Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 13, 2015

Carolyn W. Colvin.
Acting Commissioner of Social Security
Social Security Administration
6401 Security Blvd.
Baltimore, MD 21235

Dear Commissioner Colvin:

We are writing to express our concern regarding recent reports that Social Security beneficiaries may not receive a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in 2016. We believe the absence of a COLA would further strain the limited resources afforded to our nation's seniors and we urge the Administration to ensure that seniors receive the resources necessary to support themselves in 2016.

For 80 years, Social Security has been a promise to America's citizens that they could retire with dignity. Seniors have earned their Social Security benefits after a lifetime of hard work, and we have the responsibility to protect this critical safety net for them in their retirement years. COLAs are vital for our seniors to keep up with the rising costs of medical care, prescription drugs, and housing. The absence of a COLA this year would not only harm America's seniors, but would place undue burden on those who support them, including family and care taking professionals.

We also believe strongly that the use of the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E) as the calculation for cost-of-living increases for Americans aged 62 and older as this CPI would more accurately reflects the spending patterns of the elderly than the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). The CPI-E grows faster than the current COLA calculation on average, due to a larger portion of spending by the elderly on health care expenditures and other items with prices that tend to rise more rapidly. The CPI-E has increased by an average of about 0.2 percentage points faster than the CPI-W or the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) since 1982.

We greatly appreciate your ongoing commitment to beneficiaries across the country. We urge you to continue advocating for seniors by supporting policies that would include an annual COLA for America's elderly citizens in the future.

Sincerely,

David N. Cicilline

Janice D. Schakowsky

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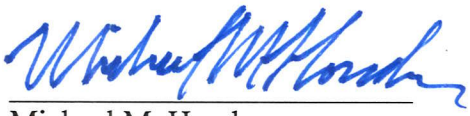
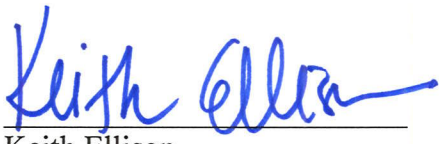


Michael M. Honda



Keith Ellison

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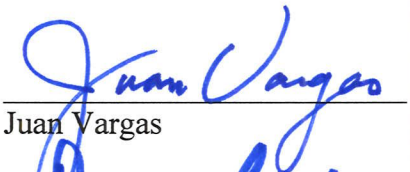

Juan Vargas

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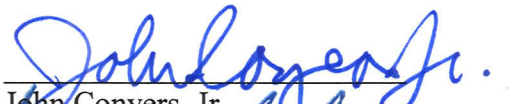
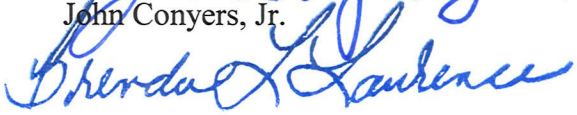
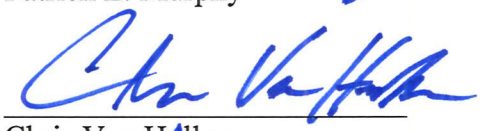


John Conyers, Jr.

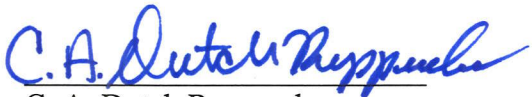
Patrick E. Murphy



Brenda L. Lawrence



Chris Van Hollen



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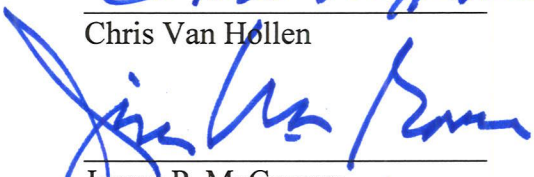
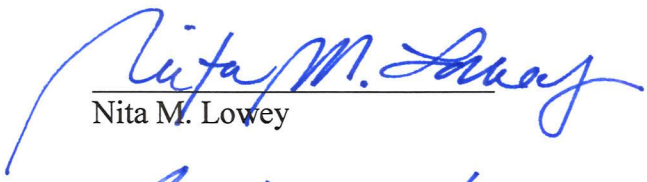


