

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 6, 2012

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We are writing to inform you that we will oppose including Social Security cuts for future or current beneficiaries in any deficit reduction package.

Under long-standing federal law, Social Security is not part of the federal budget and cannot contribute to the federal deficit. This reflects Social Security's structure as an independent, self-financed insurance program, in which worker contributions, not general taxes, finance benefits. In our view, it is essential that Social Security's status as a separate entity be fully maintained.

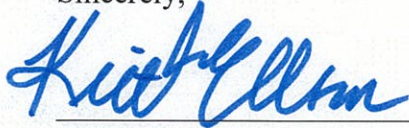
Contrary to some claims, Social Security is not the cause of our nation's deficit problem. Not only does the program operate independently, but it is prohibited from borrowing. Social Security must pay all benefits from its own trust fund. If there are insufficient funds to pay out full benefits, benefits are automatically reduced to the level supported by the program's own revenues. Social Security cannot drive up the deficit by tapping general revenues to pay benefits. Additionally, it is important to note that over its lifetime, Social Security has collected and earned \$15.5 trillion and only paid out \$12.9 trillion in benefits.

Even though Social Security operates in a fiscally responsible manner, some still advocate deep benefit cuts and seem convinced that Social Security hands out lavish welfare checks. But Social Security is not welfare. Seniors earned their benefits by working hard and paying into the system. Meanwhile, the average monthly Social Security benefit for seniors is only about \$1,200, quite low by international standards.

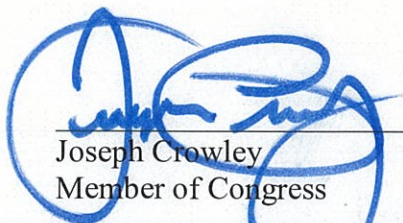
For all these reasons, we believe it would be a serious mistake to cut Social Security benefits for current or future beneficiaries as part of a deficit reduction package. To be sure, Social Security has its own long-term challenges that will need to be addressed in the decades ahead. But the budget and Social Security are separate and should be considered separately.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

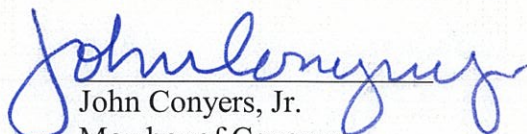
Sincerely,



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



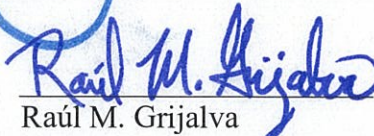
Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



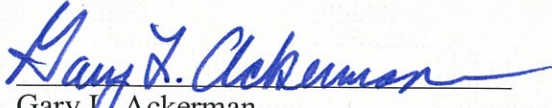
John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress



Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



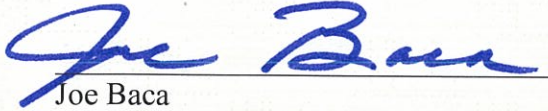
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



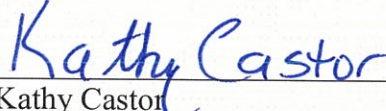
Gary L. Ackerman
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Joe Baca
Member of Congress



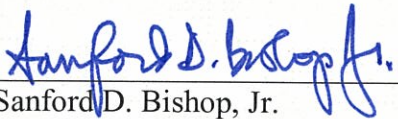
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



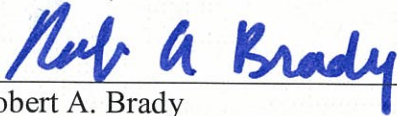
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



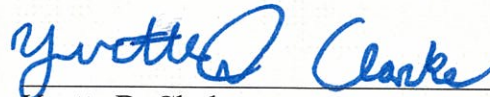
Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress




Hansen Clarke
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress



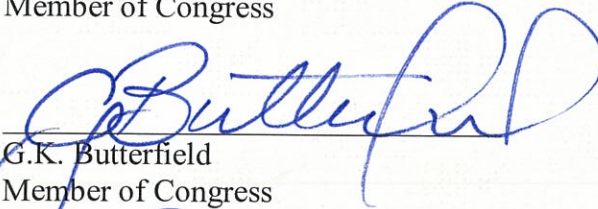
Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



