

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

April 4, 2018

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
House Armed Service Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee  
H-405, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
2216 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter Visclosky  
Ranking Member  
House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee  
H-405, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Gentlemen and Madame Chairwoman:

As you consider the Fiscal Year 2019 defense authorization and appropriations bills, we strongly urge your continued support for the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter program. As you well know, our nation's adversaries continue to develop and improve their own stealth fighters and advanced surface-to-air missile systems. As we face increasingly advanced global threats, it's critical that we continue to increase F-35 production – our nation's only 5<sup>th</sup> generation stealth aircraft – in order to reduce overall program costs and ensure the United States maintains its competitive edge.

Current Department of Defense (DoD) force structure plans leave the Services with a capability gap that 4<sup>th</sup> Generation, or legacy, aircraft cannot fulfill. Investing in advanced procurement of F-35 aircraft will allow us to meet our warfighters' critical capability requirements in the near future and over the long-term. Not only does the F-35 program deliver air superiority for the United States and its key allies, it also bolsters our domestic economy by supporting more than 1,500 suppliers and more than 194,000 direct and indirect jobs across the country.

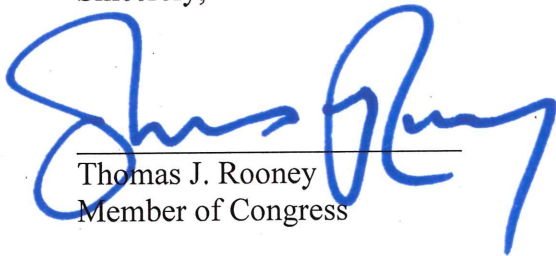
Therefore, we are specifically requesting your support for a total of 93 F-35 aircraft in the Fiscal Year 2019 defense authorization and appropriations bills, which is an increase of 16 aircraft over the President's budget request. The President's budget includes funding for 77 F-35s, which translates to 48 F-35As, 20 F-35Bs and 9 F-35Cs; however, it is vitally important for Congress to provide authorization and funding for 54 F-35As (+6), 24 F-35Bs (+4), and 15 F-35Cs (+6) in Fiscal Year 2019. This increase in production would continue to restore previously-planned F-35 procurement that slowed, in part, as a result of the budget caps on defense spending since 2011. We also request your support for a \$328 million investment in Production Non-Recurring tooling to ensure that we're prepared to achieve the planned full rate of production of 80 F-35As, 24 F-35Bs and 24 F-35Cs in 2021. An additional \$98.4 million could further accelerate the F-

35C to 30 aircraft per year by 2022. Finally, we believe additional funds are needed for the spare parts and reparability programs in order to sufficiently support the number of aircraft operating today and those that are expected to operate in the future.

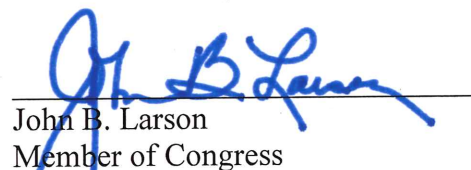
F-35 unit costs have come down more than 60 percent since the procurement of the first production aircraft more than 11 years ago and the program is on track to achieve a \$79 million F-35A, per plane cost, in 2020. To reach these costs savings and to maintain future air superiority, it is critical that we increase F-35 production and provide the necessary infrastructure investments in the upcoming defense authorization and appropriations bills for Fiscal Year 2019.

Thank you for your continued support of the F-35 program and for your leadership.

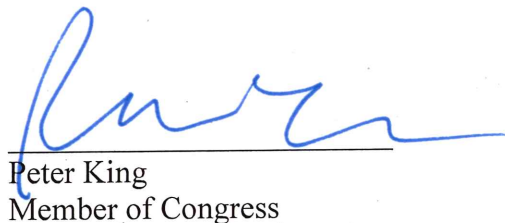
Sincerely,



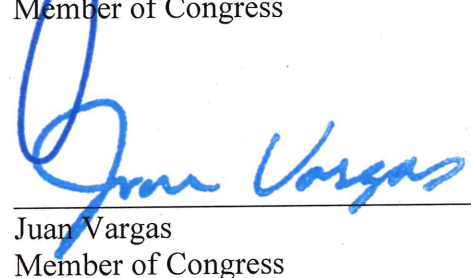
Thomas J. Rooney  
Member of Congress



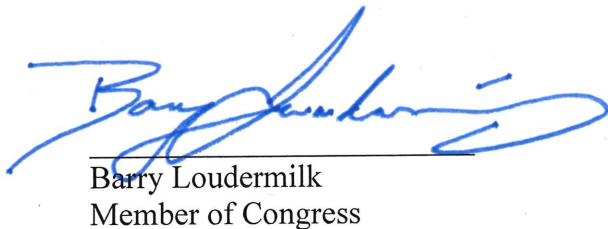
John B. Larson  
Member of Congress



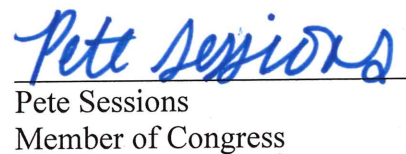
Peter King  
Member of Congress



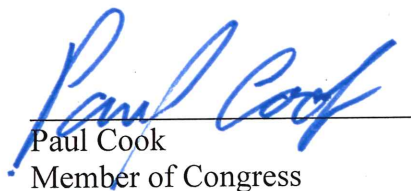
Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



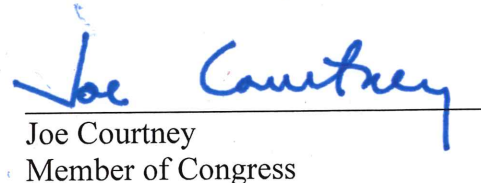
Barry Loudermilk  
Member of Congress



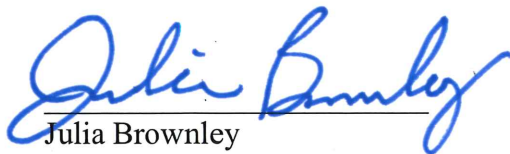
Pete Sessions  
Member of Congress



Paul Cook  
Member of Congress



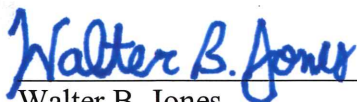
Joe Courtney  
Member of Congress




Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress



Walter B. Jones  
Member of Congress



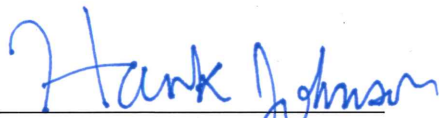
Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress



Ann M. Kuster  
Member of Congress



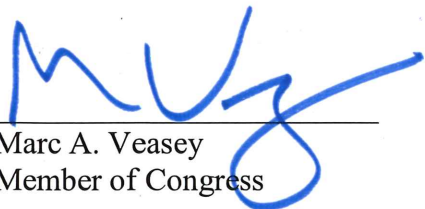
Jackie Walorski  
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



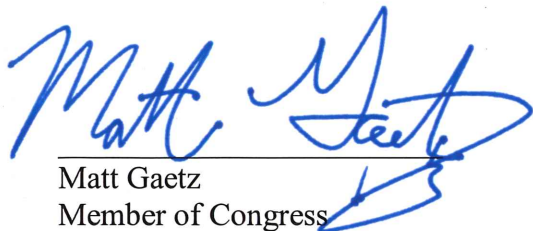
Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress



Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



Rosa L. DeLauro  
Member of Congress



Matt Gaetz  
Member of Congress

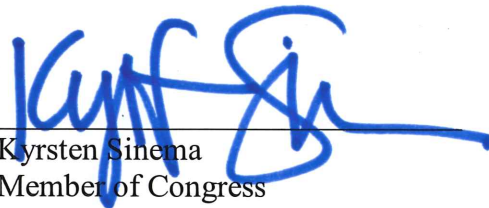


Richard E. Neal  
Member of Congress





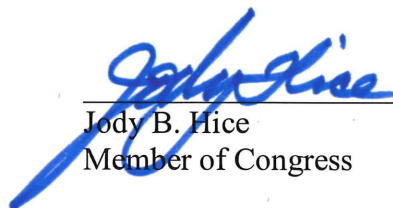
Chris Collins  
Member of Congress



Kyrsten Sinema  
Member of Congress



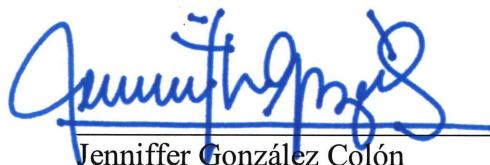
Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



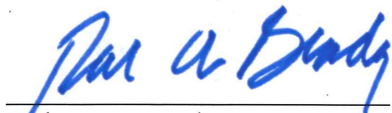
Jody B. Hice  
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress



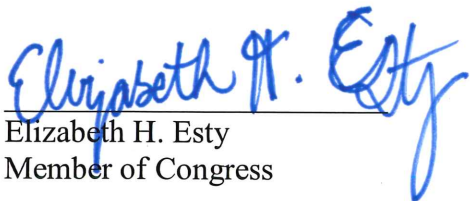
Jenniffer González Colón  
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady  
Member of Congress



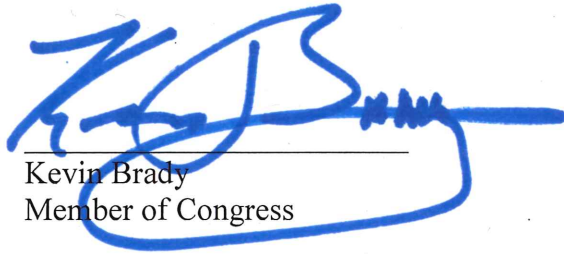
Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress



Elizabeth H. Esty  
Member of Congress

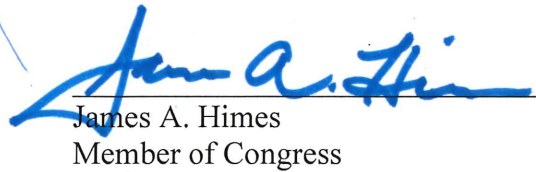


Rod Blum  
Member of Congress



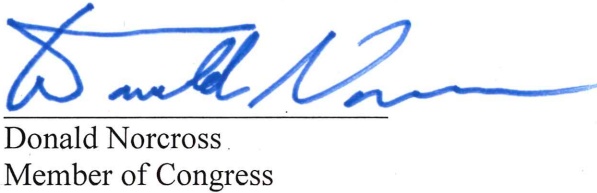
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Kevin Brady  
Member of Congress



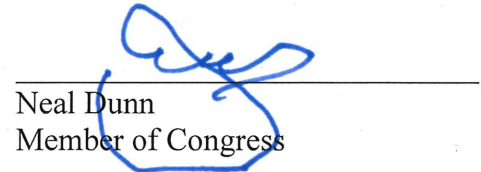
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James A. Himes  
Member of Congress



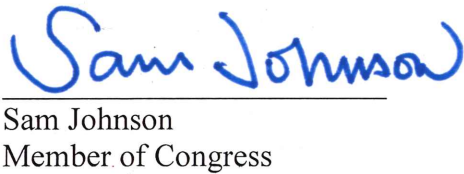
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Donald Norcross  
Member of Congress



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Neal Dunn  
Member of Congress



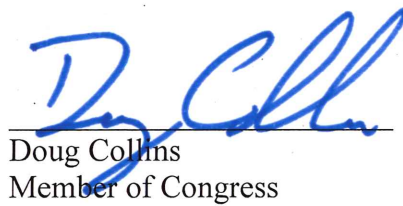
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Sam Johnson  
Member of Congress



