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February 8, 2017

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write regarding your recent call for an investigation into alleged voter fraud in the 2016 Presidential election. As an initial matter, claims of widespread voter fraud in the 2016 Presidential election are largely unsubstantiated. Inquiries conducted thus far have not revealed any evidence of widespread voter fraud, nor is there is evidence substantiating your claim that “3 to 5 million illegal votes” were responsible for Hillary Clinton’s popular vote win. Nevertheless, we are writing to demand that any investigation your Administration conducts into voter irregularities in the 2016 Presidential election include a thorough investigation and analysis of voter suppression and disenfranchisement.

Our nation’s history on voting rights is checkered, and the systemic disenfranchisement of low-income and minority voters is longstanding and well documented. In fact, it was not until 600 people marched through Selma, Alabama in 1965 that Congress passed the Voting Rights Act. It is now 52 years later and the battle is far from over.

In 2013, the Supreme Court effectively dismantled the Voting Rights Act when it struck down a section of the law that required jurisdictions with histories of voter discrimination to receive “preclearance” before changing their voting laws. The result is 14 new state laws implementing voting restrictions that went into effect for the first time in 2016. These new laws include roadblocks such as strict photo ID requirements, early voting cutbacks, and registration restrictions. Three states with new voter restrictions—Florida, North Carolina, and Alabama—have demonstrated histories of voter disenfranchisement and were monitored by the Department of Justice for illegal electioneering. The breadth of the disenfranchisement caused by statewide voting restrictions is personified in Wisconsin, North Carolina, and Florida.

- Wisconsin’s strict voter ID law has been the subject of extensive litigation. Although a federal court held that the law unconstitutionally burdened low-income individuals and minorities, the Supreme Court allowed it to go into effect for the 2016 election. According to Wisconsin’s records, as many as 300,000 people lacked the proper ID and

may have been prevented from voting. Statewide, turnout for the 2016 Presidential election was the lowest it has been in two decades.

- North Carolina’s law included strict voter ID requirements, eliminated same-day voter registration, cut a full week of early voting, and barred voters from casting a ballot outside their home precincts. A federal court struck most of the law after finding it suppressed African-American voters “with almost surgical precision.” Despite this ruling, early voting hours and locations were curtailed during the 2016 Presidential election. African-American turnout for the early vote dropped nearly nine percent.
- Florida law bars anyone with a felony conviction from voting unless they travel to the state capitol and request clemency—a burdensome requirement for those that cannot afford to travel to the state capitol. Approximately 1.5 million Florida residents are unable to vote because of the law, and approximately 25 percent of Florida’s African-American residents could not cast a ballot in the 2016 Presidential election.

In addition to passing harsh laws, states like Alabama are closing driver’s license offices in rural areas with large African-American populations, while states like Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida are moving polling places out of largely minority districts. Incidents of voter intimidation have also occurred, like the one in Sparta, Georgia, when more than 180 African-American citizens were confronted by law enforcement officers that were dispatched by the local election board. These citizens, all American voters, were told they had to appear in person in order to prove they were a resident and could vote in upcoming elections.

This is unacceptable. Every American deserves a voice in our elections and the freedom to cast their vote without interference. These restrictive laws and intimidation tactics make clear that it is time to put teeth back into the Voting Rights Act and counter voter disenfranchisement. We hope to work together with you to remedy widespread voter disenfranchisement across our country.

Sincerely,



Derek Kilmer  
Member of Congress



Terri Sewell  
Member of Congress



Elijah E. Cummings  
Member of Congress



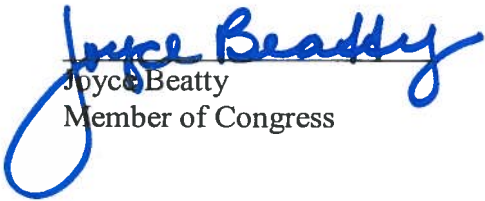
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D  
Member of Congress



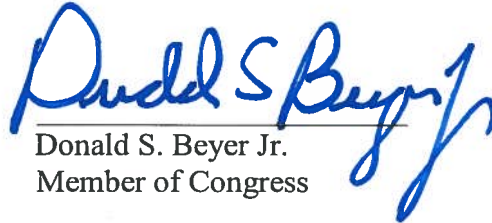
Pete Aguilar  
Member of Congress



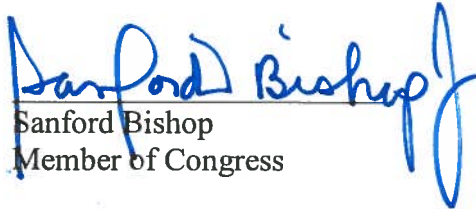
Karen Bass  
Member of Congress



Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.  
Member of Congress



Sanford Bishop  
Member of Congress



Lisa Blunt Rochester  
Member of Congress



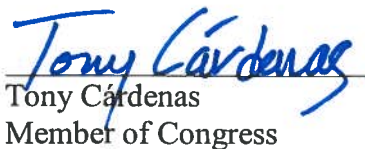
Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



