

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 10, 2009

The Honorable Peter Orszag
Director
Office of Management and Budget
Eisenhower Executive Office Building
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Orszag:

We respectfully request that you increase international family planning and reproductive health assistance funding in President Obama's budget to \$1 billion, including \$65 million for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). This increase will reverse a decade of inadequate funding and will prevent grave consequences for the health and well-being of women, children and families across the globe for generations.

Even with the significant funding increases of the past two years, international family planning funds remain nearly 35 percent below, in real dollars, the 1995 peak funding. During the same time period, the number of women of reproductive age in the developing world has increased by more than 300 million. Today, at least 200 million women want but lack access to contraceptives, and this demand is projected to rise by 40 percent over the next 15 years. Our request represents the U.S. fair share of the amount necessary to address the existing unmet need for family planning. By doing so, more than 18 million additional women in the developing world would be able to use modern methods of contraception.

Inadequate funding for international family planning holds grave consequences for the health and well-being of women, families and communities across the globe. More than half a million women die from pregnancy-related causes and childbirth complications every year. The vast majority of these preventable deaths occur in the poorest countries in the world where there are limited services to promote safe motherhood and a lack of basic health infrastructure. Further, 50 percent of infant deaths result from poor maternal health and inadequate safe delivery care. Family planning is paramount to turn the tide on maternal and infant mortality.

The direct and rippling positive impact of an investment in family planning is clear. Slowing the population's rapid growth will ease pressure on natural resources and help create a healthier, more sustainable environment. Moreover, family planning and reproductive health should be part of larger strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Slower population growth will make reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions easier to achieve, and reduce the scale of human vulnerability to the effects of climate change.

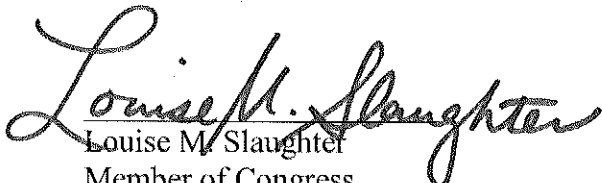
Given the ability to choose the size and spacing of their children, the living standards of families rise, and communities are lifted out of cyclical poverty. Family planning encourages social stability in the developing world, which in turn, can help assure our national security. Access to family planning and reproductive health care is the hallmark in our effort to advance the rights and empowerment of women. All the while from a fiscal standpoint, we know an investment now in family planning produces real cost savings for the American taxpayers in the future.


The United States supports family planning and reproductive health projects in more than fifty developing nations. Each year, these programs help prevent 60 million unplanned births, 105 million abortions, and nearly 3 million infant deaths. These projects promote safe motherhood initiatives, combat sexual and gender-based violence, and prevent and treat HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, reducing the risk of mother to child transmission.

Finally, it is important for the United States to recognize the key role of UNFPA in this area. UNFPA is the largest multilateral provider of family planning and reproductive health services, working in more than 150 countries – more than twice the number in which our bilateral program operates -- to prevent maternal mortality, expand access to contraceptives and improve the status of women. It receives donations from more than 180 nations including every country in sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, UNFPA's programs are grounded in a human rights based voluntary family planning approach that is centered on the empowerment of women. This agency is a critical global partner and requires a strong United States commitment of political and financial support.

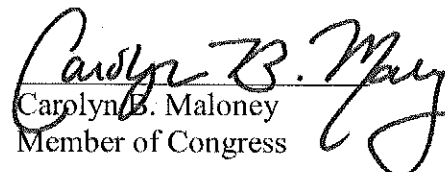
For a healthier world, we firmly support strengthening international family planning programs and urge you to provide one billion dollars for international family planning and reproductive health assistance in the President's Budget. We appreciate your attention to this request.