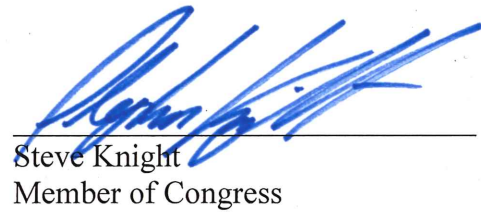
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Joe Barton  
Member of Congress



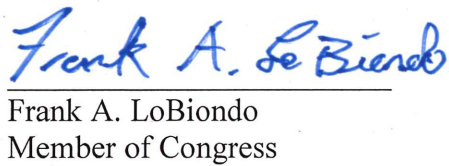
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Doug Collins  
Member of Congress



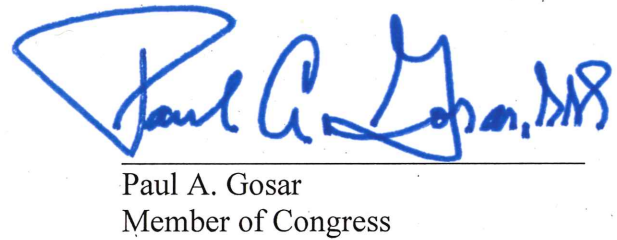
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Steve Knight  
Member of Congress



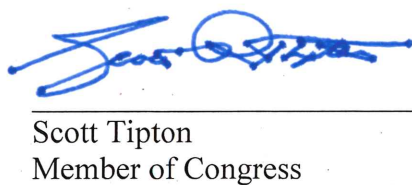
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Frank A. LoBiondo  
Member of Congress



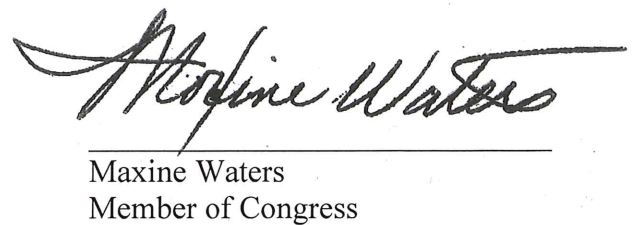
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Paul A. Gosar  
Member of Congress



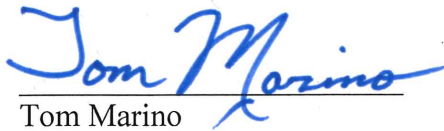
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Scott Tipton  
Member of Congress



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Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