Robert A. Brady  
Member of Congress



G.K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress



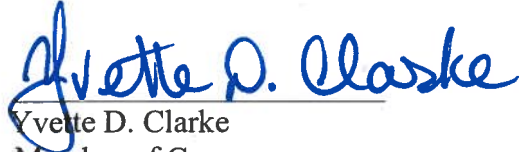
André Carson  
Member of Congress



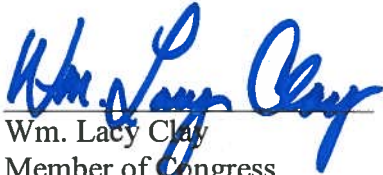
David N. Cicilline  
Member of Congress



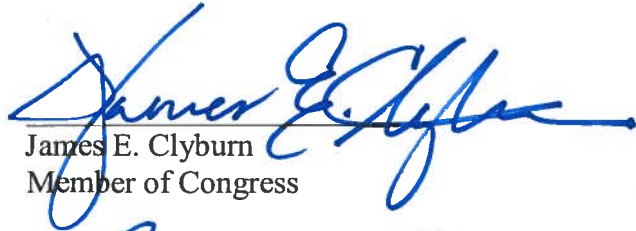
Katherine Clark  
Member of Congress



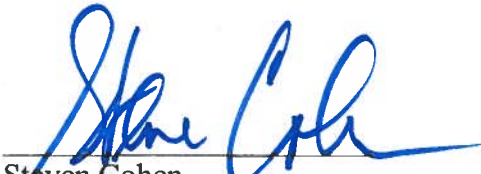
Yvette D. Clarke  
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Wm. Lacy Clay  
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James E. Clyburn  
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Steven Cohen  
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Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress



Joseph Crowley  
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Danny K. Davis  
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Susan Davis  
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John K. Delaney  
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene  
Member of Congress



Val Demings  
Member of Congress





Eliot L. Engel  
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Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



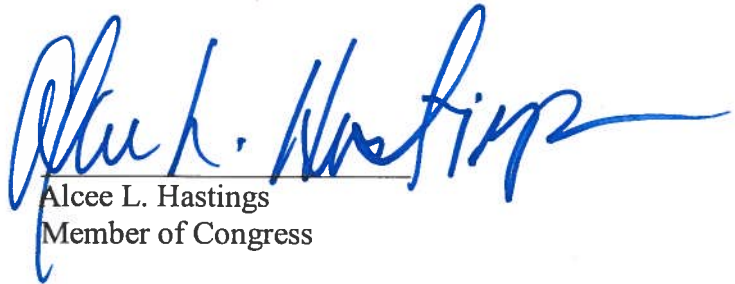
Bill Foster  
Member of Congress



Marcia L. Fudge  
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Colleen Hanabusa  
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Alcee L. Hastings  
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Jim Himes  
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Sheila Jackson Lee  
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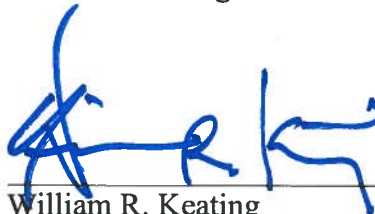
Hakeem Jeffries  
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson Jr.  
Member of Congress



Eddie Bernice Johnson  
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William R. Keating  
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Robin L. Kelly  
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Ron Kind  
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Rick Larsen  
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Brenda L. Lawrence  
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Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



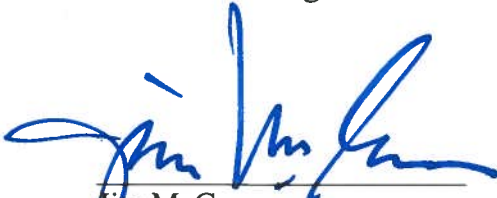
John Lewis  
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Sean Patrick Maloney  
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Donald McEachin  
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Jim McGovern  
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Gregory W. Meeks  
Member of Congress



Grace Meng  
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Gwen Moore  
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Donald Norcross  
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Frank Pallone, Jr.  
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Donald Payne Jr.  
Member of Congress



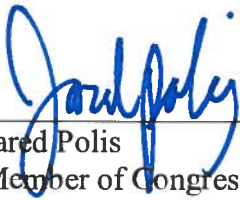
Ed Perlmutter  
Member of Congress



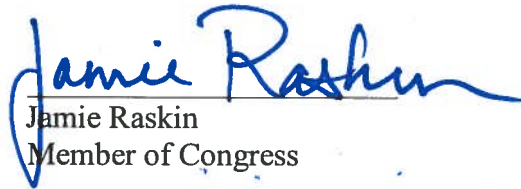
Scott H. Peters  
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Stacey E. Plaskett  
Member of Congress



Jared Polis  
Member of Congress



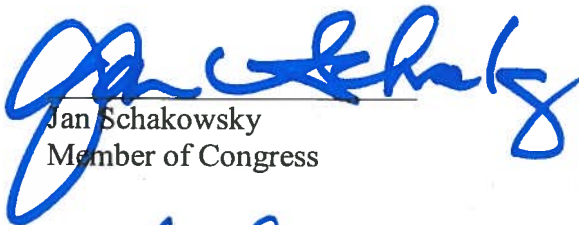
Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



Cedric L. Richmond  
Member of Congress



Lucille Roybal-Allard  
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



Robert C. "Bobby" Scott  
Member of Congress



Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



Darren M. Soto  
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress




Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



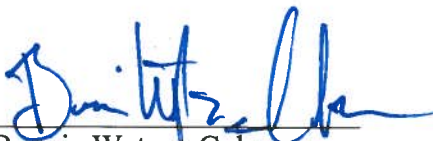
Marc Veasey  
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela Jr.  
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress