

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 20, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
2433 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Leader Schumer, and Leader McConnell:

We write today regarding the urgent need to preserve the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). As you know, the Federal Communications Commission has stated that without Congressional action, remaining ACP funds are insufficient to provide the full monthly benefit to enrollees beyond April 2024.¹ We request that Congressional Leadership take action in the immediate future to prevent a lapse in funding that would result in a wind-down of the program. At a time when broadband accessibility is more important than ever, we cannot afford to lose the progress we have made in our efforts to bridge the digital divide.

Established originally as the Emergency Broadband Benefit and signed into law under President Trump, the renamed Affordable Connectivity Program currently provides \$30 per month to eligible low-income households and \$75 per month for households on Tribal lands. The success of this program is undeniable as nearly 23 million American homes are currently enrolled in the program.² Of those 23 million households, nearly half are military families worried about losing contact with their loved ones, 19% are households with seniors concerned about losing access to government benefits like Medicare and Social Security, and 26% live in rural communities.³ Notably, Louisiana (31%), Kentucky (26%), and New York (23%) are among the top five states in terms of ACP enrollment per household.⁴

Reliable, affordable broadband access is no longer a luxury, it is a necessity in this increasingly digital age. Broadband access is essential with respect to accessing education, healthcare, financial opportunities, civic engagement, and more. As we saw with the COVID-19 pandemic,

¹ [DOC-400234A1.pdf \(fcc.gov\)](#)

² <https://acpdashboard.com/>

³

https://ac32b1ba-8f5b-411f-91ab-b7ae9a046606.usrfiles.com/ugd/ac32b1_24fc2d02f2974ba1aaa67c4d3920c304.pdf

⁴ <https://map.digitalprogress.tech>

our education system heavily relies on broadband access as students around the country transitioned to remote learning. Remote learning also provides older Americans the flexibility often needed to complete degree and skill development programs. The proliferation of telehealth programs has also led to improved health outcomes, particularly for the elderly and those in rural communities. Moreover, telehealth reduces healthcare costs by preventing unnecessary emergency room visits and promoting a more proactive approach to healthcare management. Further, many essential government services have moved online. Today, Americans rely on broadband access to complete tasks like applying for unemployment benefits, accessing social services, paying student loans, filing taxes, registering to vote, and more. The ACP provides a lifeline to civic engagement and plays an important role in promoting innovation and competition. The program allows the federal government to leverage private sector expertise and resources to expand access to broadband in a cost-effective manner, which in turn promotes greater competition among Internet Service Providers. Finally, efforts to close the digital divide are a fiscally responsible investment for our future. As more Americans increase their educational and skill levels, improve their health with telehealth services, and become more engaged members of our civil society, we can avoid the long-term costs associated with sustained social inequality and reliance on government services.

Not only is the Affordable Connectivity Program a practical investment in America, it is wildly popular. This technology-neutral program is backed by a strong, bipartisan majority of voters, as polling has shown that 62% of Republicans, 78% of Independents, and 96% of Democrats support continuing the program.⁵ Furthermore, as you all are aware, the ACP is also strongly supported by a bipartisan cross-section of Members of Congress, including the Rural Broadband Caucus,⁶ Problem Solvers Caucus⁷ and Tri-Caucus⁸, Governors across the country⁹, the US Conference of Mayors,¹⁰ the National Conference of State Legislatures,¹¹ the National Association of Counties,¹² the US Chamber of Commerce,¹³ the ACLU,¹⁴ a number of prominent non-profit organizations,¹⁵ and countless other civil society and community-based organizations, municipalities, and corporations alike.¹⁶ The chorus of voices calling for the continuation of the ACP is growing stronger by the day.

⁵ <https://digitalprogress.tech/acp-poll2024/>

⁶ https://craig.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/craig.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/support-acp_rural-broadband-caucus-letter_09.20.2023.pdf

⁷ <https://d12t4t5x3vyizu.cloudfront.net/gottheimer.house.gov/uploads/2023/08/8.17.2023-Reps.-Gottheimer-Fitzpatrick-Letter-to-Leadership-on-ACP-Broadband.pdf>

⁸

https://capac-chu.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/congressionalasianpacificamericancaucus.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/11_14_2023-tri-caucus-letter-to-house-senate-leadership-supporting-acp-min.pdf

⁹ <https://governor.nc.gov/governors-acp-letter/open>

¹⁰ <https://knowlegis.cq.com/file/download/Jn2UvBXcokM/2024-usmayors-ACP-SignOn-174.pdf/>