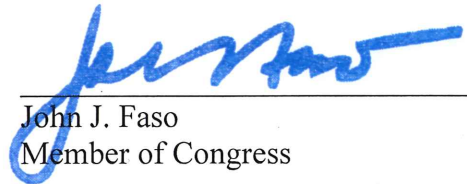
Tom Marino  
Member of Congress



Paul Mitchell  
Member of Congress



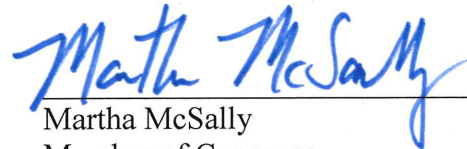
Bill Posey  
Member of Congress



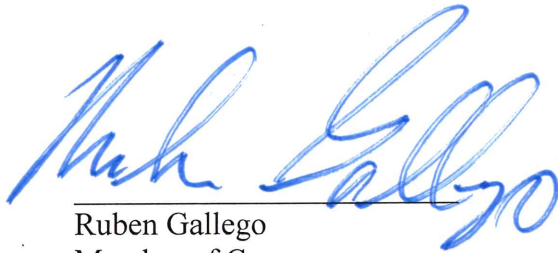
John J. Faso  
Member of Congress



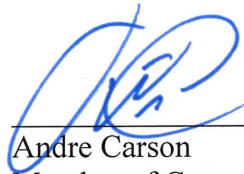
Bill Johnson  
Member of Congress



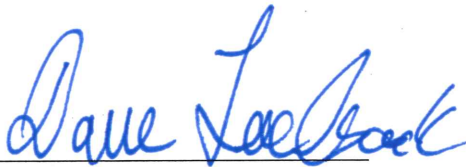
Martha McSally  
Member of Congress



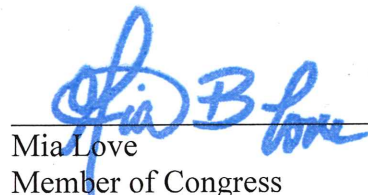
Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



Andre Carson  
Member of Congress



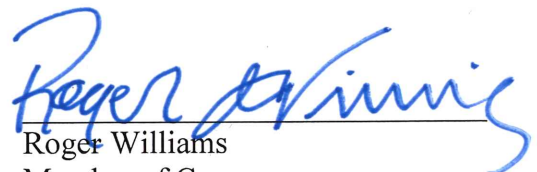
David Loebsack  
Member of Congress



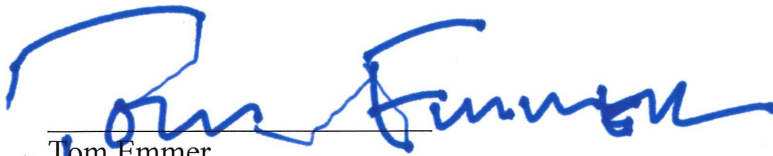
Mia Love  
Member of Congress



Rob Bishop  
Member of Congress




Roger Williams  
Member of Congress



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Tom Emmer  
Member of Congress



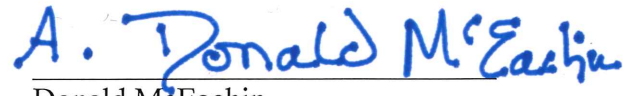
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A. Drew Ferguson, IV DMD  
Member of Congress



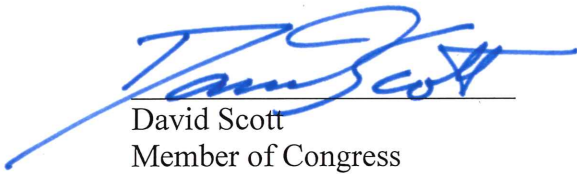
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Blake Farenthold  
Member of Congress




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A. Donald McEachin  
Member of Congress




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David Scott  
Member of Congress




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Karen Handel  
Member of Congress



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Anthony Brown  
Member of Congress



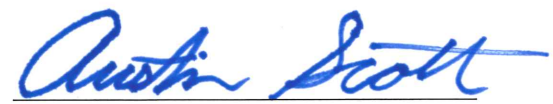
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Andy Harris, M.D.  
Member of Congress




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Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



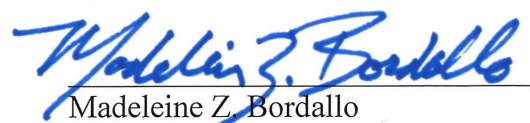
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Austin Scott  
Member of Congress



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Keith Rothfus  
Member of Congress



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Madeleine Z. Bordallo  
Member of Congress

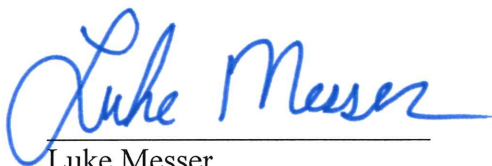




Brian Babin  
Member of Congress



Susan W. Brooks  
Member of Congress



Luke Messer  
Member of Congress




Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress

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Eddie Bernice Johnson  
Member of Congress



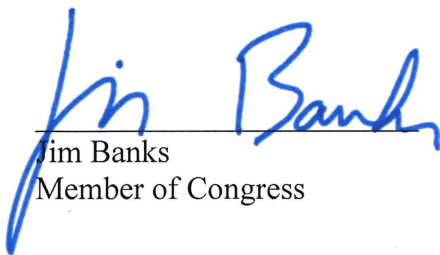
Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



