

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 10, 2017

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman
Committee on Ways & Means
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Richard Neal
Ranking Member
Committee on Ways and Means
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Neal:

CC: Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi:

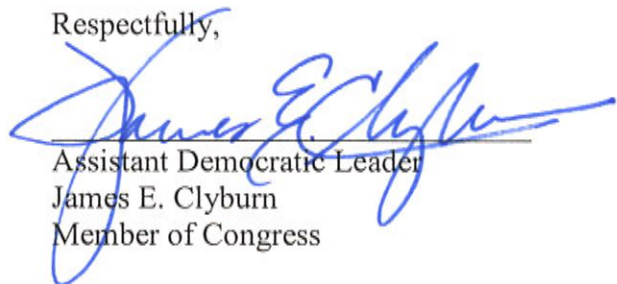
As Congress debates comprehensive tax reform, we urge you to oppose proposals that could politicize charitable nonprofit and philanthropic organizations. Specifically, we ask you to protect current federal tax provisions that prohibit tax-exempt organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code from endorsing, opposing, or contributing to political candidates. This longstanding protection, better known as the Johnson Amendment, has served as an important legal precedent separating charitable organizations from electoral politics.

Since 1954, the Johnson Amendment has ensured that tax-exempt organizations, including charitable nonprofits, houses of worship, and foundations do not endorse or oppose political candidates. It protects the right of these organizations to discuss political and social issues while, at the same time, ensuring they are not pressured by political candidates, campaigns, and donors to take a side in divisive partisan elections. It is widely supported by religious organizations and denominations, faith leaders, secular nonprofits, and the overwhelming majority of Americans. In fact, in August 2017, more than 4,000 faith leaders sent a letter to all Members of Congress strongly opposing any efforts to weaken or repeal the Johnson Amendment. Similarly, in September, more than 5,500 organizations from all 50 states wrote each of us expressing opposition to any changes to the Johnson Amendment.

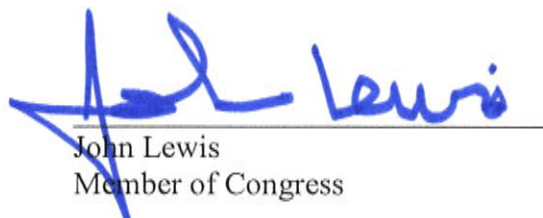
This policy has successfully shielded our nation's charitable community against the rancor of partisan politics and allowed them to freely address humanitarian, social, and community-specific problems in a nonpartisan manner. Americans do not want our houses of worship, charitable nonprofits, and foundations to become points of leverage for partisan politics. Nor do they want tax-exempt, charitable contributions to be funneled into political campaigns.

Therefore, we strongly urge you to ensure that any tax reform package retains the Johnson Amendment without modification. Thank you for your consideration.

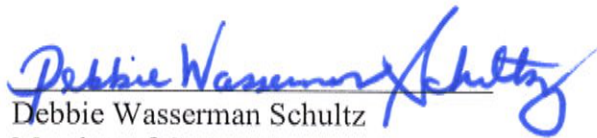
Respectfully,



Assistant Democratic Leader
James E. Clyburn
Member of Congress



John Lewis
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress



Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



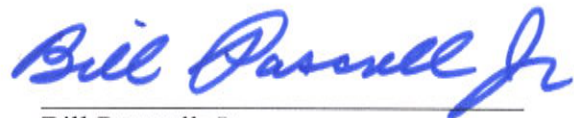
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



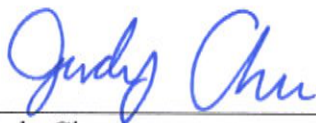
Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



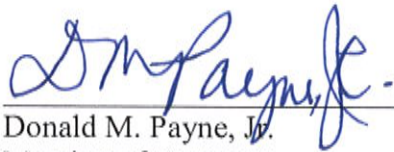
Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



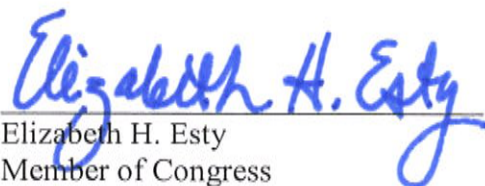
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress




Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



Michelle Lujan Grisham
Member of Congress



Elizabeth H. Esty
Member of Congress



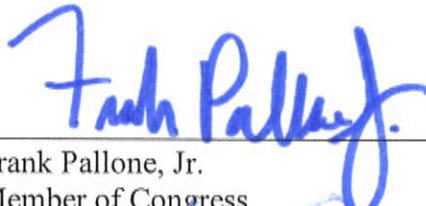
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