¹¹ <https://www.ncsl.org/resources/details/ncsl-supports-additional-funding-for-the-affordable-connectivity-program-extension-act>

¹² <https://www.naco.org/news/white-house-counties-urge-congress-extend-affordable-connectivity-program>

¹³ <https://www.uschamber.com/technology/broadband/u-s-chamber-comments-in-support-of-the-affordable-connectivity-program-extension-act>

¹⁴ <https://www.aclu.org/press-releases/aclu-statement-in-support-of-additional-funding-for-the-affordable-connectivity-program>

¹⁵ <https://s3.amazonaws.com/uww.assets/site/policy/acp-nonprofits-letter-1-24-24.pdf>

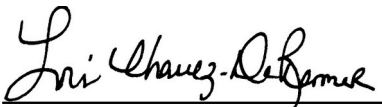
Your leadership on this issue is of the utmost importance and urgently needed. As we approach the wind-down period, there are ongoing conversations about adjusting the eligibility requirements to enroll and figuring out a long-term, sustainable funding solution to keep this critical program alive for years to come. While those negotiations continue, we must prioritize funding for the rest of 2024 in order to provide enough time to build consensus around a bipartisan set of reforms for the long-term health of the ACP. Even a short lapse in the program will have devastating consequences. According to a recent FCC survey, nearly half of respondents reported having either no internet service or relying solely on mobile internet service prior to receiving their ACP benefit¹⁷. Allowing the ACP to lapse for any length of time will result in a loss in trust in the program and the federal government among consumers who have come to rely on the monthly benefit and must be avoided at all costs. A potential wind-down followed by an attempt to re-enroll customers may prove too costly to providers, disincentivizing future participation in the program. We must prioritize keeping the program alive for the duration of this year to allow Congress the opportunity to reach agreement without undoing the progress made to close the digital divide.

We thank you for your prompt attention to this critical broadband affordability program and urge you to meet this moment. The time has come to provide the millions of Americans with the assurance that this program will continue to serve them now and into the future. We stand ready to work with you on ensuring the Affordable Connectivity Program's survival and await your response.

Sincerely,



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



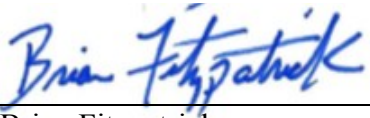
Lori Chavez-DeRemer
Member of Congress



Anthony D'Esposito
Member of Congress

¹⁶ <https://www.welch.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Supporters-of-the-Affordable-Connectivity-Program-Extension-Act.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://www.fcc.gov/acp-survey>



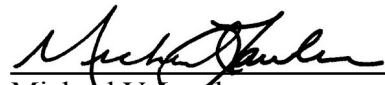
Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Andrew R. Garbarino
Member of Congress



Jen A. Kiggans
Member of Congress



Michael V. Lawler
Member of Congress



Marcus J. Molinaro
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David G. Valadao
Member of Congress



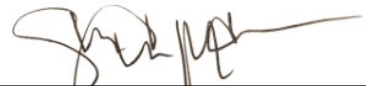
Brandon Williams
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



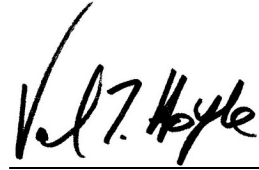
Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



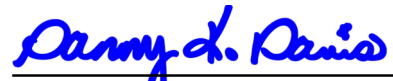
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Val Hoyle
Member of Congress



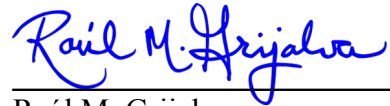
Madeleine Dean
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Danny K. Davis
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Gregorio Kilili Camacho
Sablan
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Raúl M. Grijalva
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Gwen S. Moore
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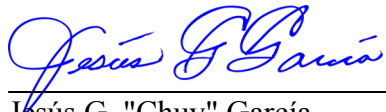
Ritchie Torres
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Patrick Ryan
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Jesús G. "Chuy" García
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Donald G. Davis
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Paul D. Tonko
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Katie Porter
Member of Congress



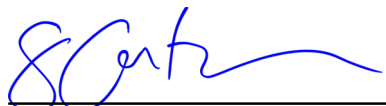
Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



