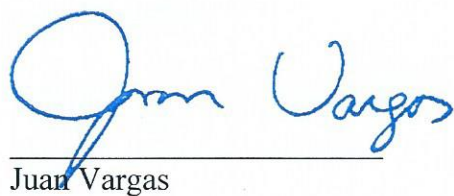

Carol Shea-Porter


Charles B. Rangel


John K. Delaney

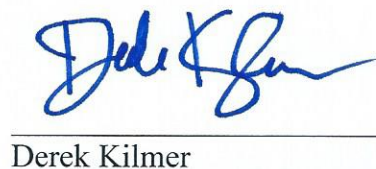

Alcee L. Hastings


John Conyers, Jr.


Juan Vargas

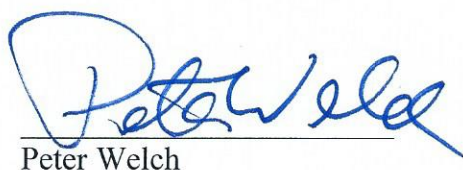

Michelle Lujan Grisham

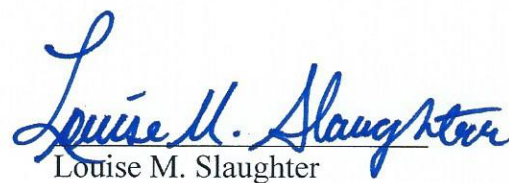

Michael E. Capuano


Derek Kilmer


Madeleine Z. Bordallo

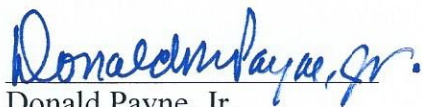

Chellie Pingree


Peter Welch


Louise M. Slaughter



Mark Pocan



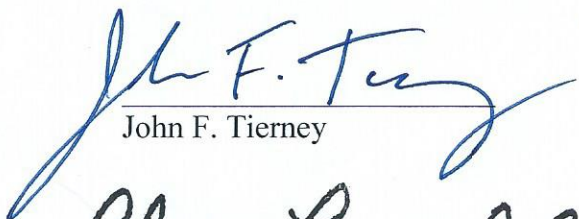
Donald Payne, Jr.



Keith Ellison



Eric Swalwell



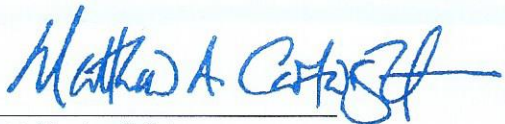
John F. Tierney



Alan Lowenthal



William R. Keating



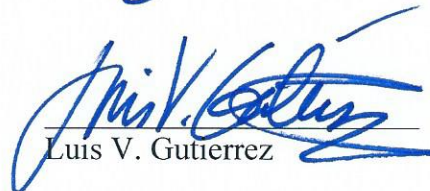
Matt Cartwright



Alan Grayson



Elizabeth H. Esty



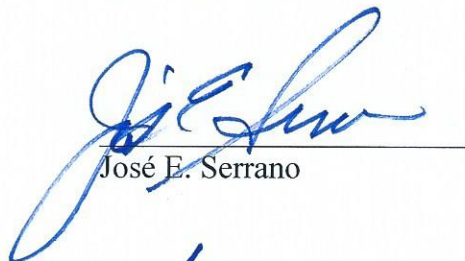
Luis V. Gutierrez



David N. Cicilline



Dan Kildee



José E. Serrano



Gregory W. Meeks