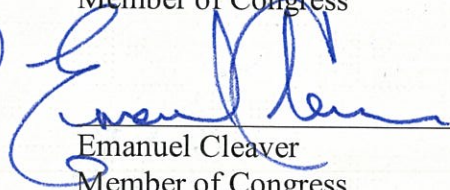
Corrine Brown
Member of Congress



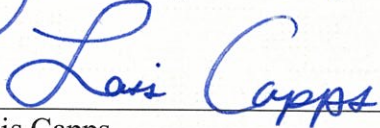
William Lacy Clay
Member of Congress




G.K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress



Lois Capps
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

Jerry R. Costello

Jerry R. Costello
Member of Congress

Anna G. Eshoo

Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress

MSA

Mark S. Critz
Member of Congress

Eni F. H. Faleomavaega

Eni F. H. Faleomavaega
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings

Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress

Chaka Fattah

Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress

David Alan Curson

David Alan Curson
Member of Congress

Barney Frank

Barney Frank
Member of Congress

Danny K. Davis

Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress

Marcia L. Fudge

Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress

Peter A. DeFazio

Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress

John Garamendi

John Garamendi
Member of Congress

Rosa L. DeLauro

Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress

Gene Green

Gene Green
Member of Congress

Theodore E. Deutch

Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress

Luis V. Gutierrez

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Member of Congress

Donna F. Edwards

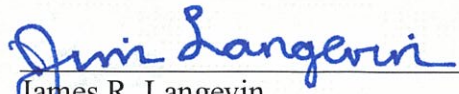
Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress

Colleen W. Hanabusa

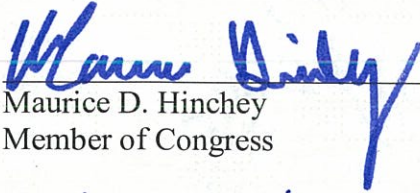
Colleen W. Hanabusa
Member of Congress



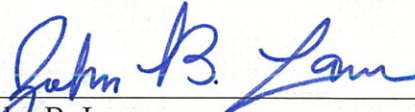
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



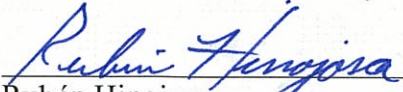
James R. Langevin
Member of Congress



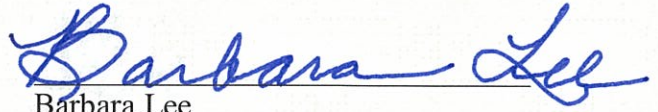
Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress




Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



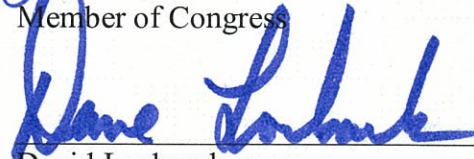
Rush Holt
Member of Congress



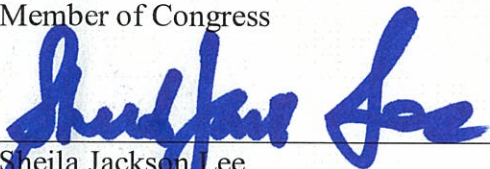
John Lewis
Member of Congress



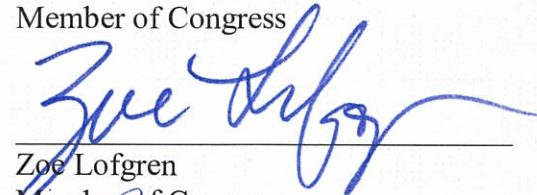
Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress



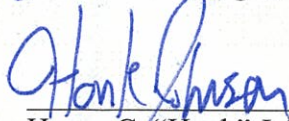
David Loebsack
Member of Congress



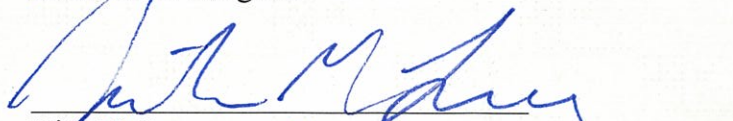
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



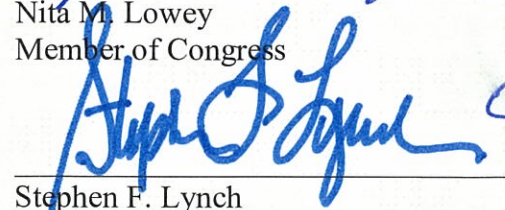
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson
Member of Congress



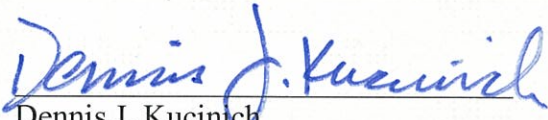
Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress



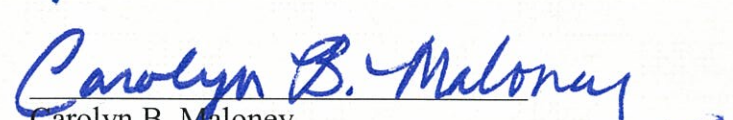
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