James P. McGovern



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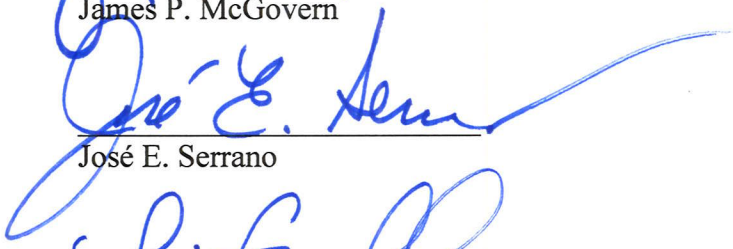
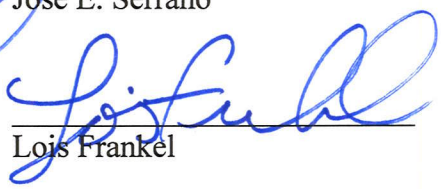
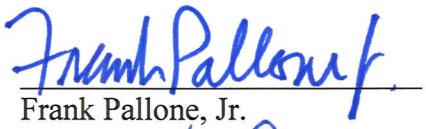


José E. Serrano

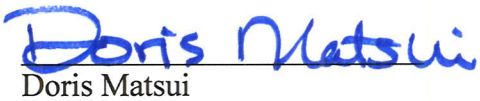
Barbara Lee



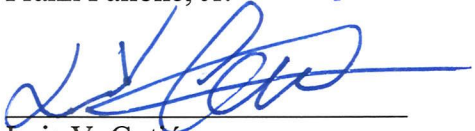
Lois Frankel



Frank Pallone, Jr.



Doris Matsui



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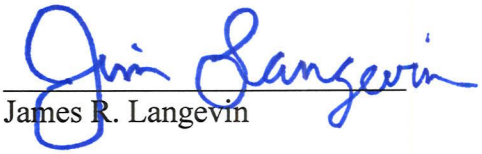

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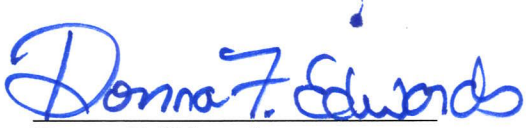

Donna F. Edwards

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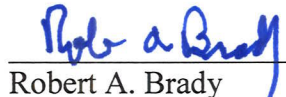
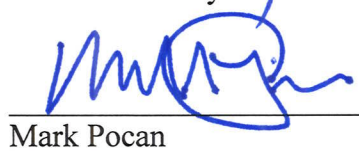
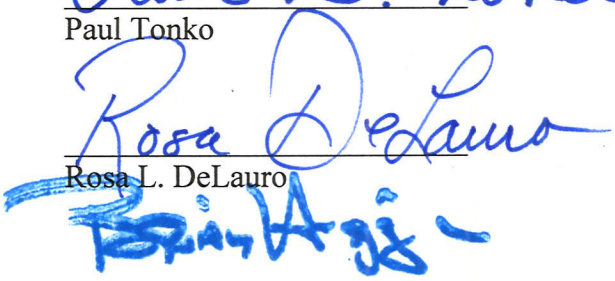


Robert A. Brady

Paul Tonko



Mark Pocan



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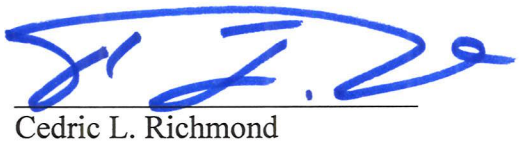
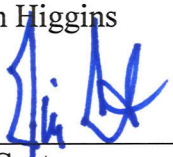


Cedric L. Richmond

Brian Higgins

Katherine M. Clark



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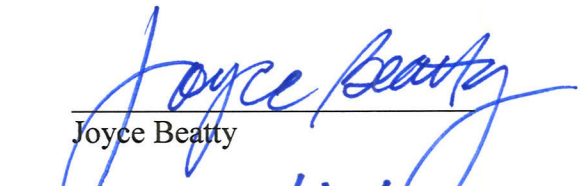
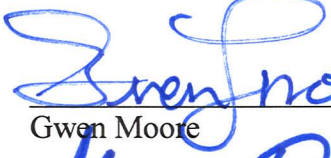


