

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3214

May 5, 2016

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We share your belief that every American worker deserves the opportunity to retire with dignity, and applaud the actions of your Administration to work towards this goal. We also recognize more must be done to cover the millions of American workers who have no access to employer-sponsored retirement savings plans and urge you to take executive action to require Federal contractors to auto-enroll all of their employees in retirement plans.

As you know, there is a looming retirement security crisis in our country. Today, nearly half of all workers do not have access to a retirement savings plan at work, including over three-quarters of workers at firms with fewer than 50 employees and more than two-thirds of part-time workers. In addition, independent contractors are not eligible to participate in employer-sponsored plans, and temporary employees are often prohibited from participation. Workers without access to a plan at work rarely save for retirement as a result, with fewer than 10 percent of these workers contributing to a retirement savings account on their own.

We applaud the many actions you have taken under your authority to bring about needed change for real people every day. You have acted to protect LGBT workers from discrimination, with an order prohibiting Federal contractors from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. You have acted to give millions of workers a pay increase, by raising the Federal minimum wage for all workers on Federal construction and service contracts. Now, we hope you will use your pen to help provide retirement security to workers in Federal contract jobs.

Your Administration has advanced a number of excellent ideas to promote retirement savings. For example, the Treasury Department recently unveiled the "my Retirement Account," or *myRA*, which serves as a starter retirement plan to allow workers without access to an employer-sponsored retirement plan to begin saving for their future. Additionally, your most recent budget continues to reflect the core value of expanding workplace retirement benefits to all workers through automatic IRA enrollment and an expansion of coverage to part-time workers. Auto-enrollment can drastically help increase the nation's anemic savings rate, as it has been shown to increase participation in a 401(k) plan to 90 percent or more of employees.

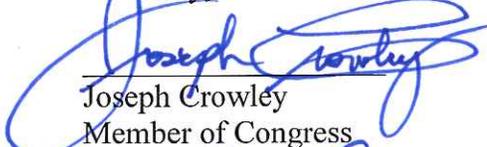
Additionally, your Administration has issued proposed rules and guidance facilitating state efforts to create their own retirement savings programs. For example, over the past year, Illinois and Oregon have enacted their own state-level auto-IRAs, while Washington and New Jersey have enacted retirement marketplaces connecting small businesses and their employees to existing investment vehicles. Approximately 20 more states are considering similar measures or an alternative state-based 401(k). We appreciate the determination of your Administration to actively promote retirement savings and address the savings gap now, not when it is too late. We believe having Federal contractors auto-enroll all of their employees in retirement plans would further help remedy some of our nation's savings issues, and it could become a reality if you require them to do so through executive action.

There are a number of ways this requirement could be met, such as requiring employers to enroll their workers in a company's traditional pension or 401(k) plan. Employers could at least make use of the *myRA*, which would cost employers nothing, while helping workers save for their retirement. We hope any such action would include a requirement to apply to both full- and part-time employees. Furthermore, we would encourage that a requirement be included to ensure employees are considered immediately vested in whatever plan is being offered. Workers are changing jobs with more and more frequency in our current economy, and being immediately vested in their retirement plan will enable them to have access to their funds even if they change jobs, and to be able to roll funds over into another retirement account.

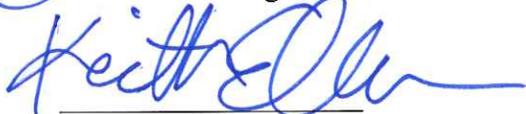
In an economy that's ever changing and as employment habits shift, we should find ways to ensure our policies continue to meet the needs of workers. These proposals provide the flexibility workers and employers need, while addressing some of the root causes that lead to a lack of savings.

Given the growing savings and retirement crisis in the country and the difference that can be made for so many workers by putting into effect your Administration's policies to provide a more secure retirement, we believe now is the time to take these kinds of actions. This issue will provide your Administration with yet one more opportunity to bend upwards the current trajectory for America's workers. Again, thank you for your leadership. We look forward to working with you to ensure all Americans can retire with more of the resources they will need.