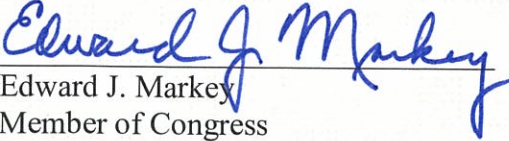
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress

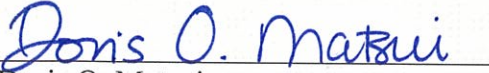


Dennis J. Kucinich
Member of Congress



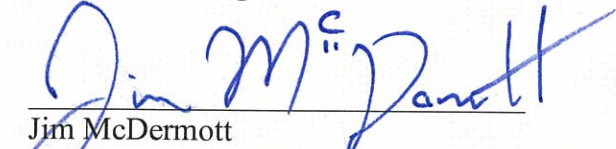
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

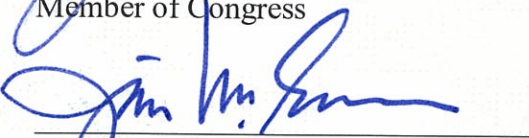

Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress

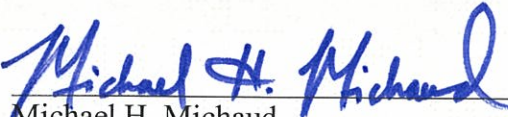

Doris O. Matsui
Member of Congress

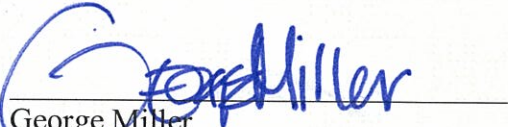

Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

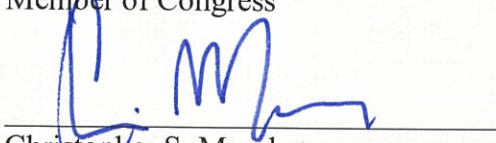

James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Michael H. Michaud
Member of Congress

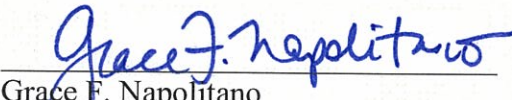

George Miller
Member of Congress

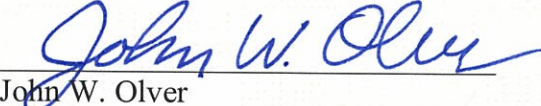

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

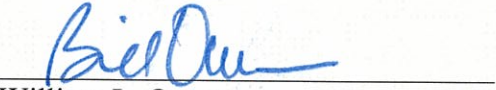

James P. Moran
Member of Congress

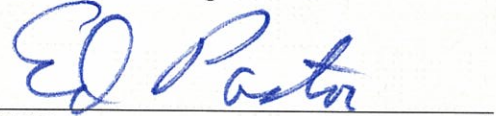

Christopher S. Murphy
Member of Congress

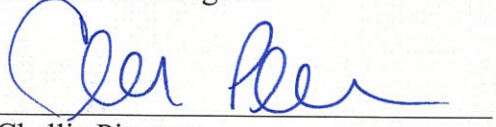

Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress

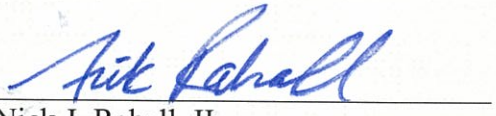

Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress

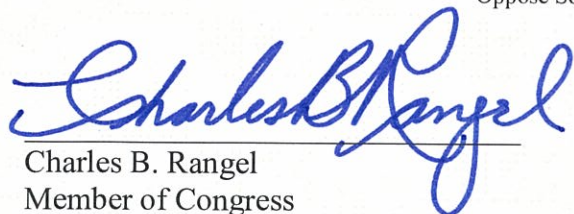

John W. Olver
Member of Congress

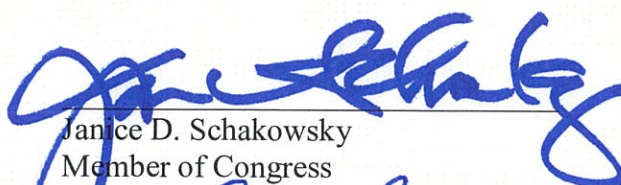

William L. Owens
Member of Congress

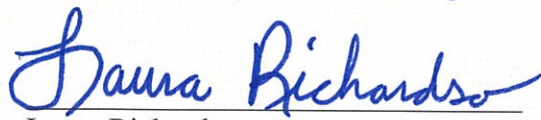

Ed Pastor
Member of Congress

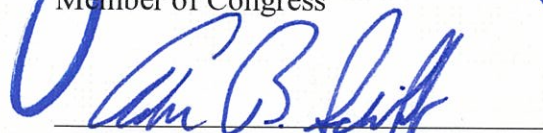

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress


Nick J. Rahall, II
Member of Congress


Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress


Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress

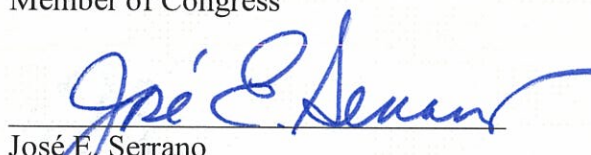

Laura Richardson
Member of Congress

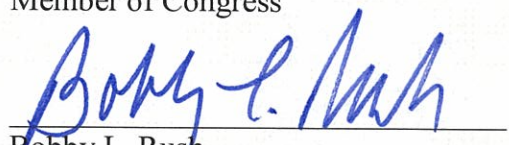

Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress

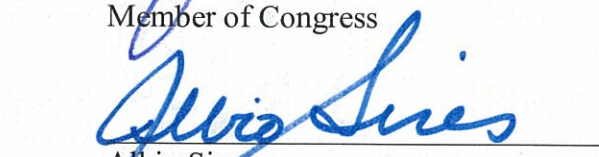

Cedric L. Richmond
Member of Congress

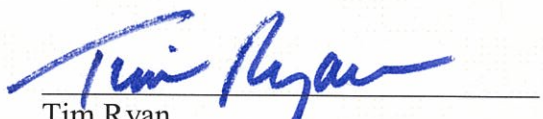

Robert C. Scott
Member of Congress

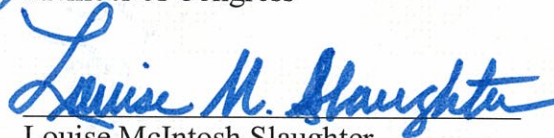

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Member of Congress



José E. Serrano
Member of Congress

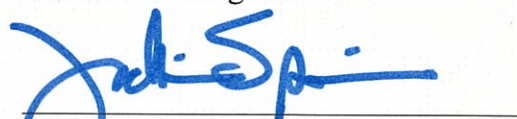

Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress


Tim Ryan
Member of Congress

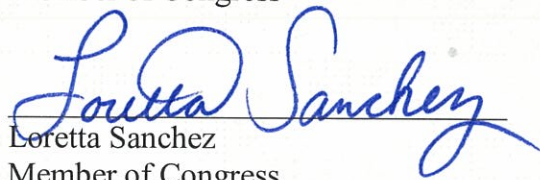

Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Member of Congress

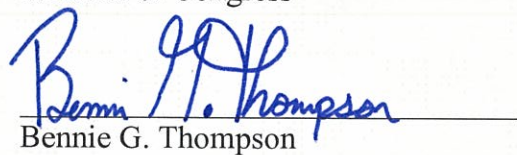

Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress

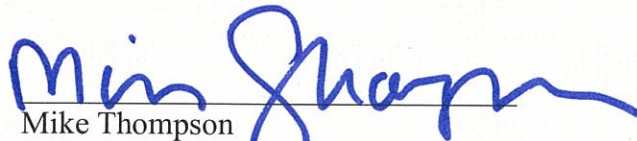

Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

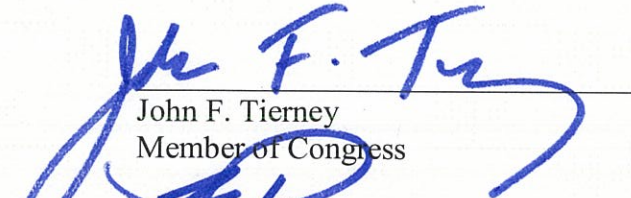

Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

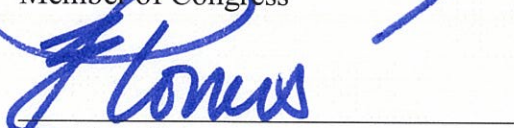

Fortney Pete Stark
Member of Congress

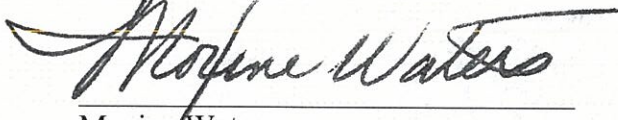

Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress

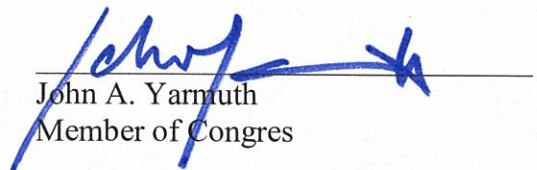

John F. Tierney
Member of Congress


Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress


Maxine Waters
Member of Congress


Peter Welch
Member of Congress


Lynn C. Woolsey
Member of Congress


John A. Yarmuth
Member of Congress