Delia C. Ramirez
Member of Congress



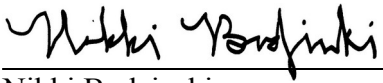
Grace F. Napolitano
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Sean Casten
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Maxwell Alejandro Frost
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Nikki Budzinski
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



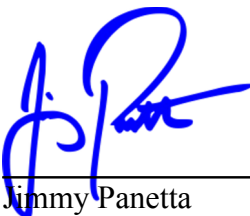
Tony Cárdenas
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Nikema Williams
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Grace Meng
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Jimmy Panetta
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Susan Wild
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Kim Schrier, M.D.
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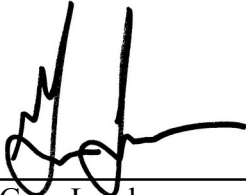
Gabe Amo
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Jim Costa
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Stacey E. Plaskett
Member of Congress



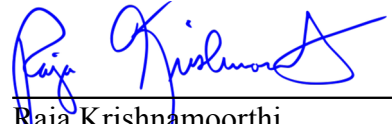
Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



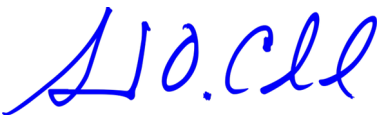
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



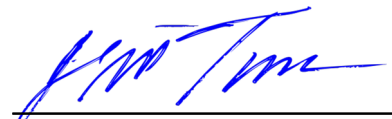
Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.
Member of Congress



Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



David J. Trone
Member of Congress



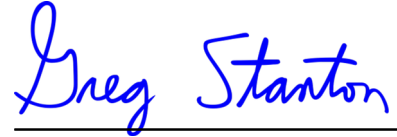
Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



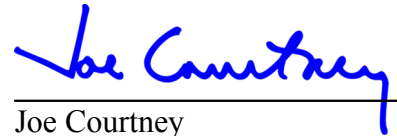
Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Greg Stanton
Member of Congress



Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



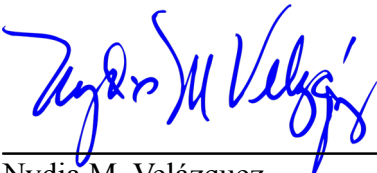
Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



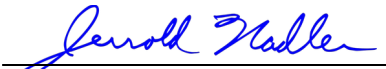
Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress



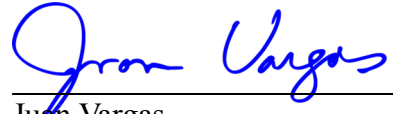
Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



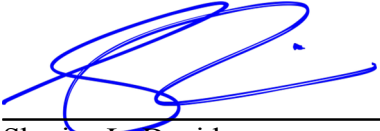
Steven Horsford
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
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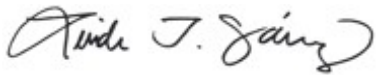
Juan Vargas
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Sharice L. Davids
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Doris Matsui
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Linda T. Sánchez
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Lisa Blunt Rochester
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Jared Huffman
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Mark Takano
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Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress



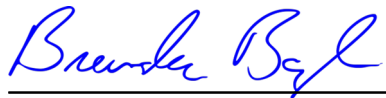
Lori Trahan
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Eric Swalwell
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Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



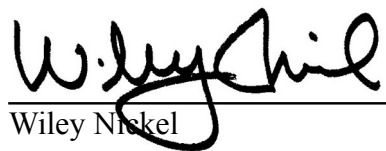
Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



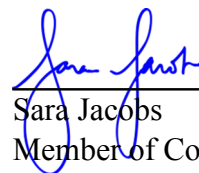
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



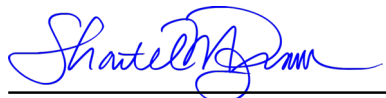
Angie Craig
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Wiley Nickel
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Sara Jacobs
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Shontel M. Brown
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Eric Sorensen
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Daniel T. Kildee
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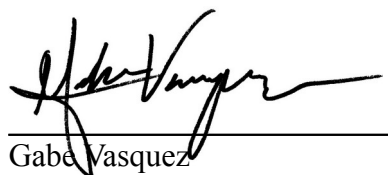
Teresa Leger Fernández
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



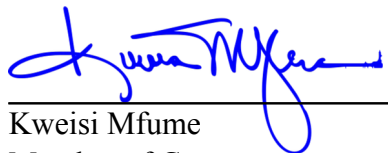
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Gabe Vasquez
Member of Congress



