

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 6, 2012

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Chairman
U.S. House Committee on the Budget
207 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen
Ranking Member
U.S. House Committee on the Budget
B-71 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Ryan and Ranking Member Van Hollen:

We strongly urge the U.S. House Budget Committee to include report language recommending that no funding be appropriated towards promulgating, implementing or enforcing any rule or guidance which forces entities to violate their religious charter or doctrinal beliefs or employees' individual consciences by offering to their employees health insurance coverage of contraceptives, sterilizations and abortifacients.

We find ourselves in uncharted territory. Never before has the Federal Government mandated that charities, hospitals, schools or other entities violate their own moral or religious beliefs. Such an unprecedented and unconstitutional overreach by President Obama and his Administration requires this Congress to take every step to combat this clear violation of the First Amendment.

Thomas Jefferson stated, "No provision in our Constitution ought to be dearer to man than that which protects the rights of conscience against the enterprises of the civil authority." As we find these words to still ring true today, we can think of few proposals more deserving of inclusion in the Budget Report than language condemning the Administration's efforts to infringe upon the religious freedoms and conscience rights of countless citizens.

We feel such a rebuke of the Administration's contraception mandate dovetails very well with the Report accompanying H.Con.Res 34, which states, "Ultimately, a budget is more than a series of numbers; it also serves as an expression of Congress' principles, vision and philosophy of governing."

As Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Budget Committee, you face a daunting feat in leading Congress in the important task of setting funding levels for the Federal Government. As such, we urge you to recall the faith of our Founding Fathers and preserve our fundamental religious freedoms as you draft the FY 2013 report and ensure this document includes a strong statement against requiring organizations to cover practices and procedures to which they are morally opposed.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration of this request and we look forward to working with you on this matter.

Respectfully,



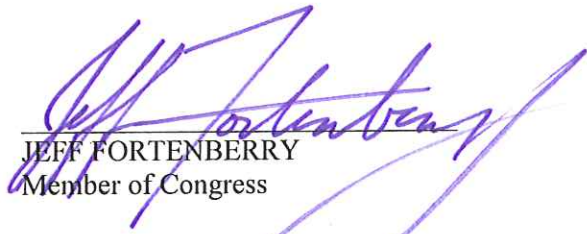
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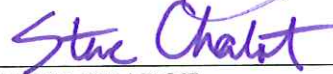
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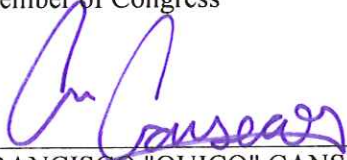
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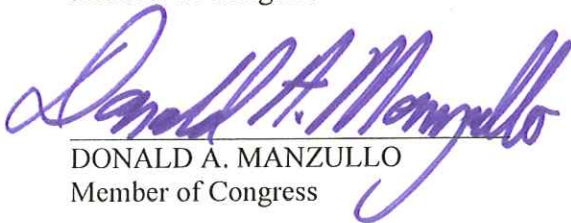
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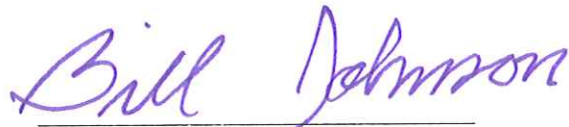
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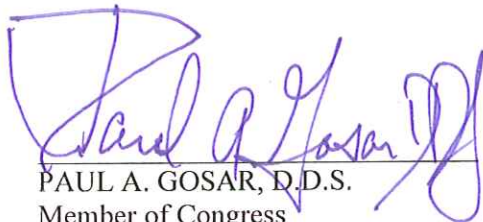
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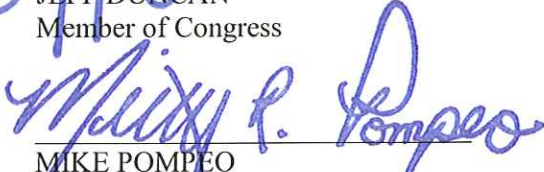
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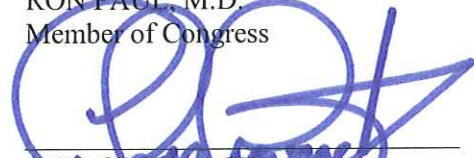

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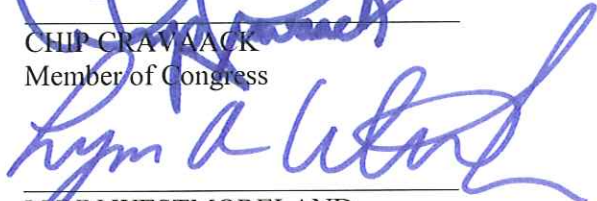

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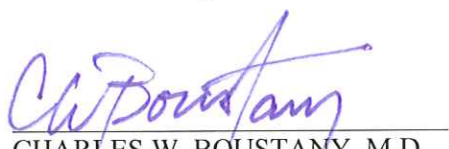

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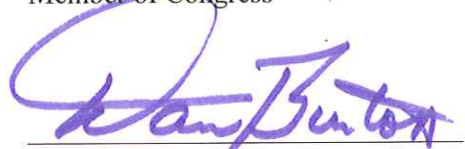

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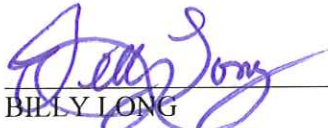
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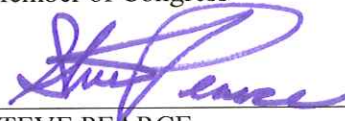
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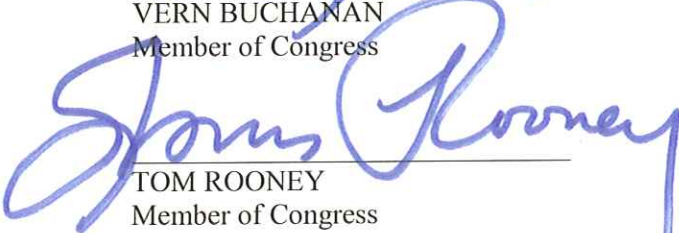
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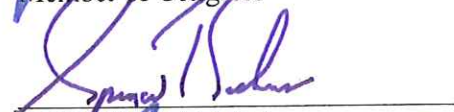
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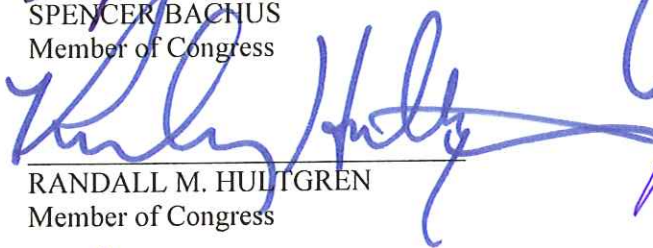
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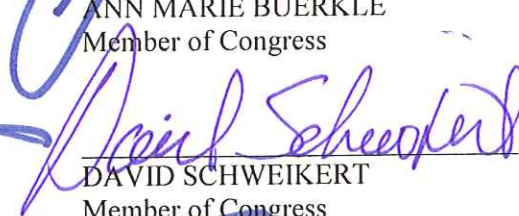
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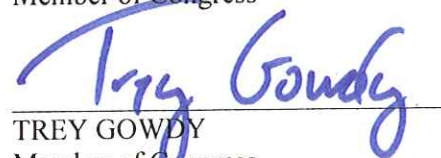
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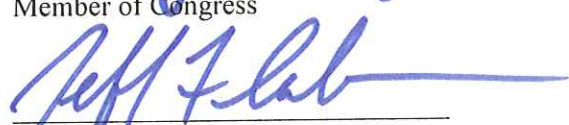
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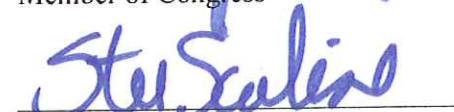
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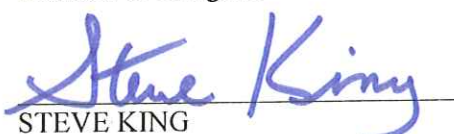
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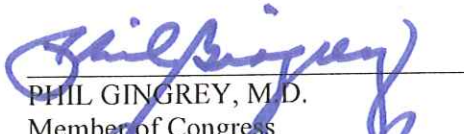
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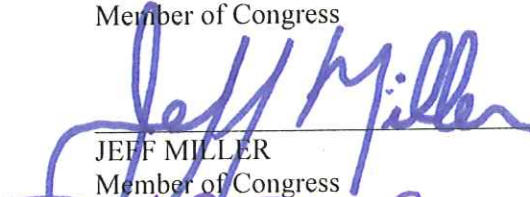
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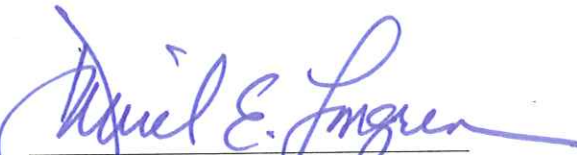
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