

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 26, 2009

Mr. Robert B. Zoellick  
President  
The World Bank  
1818 H Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20433

Dear President Zoellick:

We are deeply concerned about the urgent humanitarian needs of the people of Haiti and the difficulties Haiti has faced in qualifying for the cancellation of its debts. We urge you to suspend immediately all further debt service payments from Haiti and grant complete debt cancellation to this impoverished nation.

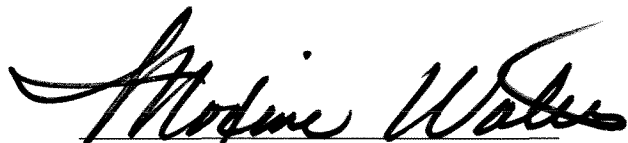
We were disappointed to learn that Haiti's progress through the HIPC (Heavily Indebted Poor Countries) Initiative has been delayed as a result of recent natural disasters, economic shocks, and political developments – together with a number of conditions from the IMF. At this time last year, it was expected that Haiti would reach the “completion point” for the HIPC program and receive complete debt cancellation in the last quarter of 2008. Now, however, Haiti's expected “completion point” date has been pushed back to as late as July of 2009. We understand that Haiti is scheduled to send approximately \$20 million to the World Bank in 2009. Clearly, this money would be better spent on basic infrastructure and poverty reduction for the Haitian people.


As you recognized when you traveled to Haiti last October, the loss of life and the destruction of infrastructure in Haiti after last year's string of hurricanes and tropical storms has been devastating. Sharp increases in food and energy prices have also led to an escalation of hunger among the poorest sectors of the population. Moreover, Haiti can expect to be severely and negatively affected by the recent downturn in the economy of the United States. Not only does the United States serve as a valuable market for Haiti's exports, Haiti is also heavily dependent on remittances from Haitians living in the United States.

Given these circumstances, we feel that the people of Haiti would be better served if the government was freed to use its limited resources to improve Haiti's democratic institutions, environmental conditions, basic infrastructure, healthcare, education, and justice system. Haiti's government has already acknowledged that the savings from debt relief would contribute significantly to its efforts towards these purposes.

We therefore urge you to grant Haiti complete debt cancellation as soon as possible. In the interim, before such cancellation takes place, we urge you to suspend immediately Haiti's debt service payments and allow the Haitian government to focus its attention on the needs of its people. We appreciate your continuing support for debt cancellation and we look forward to your response.