Joyce Beatty



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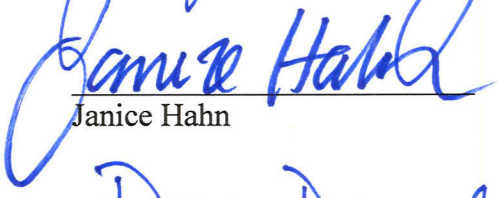

Janice Hahn

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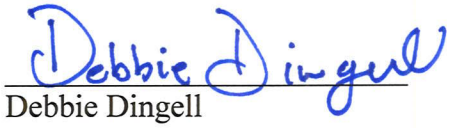

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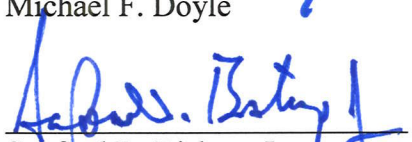

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.

Terri A. Sewell

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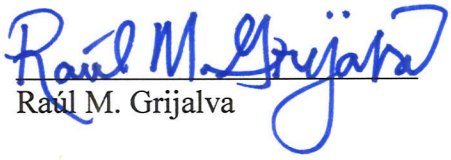
John P. Sarbanes



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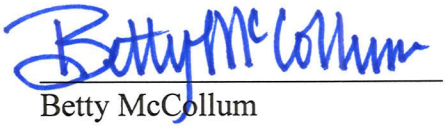
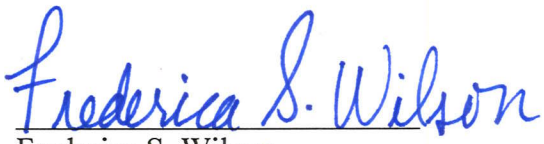


Betty McCollum

Marcia L. Fudge



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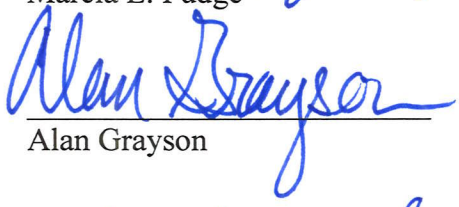

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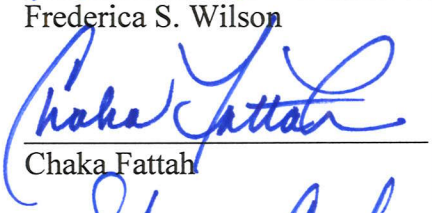

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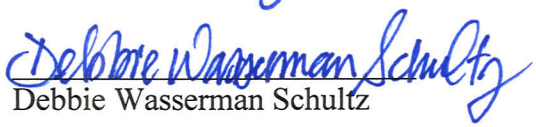
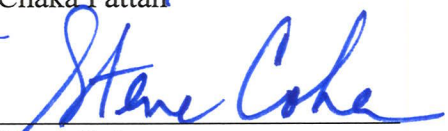


Debbie Wasserman Schultz



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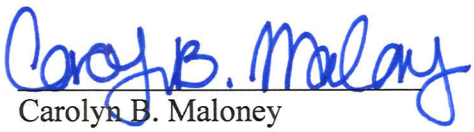

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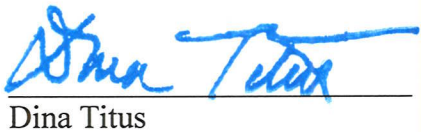
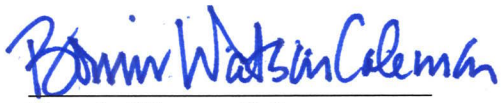
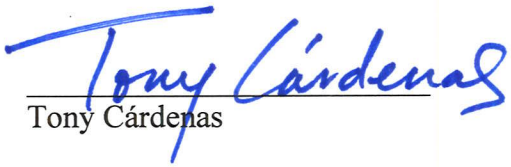


Dina Titus



Bonnie Watson Coleman



Tony Cárdenas