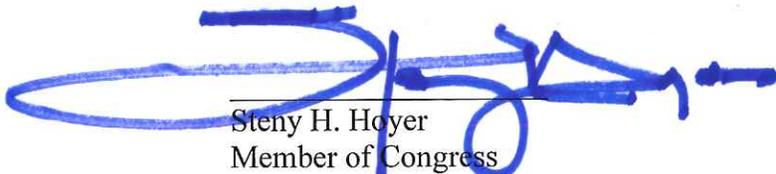
Sincerely,



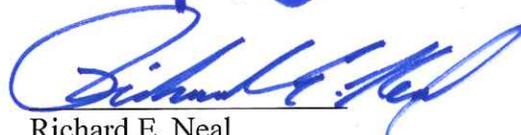
Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



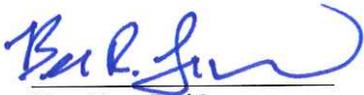
Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



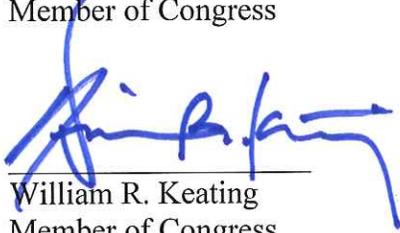
Steny H. Hoyer
Member of Congress



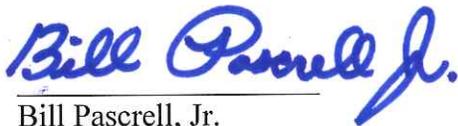
Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



Ben Ray Lujan
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



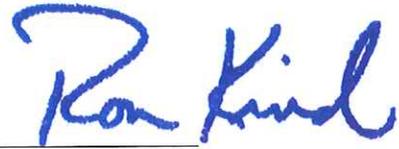
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Ted Lieu
Member of Congress



Ann M. Kuster
Member of Congress



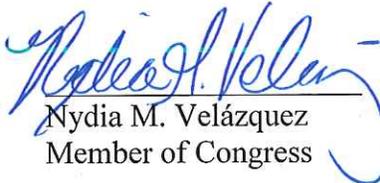
Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



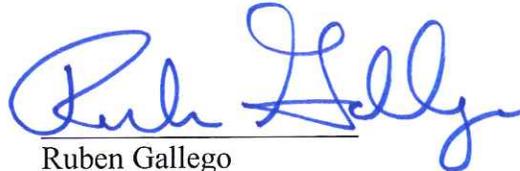
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



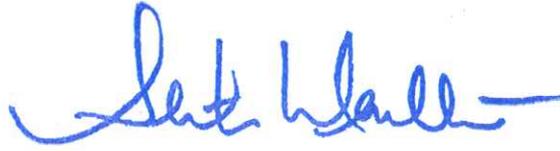
Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



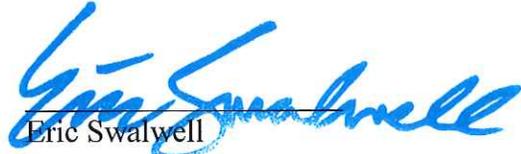
Ami Bera
Member of Congress



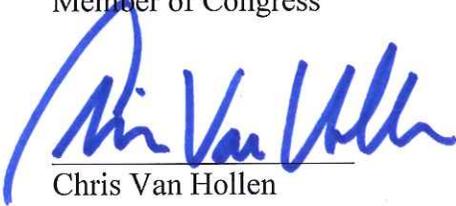
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



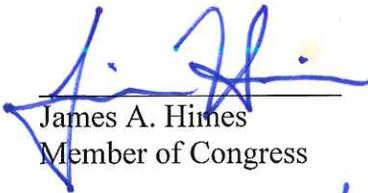
Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



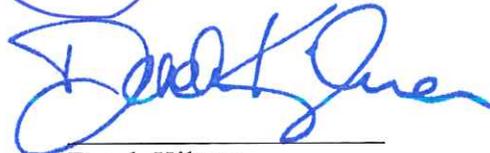
Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



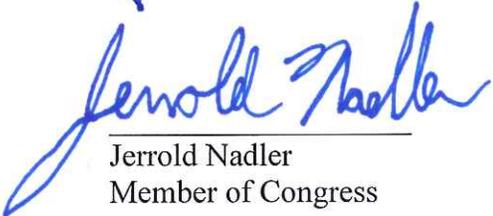
John B. Larson
Member of Congress



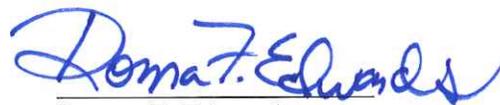
James A. Himes
Member of Congress



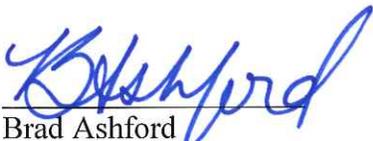
Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



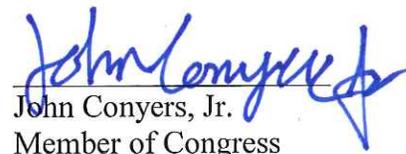
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress



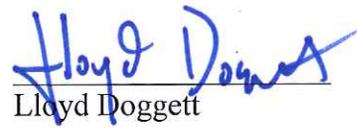
Brad Ashford
Member of Congress



John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress



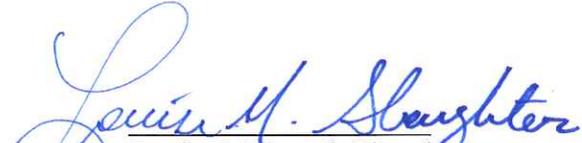
Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



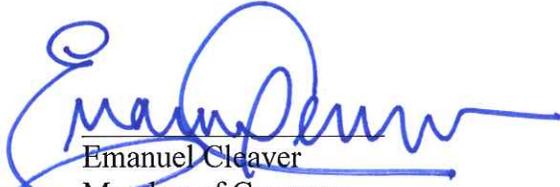
Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress

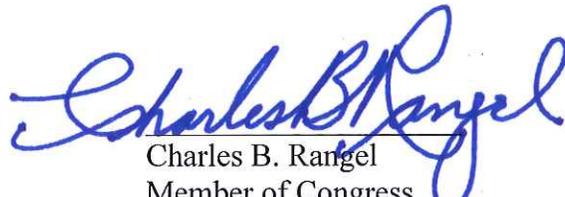

James R. Langevin
Member of Congress

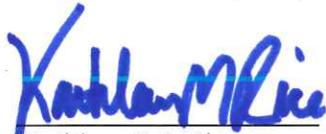

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

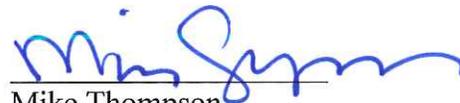

Louise McIntosh Slaughter
Member of Congress


Jared Polis
Member of Congress


Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress


Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

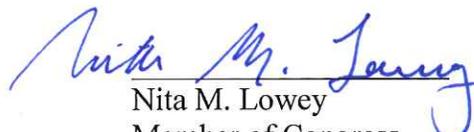

Kathleen M. Rice
Member of Congress


Mike Thompson
Member of Congress


Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

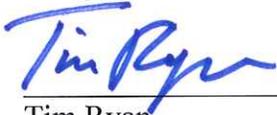

Steve Israel
Member of Congress


Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress

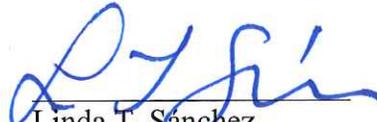

Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress


Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

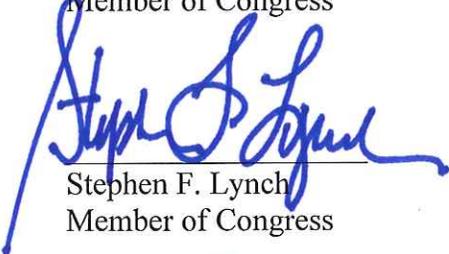

Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Tim Ryan
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sanchez
Member of Congress



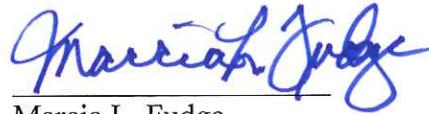
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress



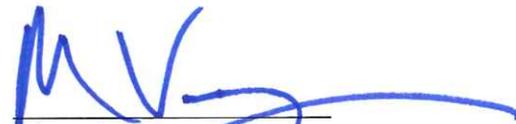
Hakeem S. Jeffries
Member of Congress



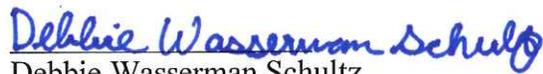
Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress



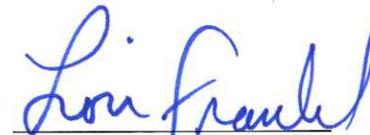
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



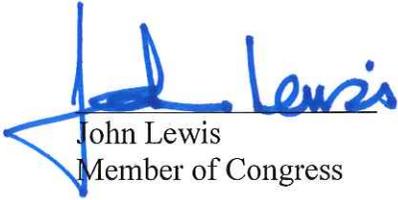
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



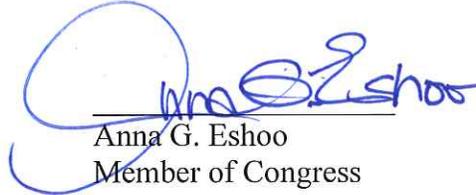
Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



John Lewis
Member of Congress



Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Raul M. Grijalva
Member of Congress