Pete Olson  
Member of Congress



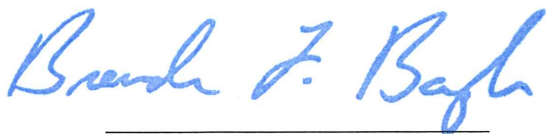
Robert J. Wittman  
Member of Congress



Jim Banks  
Member of Congress



Collin Peterson  
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress

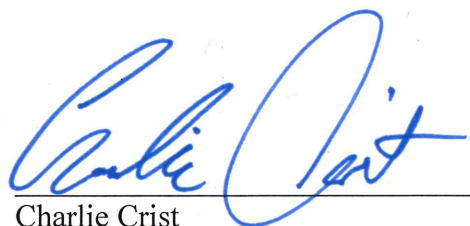


John Ratcliffe  
Member of Congress





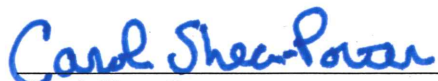
Adam Kinzinger  
Member of Congress



Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress



Ruben J. Kihuen  
Member of Congress



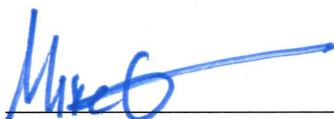
Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress



Bill Flores  
Member of Congress



Chris Stewart  
Member of Congress



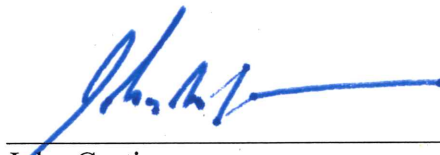
Mike Gallagher  
Member of Congress



Val B. Demings  
Member of Congress



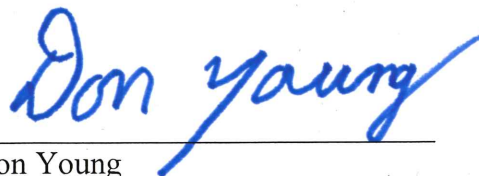
Earl L. "Buddy" Carter  
Member of Congress



John Curtis  
Member of Congress



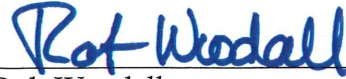
John Katko  
Member of Congress



Don Young  
Member of Congress



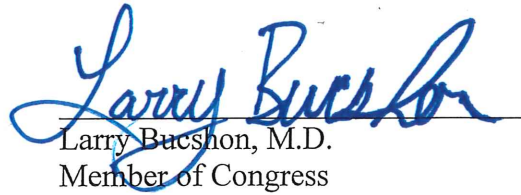
Bradley Byrne  
Member of Congress



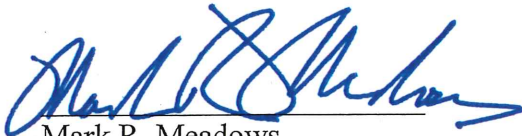
Rob Woodall  
Member of Congress



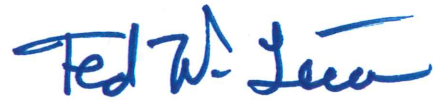
George Holding  
Member of Congress



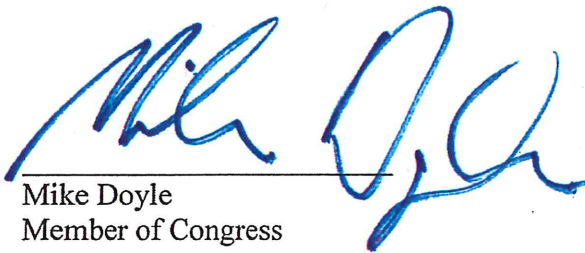
Larry Bucshon, M.D.  
Member of Congress



Mark R. Meadows  
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu  
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle  
Member of Congress