

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 7, 2011

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

This year marks the 50th Anniversary of the Peace Corps and we urge you to issue a Presidential Proclamation recognizing this significant milestone. As President, you have prioritized the importance of public service and development and no entity better embodies these two qualities than the Peace Corps. In the past five decades, over 200,000 Americans from all 50 states have served in developing countries doing, as you yourself said, ‘critical work.’ As March is Peace Corps Month, a Presidential Proclamation is a highly appropriate way to honor 50 years of Volunteer service and inspire future generations of Americans to serve.

Peace Corps is one of America’s enduring expressions of friendship and goodwill abroad. In 1961, President Kennedy called on Americans to serve their country in the cause of peace. Within five years, more than 15,000 Volunteers were serving in 44 developing countries, demonstrating to the international community the American values of peace, prosperity, and opportunity that had been eclipsed by the Cold War. Over the past 50 years, through war and conflict, Peace Corps Volunteers have shown the world a hopeful, uplifting side of America that reflects our fundamental ideals of service, tolerance, and grassroots development.

Dollar for dollar, Peace Corps Volunteers are one of the Federal Government’s most effective agents of both diplomacy and development. In your Policy Directive on Global Development, you identified the need to elevate development as a core pillar of American diplomacy. Since Peace Corps’ inception, Volunteers have worked shoulder-to-shoulder with communities in 139 developing countries, including key priority areas for the United States. Forty-six Peace Corps sites help administer the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and nearly 25% of Volunteers serve in more than a third of all countries considered Muslim. While Peace Corps Volunteers take on a diverse array of critical projects, they are linked by their commitment to lift up local capacity and promote sustainable development outcomes.

With such a laudable track record, it is not surprising that Peace Corps receives high praise from world leaders and presidents. Niger President Mamadou Tandja stated that, “The Peace Corps is a model of development assistance,” and former World Bank President A.W. Clausen said, “We at the World Bank have come across [Peace Corps

Volunteers] in every corner of the developing world and see what fine work their dedication and drive achieve." More than 20 countries have requested Peace Corps Volunteers and still other countries have requested an increase in the number of Volunteers. Now more than ever, as the United States confronts harsh scrutiny from the international community, we must honor this program that has become a beacon of American idealism and goodwill.

The Peace Corps taps into the best of what America has to offer the world. We urge you to issue a Presidential Proclamation to recognize 50 years of incredible service and usher in the next generation of Volunteers to serve our great nation in the name of peace.

Sincerely,



SAM FARR
Member of Congress
Peace Corps Volunteer, Colombia, 1964-66



TOM PETRI
Member of Congress
Peace Corps Volunteer, Somalia, 1966-67



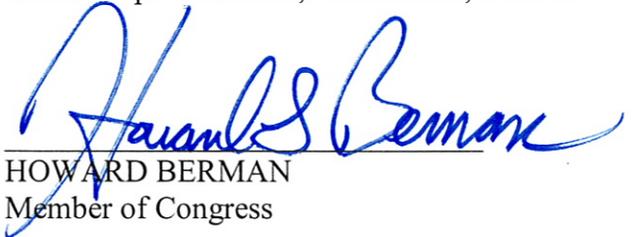
JOHN GARAMENDI
Member of Congress
Peace Corps Volunteer, Ethiopia, 1966-68



MIKE HONDA
Member of Congress
Peace Corps Volunteer, El Salvador, 1965-67



TAMMY BALDWIN
Member of Congress



HOWARD BERMAN
Member of Congress



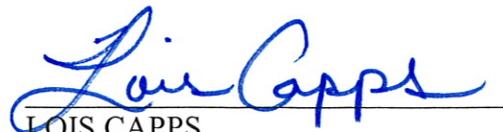
EARL BLUMENAUER
Member of Congress



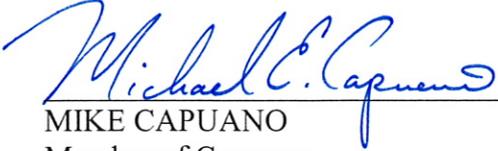
MADELEINE BORDALLO
Member of Congress



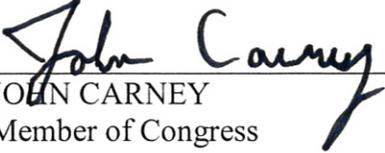
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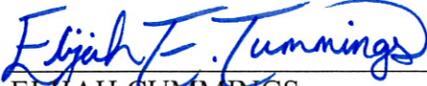

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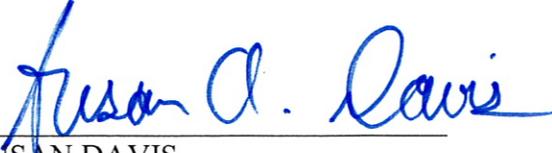

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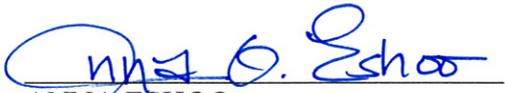
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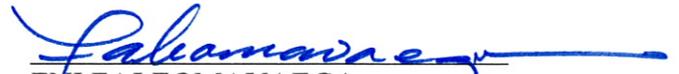
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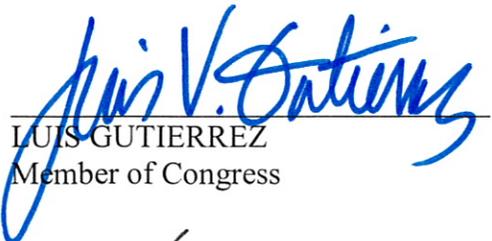
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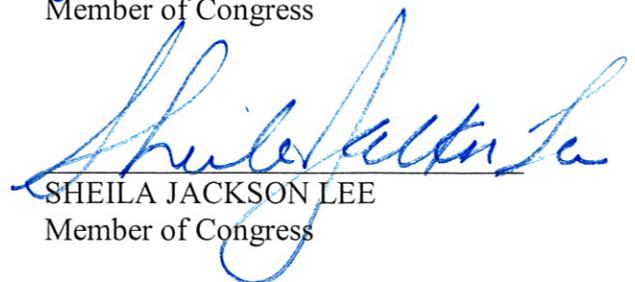
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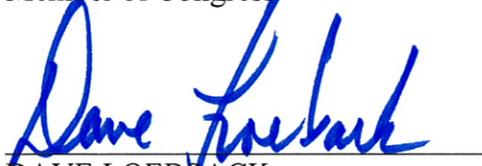
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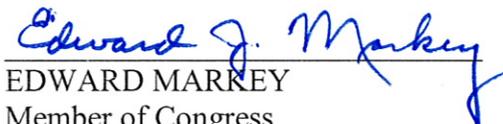
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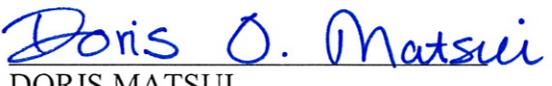
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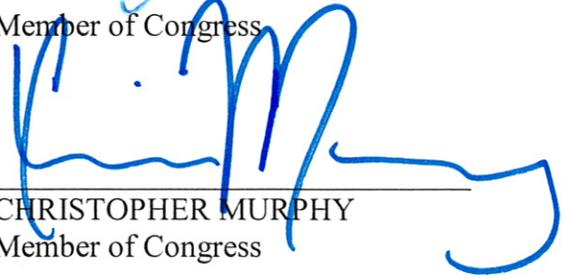
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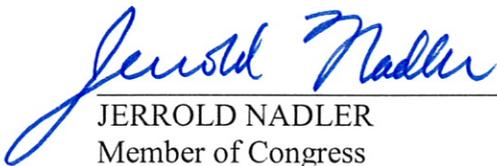
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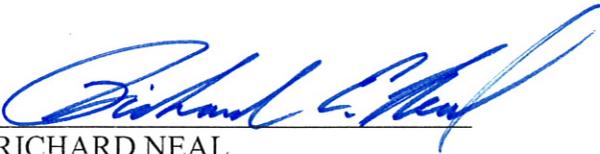
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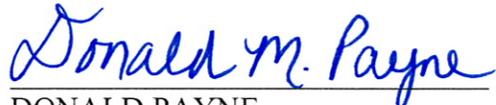
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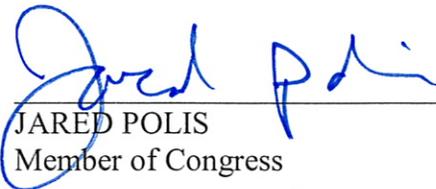
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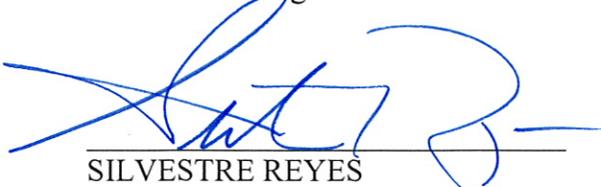
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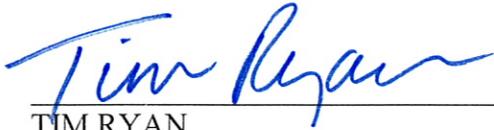
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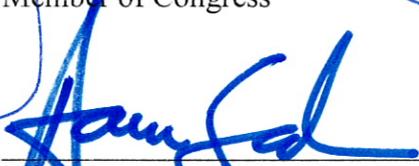
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ADAM SCHIFF
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AARON SCHOCK
Member of Congress



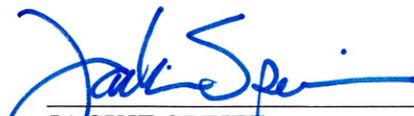
ALLYSON SCHWARTZ
Member of Congress



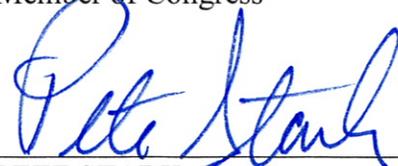
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JACKIE SPEIER
Member of Congress



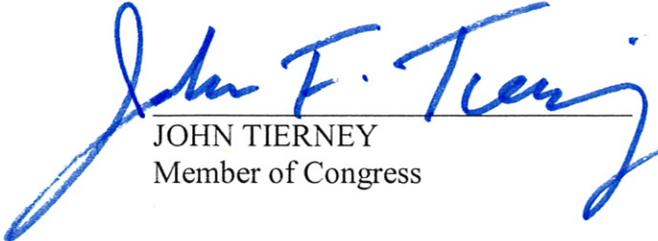
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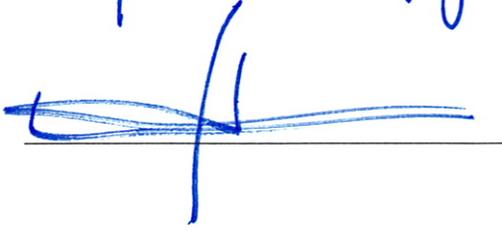
Edwards

Al Green

Kit DeZure

Mary L. Aepferman

Samuel D. G. Coyle Jr.



Kathy Castor



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6. CHELLIE PINGREE, Member of Congress
7. DAVID REICHERT, Member of Congress
8. KAREN BASS, Member of Congress
9. BENNIE THOMPSON, Member of Congress
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19. KATHY CASTOR, Member of Congress
20. COLLEEN HANABUSA, Member of Congress
21. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Member of Congress