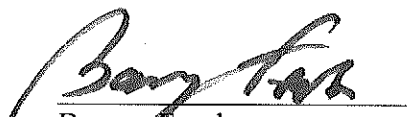
Sincerely,



Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress


Diana DeGette
Member of Congress

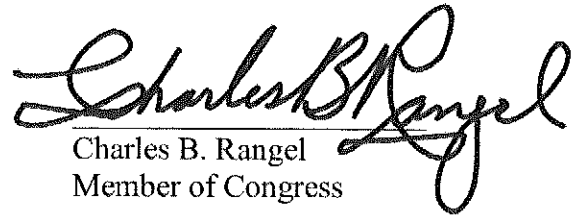

Michael H. Michaud
Member of Congress

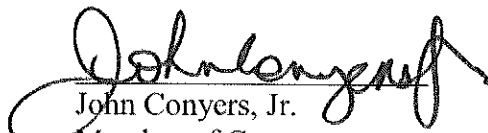

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

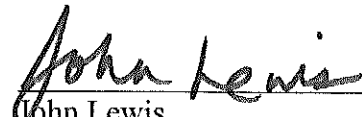

Barney Frank
Member of Congress

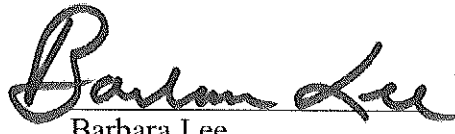

Henry A. Waxman
Member of Congress

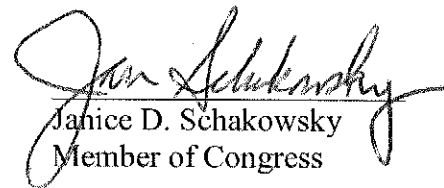

Rosa L. DeLauro
Member of Congress



Charles B. Rangel
Member of Congress

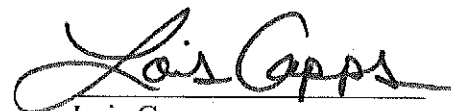

John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress

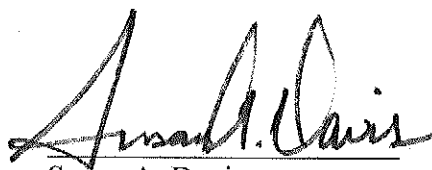

John Lewis
Member of Congress


Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress

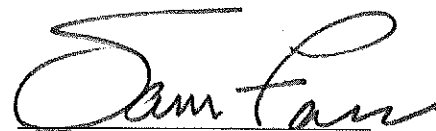

Lynn C. Woolsey
Member of Congress



Lois Capps
Member of Congress


Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress

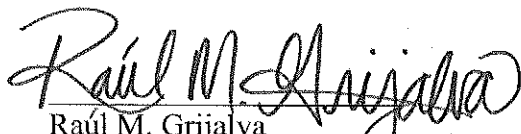

Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

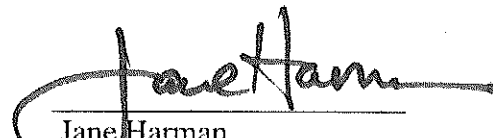

Russ Carnahan
Member of Congress

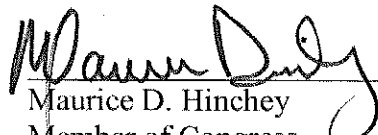

Sam Farr
Member of Congress

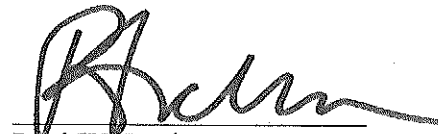

Bob Filner
Member of Congress

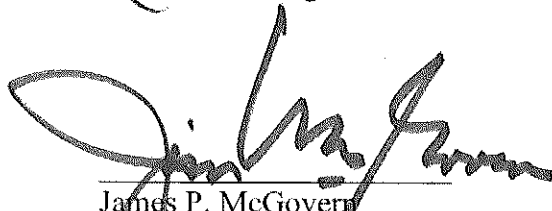

Shelley Berkley
Member of Congress

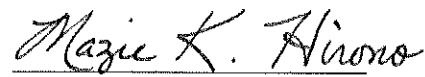

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Jane Harman
Member of Congress



Maurice D. Hinchey
Member of Congress



Paul W. Hodes
Member of Congress


James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

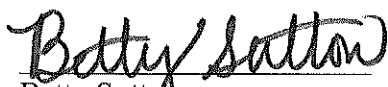

Mazie K. Hirono
Member of Congress

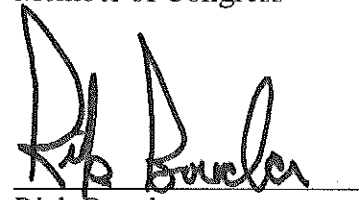

Patrick J. Kennedy
Member of Congress



Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress


Sander M. Levin
Member of Congress

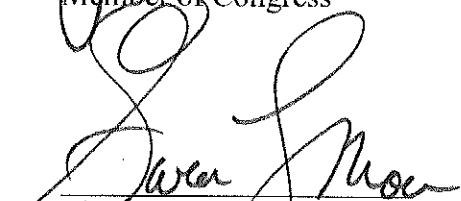

Rick Larsen
Member of Congress

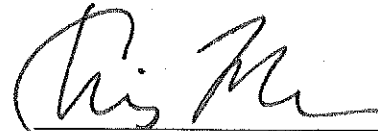

Betty Sutton
Member of Congress



Rick Boucher
Member of Congress


Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Dennis Moore
Member of Congress

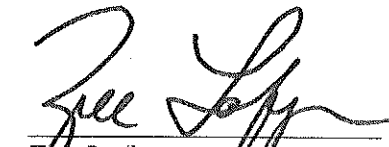

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

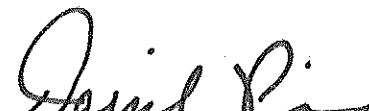

Christopher S. Murphy
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

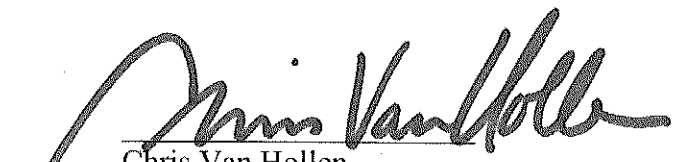

Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



David E. Price
Member of Congress


Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress


Loretta Sanchez
Member of Congress


Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress


Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress

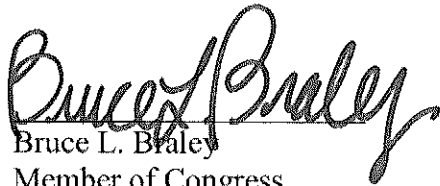

Niki Tsongas
Member of Congress



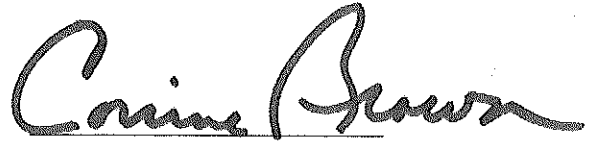
Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress



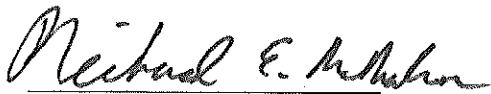
Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Bruce L. Braley
Member of Congress



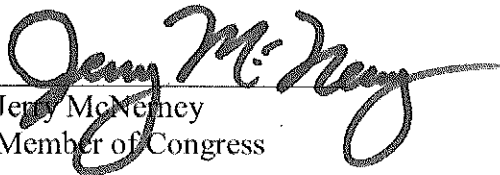
Corrine Brown
Member of Congress



Michael E. McMahon
Member of Congress



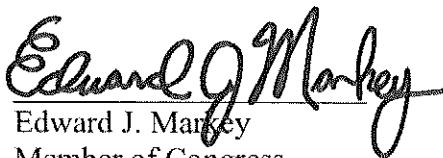
John Hall
Member of Congress



Jenny McManey
Member of Congress



Albio Sires
Member of Congress



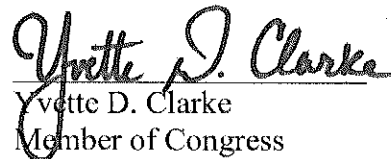
Edward J. Markey
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress

Neil Abercrombie

Neil Abercrombie
Member of Congress

Joseph Crowley

Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress

William Delahunt

William Delahunt
Member of Congress

David Loebsack

David Loebsack
Member of Congress

Foinicy Pete Stark

Foinicy Pete Stark
Member of Congress

Gerald E. Connolly

Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress

Luis V. Gutierrez

Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress

Jesse L. Jackson Jr.

Jesse L. Jackson Jr.
Member of Congress

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress

Daniel B. Maffei

Daniel B. Maffei
Member of Congress

Donald M. Payne

Donald M. Payne
Member of Congress

Bill Pascrell, Jr.

Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress

Rush Holt

Rush Holt
Member of Congress