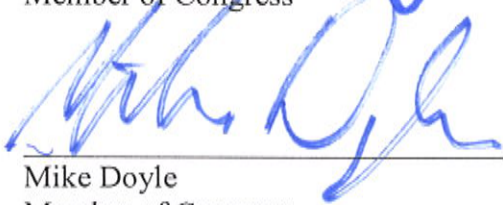
Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



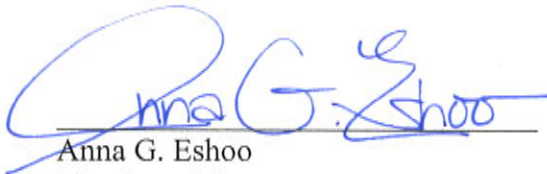
Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



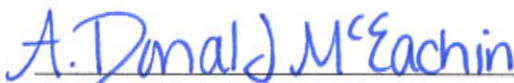
Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle
Member of Congress



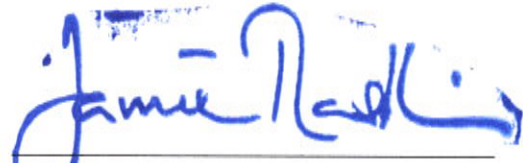
Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



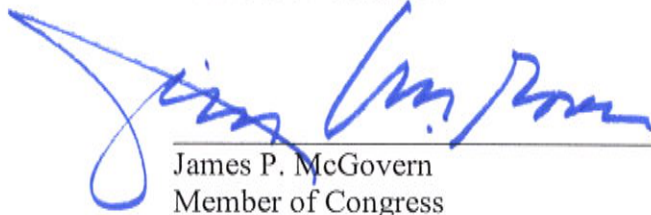
A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



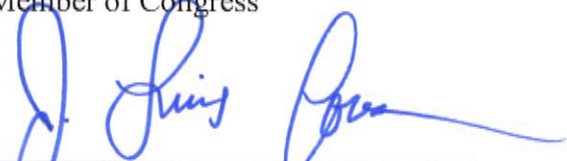
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



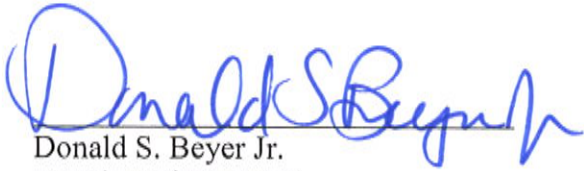
Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



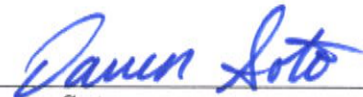
Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



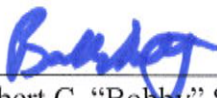
Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress



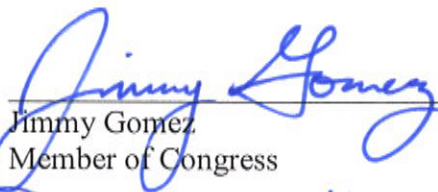
Ami Bera
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



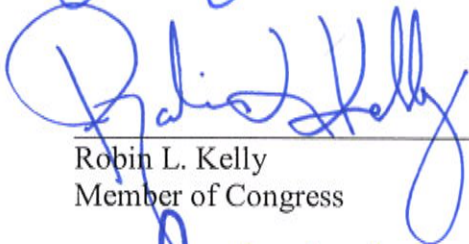
Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress



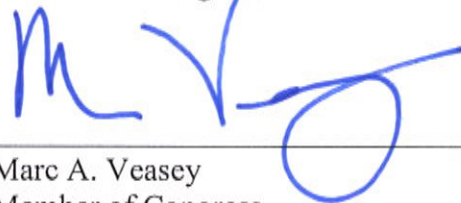
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



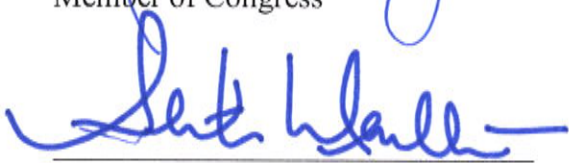
Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress

Carol Shea-Porter

Carol Shea-Porter
Member of Congress

Lucille Roybal-Allard

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress

Bonnie Watson Coleman

Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress

David Price

David E. Price
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

Jerrold Nadler

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

Adriano Espaillat

Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress

Diana DeGette

Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

Norma J. Torres

Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

André Carson

André Carson
Member of Congress

Robert A. Brady

Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Jim Costa

Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Sheila Jackson Lee

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



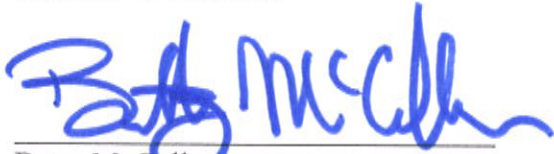
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



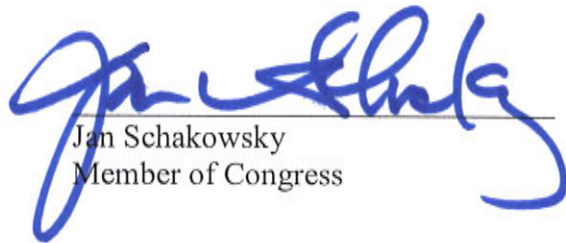
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress




Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Adam Schiff
Member of Congress



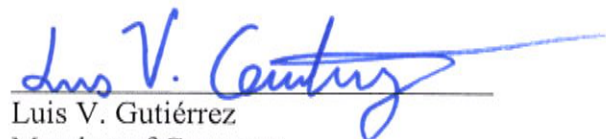
Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



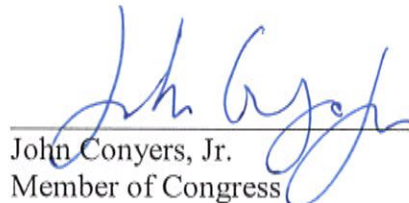
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



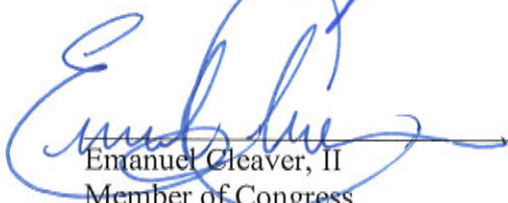
Luis V. Gutiérrez
Member of Congress



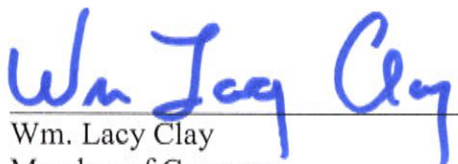
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



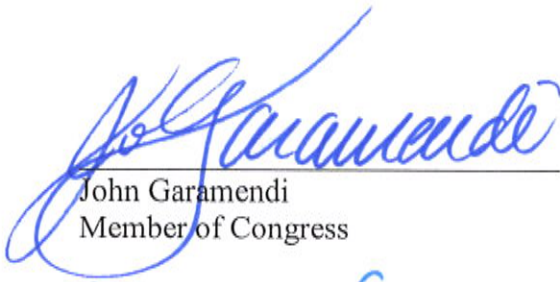
John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress



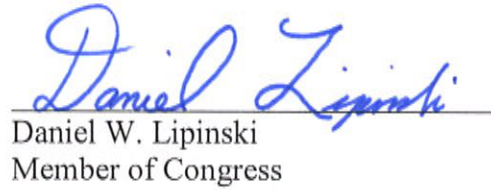
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Daniel W. Lipinski
Member of Congress



John Sarbanes
Member of Congress



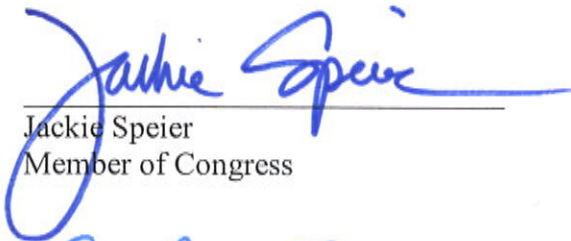
Al Green
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



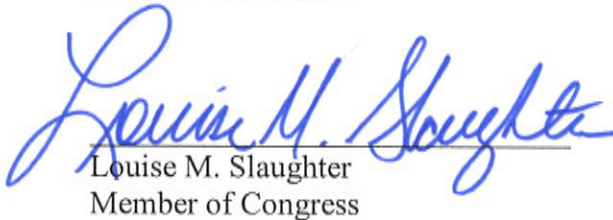
Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress



Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress



Gene Green
Member of Congress