

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

November 25, 2013

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairwoman  
Budget Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Chairman  
Budget Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jeff Sessions  
Ranking Member  
Budget Committee  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
Ranking Member  
Budget Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Chairman Ryan, Ranking Member Sessions, and Ranking Member Van Hollen:

As you consider a longer-term budget agreement which will include funding for the remainder of FY 2014, we call on you to ensure Senior Nutrition Programs authorized under the Older Americans Act (OAA) are not further reduced from the already unsustainable levels in FY 2013.

Our constituents and Americans across the country who rely on Senior Nutrition Programs are already experiencing the real, daily effects of sequestration-related cuts to these benefits. As a direct result of sequestration, home-delivered and congregate meal programs (e.g., Meals on Wheels), have been forced to cut the number of meals served, eliminate staff positions, reduce the number of delivery days, increase waiting lists, and in some cases, close their doors altogether. These cuts directly affect the health and well-being of our most vulnerable, frail and isolated senior constituents and prevent programs from maintaining services, much less meeting the needs of an aging population.

A recent report found that the impact of sequestration on Meals on Wheels in FY 2013 alone could cost taxpayers \$489 million in additional Medicaid spending. Reversing the unsustainable reductions to these programs under sequestration will provide a strong return on investment for our nation. Meals on Wheels and congregate nutrition programs are proven effective and warrant increased investment, not more devastating cuts.

For more than 40 years, OAA nutrition programs have enabled seniors to live independently in their own homes. In addition to a nutritious meal, friendly visit and wellness checks—whether in a senior center or in the home—these programs have produced millions of dollars in savings for Medicaid and Medicare through avoided hospitalizations and long-term care. In fact, a senior can be served by Meals on Wheels *for an entire year* for about the equivalent cost for that same senior to be in the hospital *for one day*.

We urge you to do all you can to reverse sequestration-related cuts to the Senior Nutrition Programs that provide a lifeline to our elderly population. We must let congregate and home-delivered meal programs get back to work and allow those they serve to live with independence and dignity.

Sincerely,



Dave Loebsock  
Member of Congress



Bobby Rush  
Member of Congress



Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress



William Enyart  
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress



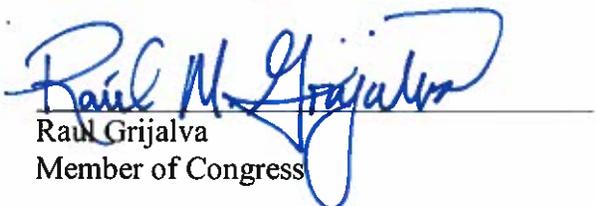
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Peter DeFazio  
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Raul Grijalva  
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Charles Rangel  
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Lois Frankel  
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John Lewis  
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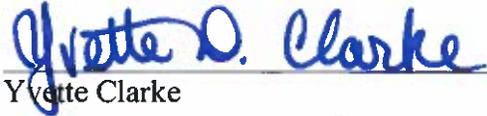
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Sander Levin  
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Yvette Clarke  
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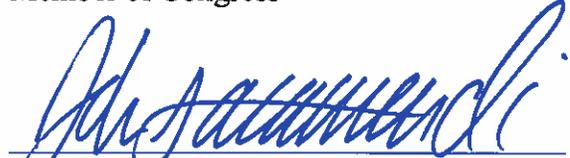
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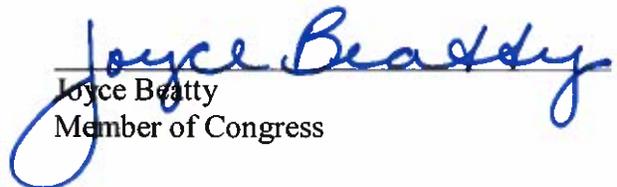
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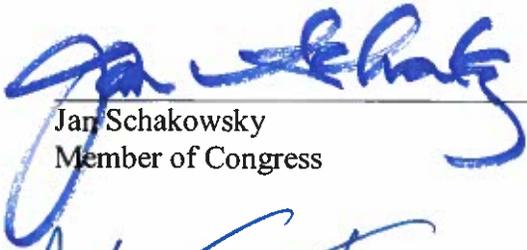
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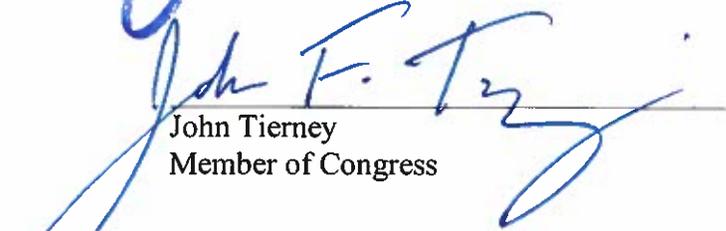
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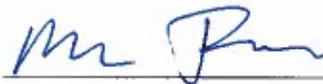
Lloyd Doggett  
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Albio Sires  
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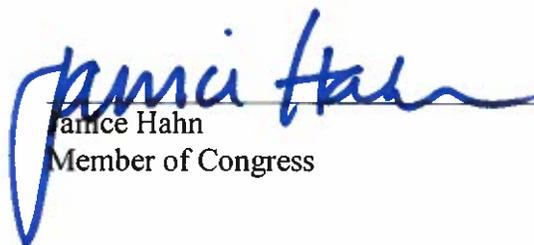
Hank Johnson  
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Janice Hahn  
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