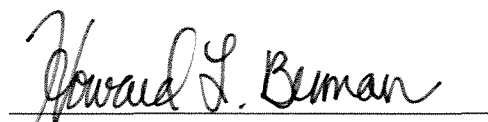
Sincerely,

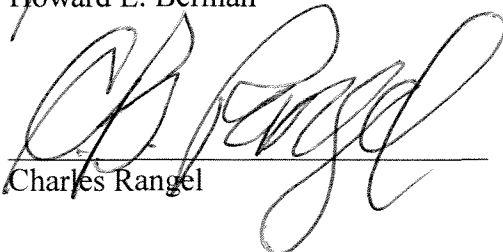
  
Maxine Waters

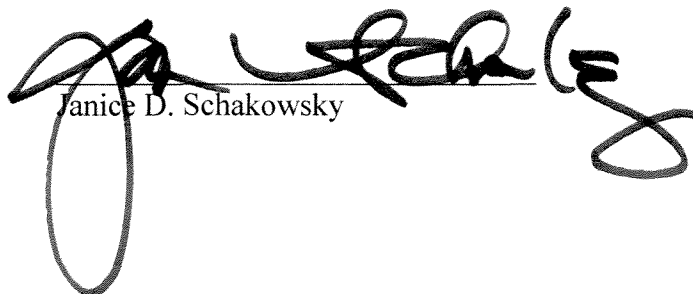
  
Barney Frank

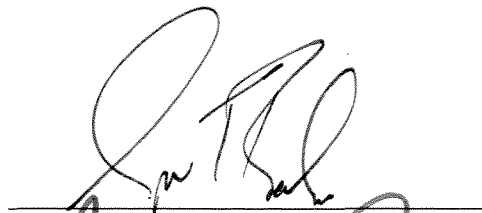
  
Alcee L. Hastings

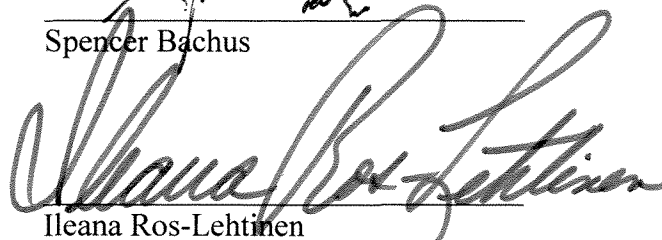
  
William Delahunt

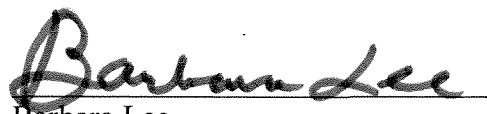
  
Howard L. Berman


  
Charles Rangel

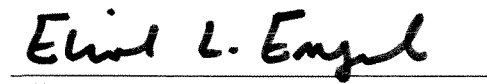
  
Janice D. Schakowsky

  
Spencer Bachus

  
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen

  
Barbara Lee

  
Donald M. Payne

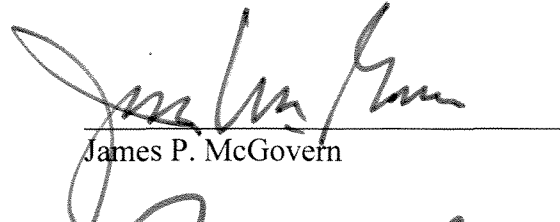
  
Eliot Engel

  
James L. Oberstar

  
Rosa DeLauro



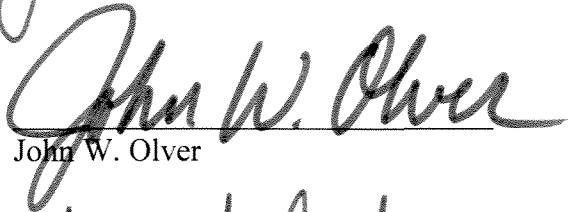
Mario Diaz-Balart



James P. McGovern



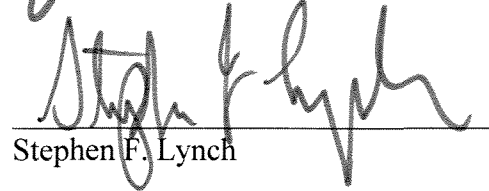
Aaron Schock



John W. Olver



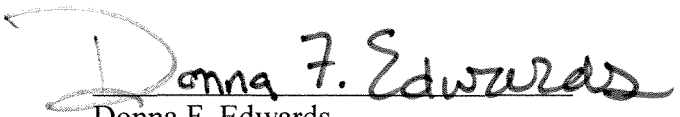
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz



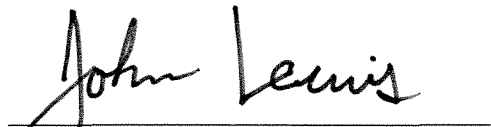
Stephen F. Lynch



Al Green



Donna F. Edwards



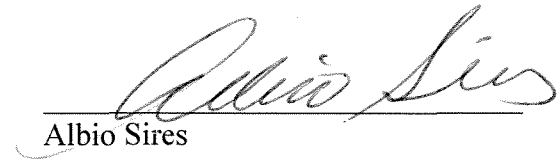
John Lewis



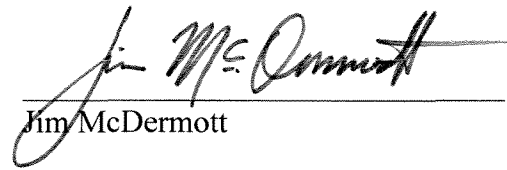
Michael Doyle



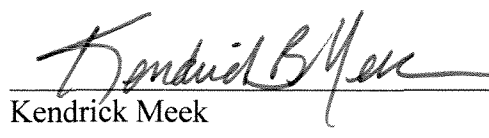
Andre Carson



Albio Sires



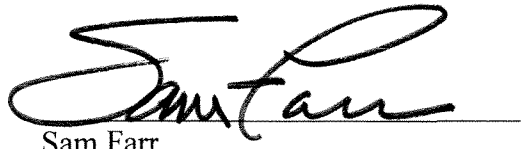
Jim McDermott



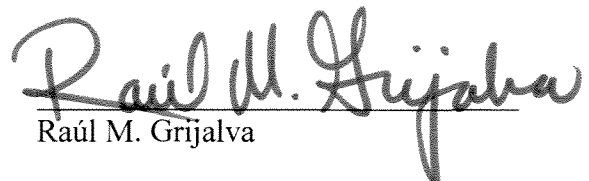
Kendrick Meek



Keith Ellison



Sam Farr



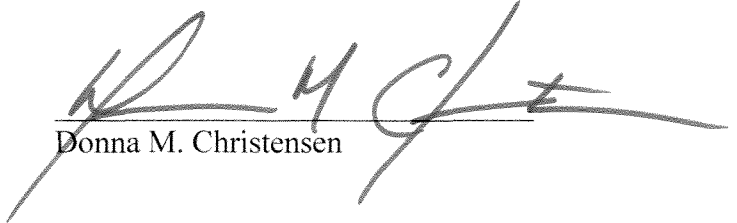
Raúl M. Grijalva



Gwen Moore



Michael E. Capuano



Donna M. Christensen

Marcia L. Fudge  
Marcia Fudge

Alan Grayson  
Alan Grayson

Michael M. Honda  
Michael M. Honda

Dennis Moore  
Dennis Moore

Anthony Weiner  
Anthony Weiner

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Eleanor Holmes Norton

Vic Snyder  
Vic Snyder

Edolphus Towns  
Edolphus Towns

Elijah E. Cummings  
Elijah E. Cummings

James P. Moran  
James P. Moran

Robert Wexler  
Robert Wexler

Carolyn Kilpatrick  
Carolyn Kilpatrick

Luis V. Gutierrez  
Luis V. Gutierrez

Earl Blumenauer  
Earl Blumenauer

Chaka Fattah  
Chaka Fattah

Melvin L. Watt  
Melvin L. Watt

Carolyn B. Maloney  
Carolyn B. Maloney

Corrine Brown  
Corrine Brown

Diane E. Watson  
Diane E. Watson

Gregory W. Meeks  
Gregory W. Meeks

*Bobby L. Rush*

Bobby L. Rush

*Wm. Lacy Clay*

Wm. Lacy Clay

*Jesse Jackson, Jr.*

Jesse Jackson, Jr.

*John Conyers*

John Conyers

*Bob Filner*

Bob Filner

*Maurice Hinchey*

Maurice Hinchey

*Dennis J. Kucinich*

Dennis Kucinich

*Tammy Baldwin*

Tammy Baldwin

*Edward J. Markey*

Edward Markey

*Danny K. Davis*

Danny K. Davis

*Sheila Jackson-Lee*

Sheila Jackson-Lee

*Jose E. Serrano*

Jose Serrano

*Steve Cohen*

Steve Cohen

*Yvette D. Clarke*

Yvette D. Clarke

*Chris Van Hollen*

Chris Van Hollen

*Louise M. Slaughter*

Louise M. Slaughter

*David Price*

David Price

*Susan Davis*

Susan Davis