

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 2, 2015

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey:

As you work to appropriate Fiscal Year 2016 funds beyond the current Continuing Resolution that runs through December 11, 2015, we respectfully ask that you provide sufficient funding to meet the needs of refugee assistance and resettlement programs.

As you know, 60 million people are displaced around the world, the largest number since World War II. The plight of more than 4 million Syrian refugees and 8 million internally displaced Syrians has compelled the United Nations to describe the Syrian refugee crisis as “the biggest humanitarian emergency of our era”, highlighting the urgent and immediate need for action.. While additional funds will not solve this crisis alone, they will go a long way to help refugees and displaced persons abroad, as well as to support refugees resettled in the United States. There is bipartisan support for increasing such funds, as evidenced by *The Middle East Refugee Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act* recently introduced by Senator Lindsey Graham (R-SC) and Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT).

Additionally, in order to properly secure the safety of the American people, we must ensure that as the United States accepts more refugees—including Syrians—we do so only after subjecting them to the most rigorous screening and security vetting of any category of traveler to the United States. Currently, it takes between 18 and 24 months for each individual, over 75% of whom are women and children, to enter the US. The current process for Syrian refugees to enter the country is extensive, and increasing funding would speed up the process and ensure the highest security measures are upheld.

Historically, the United States has recognized its moral and legal imperative to lead by example in addressing global issues such as refugee resettlement. That is why our nation is the largest resettlement country in the world, taking in almost 70 percent of all refugees resettled by the

UNHCR globally last year. Recently, the Obama Administration announced an increase in refugee admissions, from 70,000 last fiscal year, to 85,000 in FY2016 and 100,000 in FY2017. It is critical that adequate funding is provided so that local communities have the resources they need to help refugees integrate and thrive.

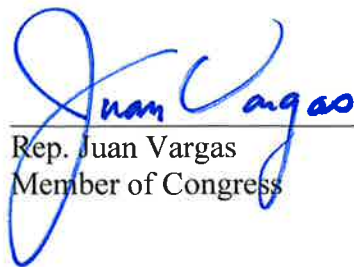
We ask that you substantially increase funds to meet the Administration's need for the following refugee-related accounts:

- **The U.S. Agency for International Development's International Disaster Assistance account** responds to the growing numbers of internally displaced persons, particularly in Syria and Iraq, and to supports refugee hosting countries and promote regional stability.
- **The Department of State's Migration and Refugee Assistance and Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance accounts** assist refugees abroad and identify, process and provide initial integration assistance to refugees resettled in the United States.
- **The Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement's Refugee and Entrant Assistance account** ensures local communities have the resources they need to help refugees integrate and thrive as they rebuild their lives.
- **The Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, for the Refugee, Asylum and International Operations Directorate account** to more expeditiously screen refugees for resettlement to the United States, a process that is currently fee-funded and in need of additional capacity.

As the United States encourages other countries to strengthen their commitments to refugee protection, the world is watching how the United States responds to the situation in Syria. As Congress makes funding decisions for FY16 and beyond, it is critical that our humanitarian and foreign policy priorities align with how we allocate our budgetary resources.

We deeply appreciate the work of the appropriations committee, and we respectfully encourage you to increase funding for these life-saving accounts so that the United States can demonstrate leadership in response to the global refugee crisis and the plight of Syrian refugees. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



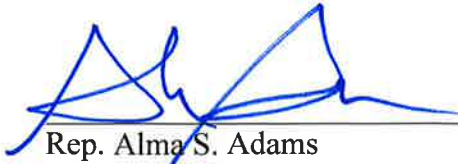
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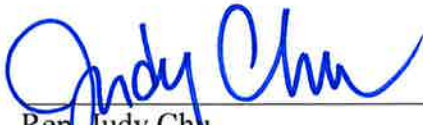
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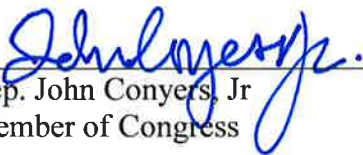
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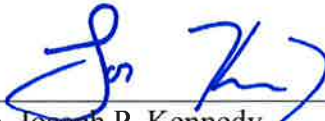
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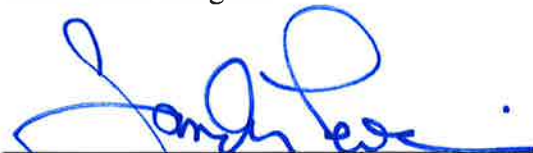
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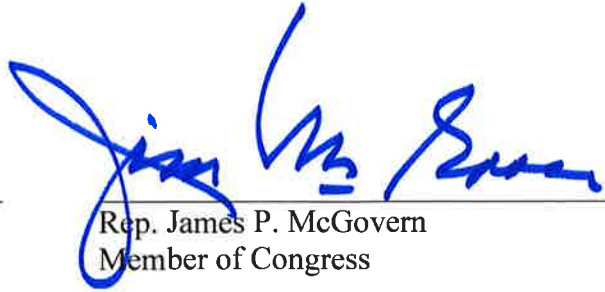
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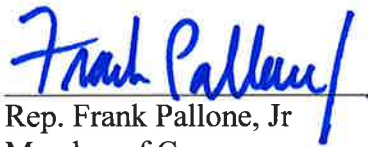
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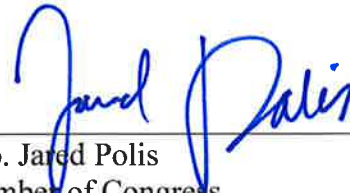
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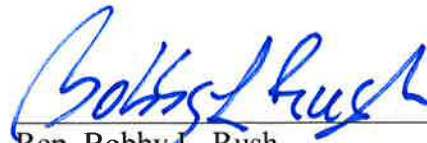
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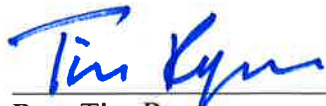
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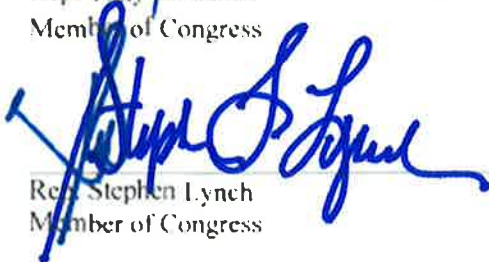
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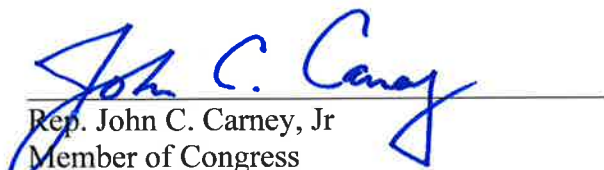
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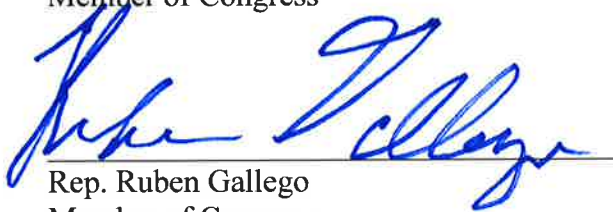

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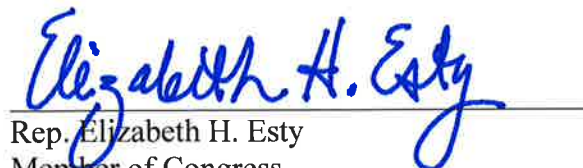

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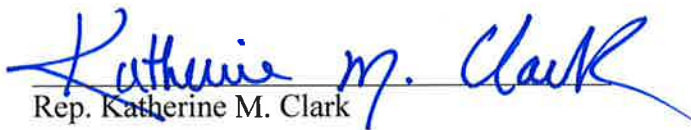
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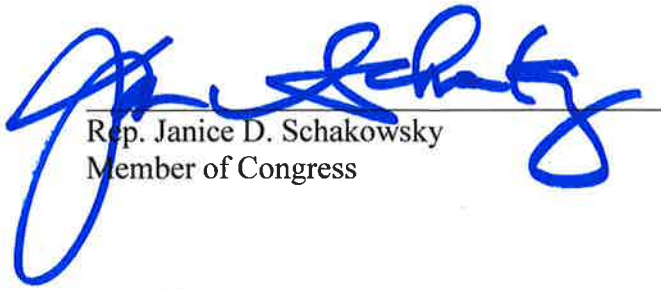
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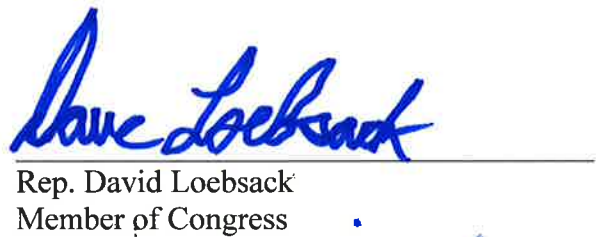
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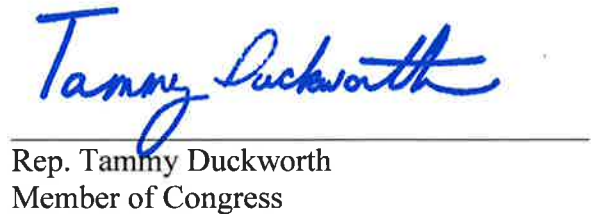
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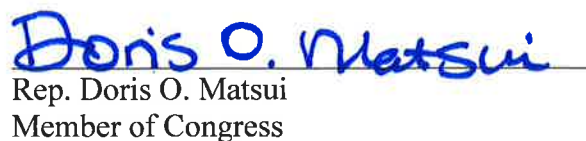
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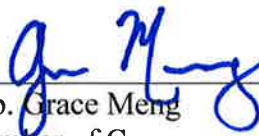
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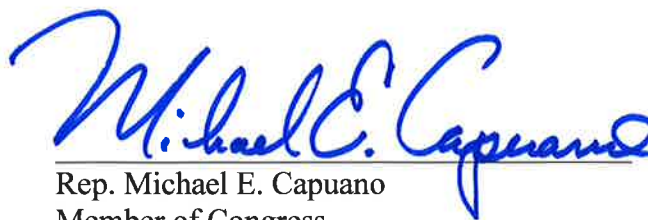
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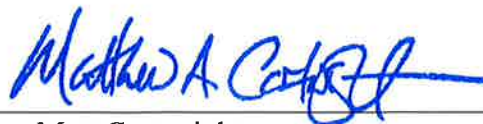
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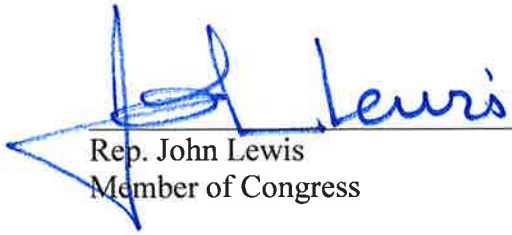
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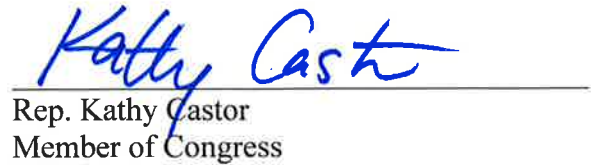
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