Deborah K. Ross
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



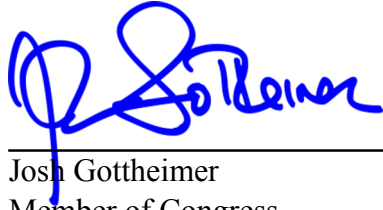
Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



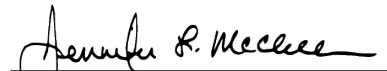
Susie Lee
Member of Congress



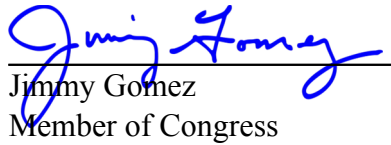
Donald Norcross
Member of Congress



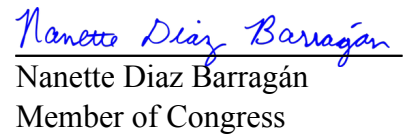
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Jennifer L. McClellan
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Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragan
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress




Troy A. Carter, Sr.
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



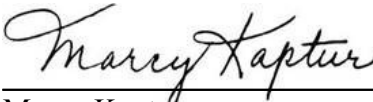
Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



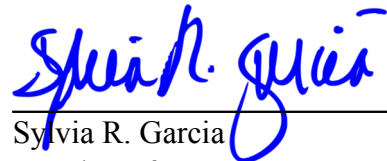
Marilyn Strickland
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



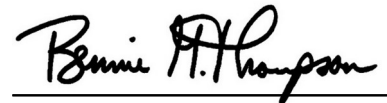
Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



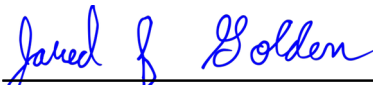
Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



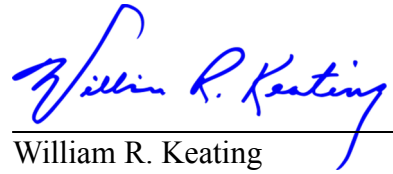
Jared Golden
Member of Congress



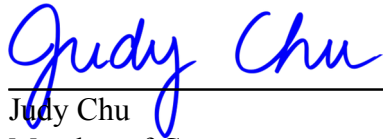
Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress



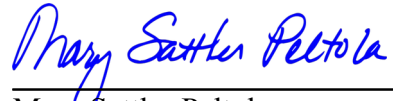
Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress



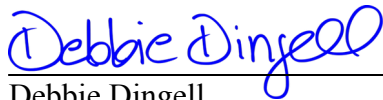
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress
Chairwoman, Congressional
Asian Pacific American
Caucus



Mary Sattler Peltola
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Rick Larsen
Member of Congress



Adam Smith
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Adam B. Schiff
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Summer Lee
Member of Congress



Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Bill Foster
Member of Congress



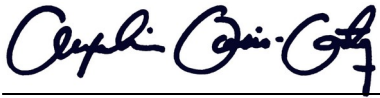
Dwight Evans
Member of Congress



Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



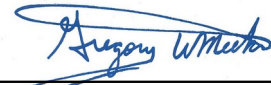
Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



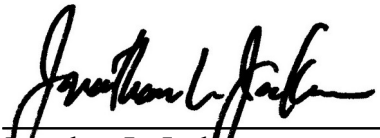
Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



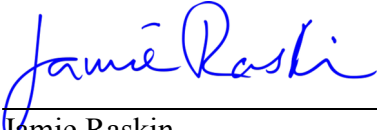
Chris Deluzio
Member of Congress



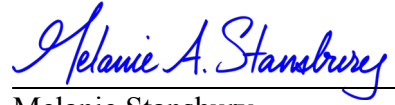
Betty McCollum
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Jim Tokuda
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



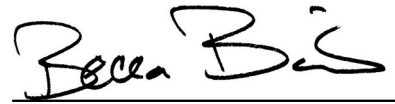
Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress



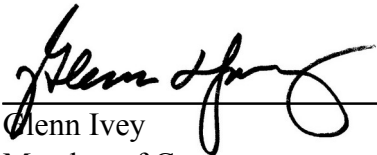
Becca Balint
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress




Cori Bush
Member of Congress



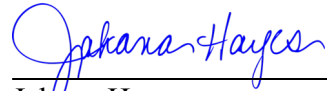
Glenn Ivey
Member of Congress



Darren Soto
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress



Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress



Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



Lauren Underwood
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress