

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 30, 2010

His Excellency Nouri al-Maliki
Prime Minister
The Republic of Iraq

Dear Mr. Prime Minister:

We are writing to you today in your role as caretaker Prime Minister of Iraq in an appeal to you and all Iraqi political leaders to work together to form a national unity government as expeditiously as possible. We believe that Iraq's political leadership has the opportunity to show the Iraqi people and the world that democracy has taken hold in your nation, and that the sacrifices of the past several years have not been in vain.

On March 7, 2010, the Iraqi people voted in favor of a unified nation by supporting the two largest cross-community coalitions: Iraqiya, led by former Prime Minister Iyad Allawi, and your own State of Law alliance. Although Iraqiya gained two more seats than State of Law, the fact that your two coalitions gained the most support in the elections demonstrates that the Iraqi people wish to move beyond the ethnic- and religious-based factions of the past.

To that end, we applaud your willingness to meet with the leaders of the other blocs, including Dr. Allawi, and hope that such meetings continue, and even accelerate. We believe that such outreach on your part would send a clear signal to the Iraqi people that you heard and understood the message that they sent in this election: the support of a unified state. A national unity government would enable Iraq's diverse ethnic and religious groups to work together under one banner in a way that would allow *all* voices to be heard.

We believe that Iraq is at a turning point in its history; only a few nations have had the chance to break so cleanly with the past. One of those, South Africa, emerged from apartheid as a deeply divided nation on the verge of violence. But its political leaders – first and foremost among them Nelson Mandela – brought their people together and focused on the possibilities of the future instead of old grievances. They demonstrated that democracy does not mean a winner-take-all victory of the majority, but instead is best exemplified by good governance that reflects the will of the majority while respecting the rights of the minority. Today South Africa is a leader in the world, as exemplified by its selection to host the World Cup.

Iraq's political leaders can make a similar break with the past by forming a national unity government that places the Iraqi people's future over the personal agendas of individual politicians. As American legislators committed to a positive US-Iraqi relationship, we believe that such a unity government would help us in our efforts to advance our common interests. We recognize that the international community, especially America, has a special responsibility towards the Iraqi people. Although our military

involvement in Iraq is ending – as it should – we believe that engagement between our two nations in the political, cultural, and economic spheres would be of great benefit to ordinary Americans and Iraqis. A non-sectarian government in Iraq would make it much easier for us in our efforts to promote U.S.-Iraqi cooperation in such efforts as eliminating the remaining United Nations Chapter VII sanctions on your country. On the other hand, a sectarian government would, in our view, put at risk the Strategic Framework Agreement between our two nations.

We would also like to stress the importance of moving quickly but deliberately in forming such a government. In this, we echo the appeal of Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, a leader who has demonstrated that he is above politics and whose integrity is unquestioned. As you well know, the longer the government formation process takes, the more impatient and disillusioned the Iraqi people will become. This is evident in the increasing demands – which have already led to violence – from the Iraqi people for a competent government that can provide basic services such as electricity. We respectfully suggest that formation of a national unity government that can effectively address the day-to-day struggles that ordinary Iraqis face should be the highest priority of yourself and your colleagues who hold the leadership of Iraq’s winning political coalitions.

In closing, Mr. Prime Minister, we believe that a peaceful transfer of power from your government to a national unity government would be a clear signal that you have heard the Iraqi people’s call for a democracy in which all voices are respected. We urge you and Iraq’s other political leaders to rise above the divisions of the past and demonstrate true patriotism by working together to create a national unity government in Iraq.

Thank you for your consideration.

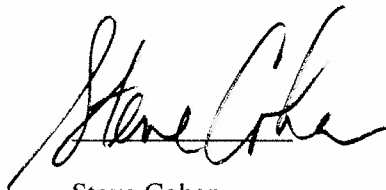
Sincerely,



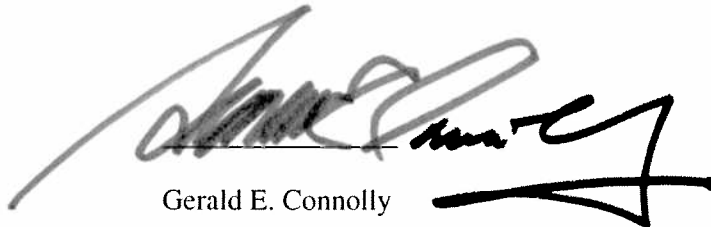
Bill Delahunt



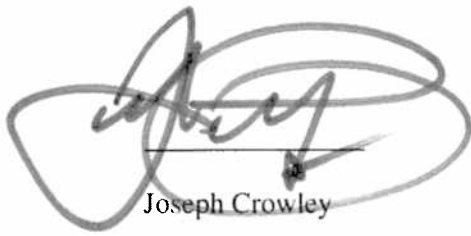
Brian Baird



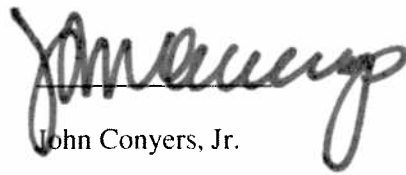
Steve Cohen



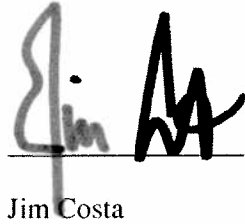
Gerald E. Connolly




Joseph Crowley




John Conyers, Jr.



Jim Costa



Rosa L. DeLauro



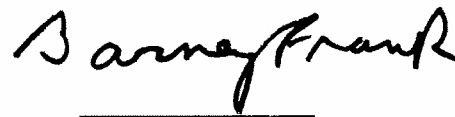
Keith Ellison



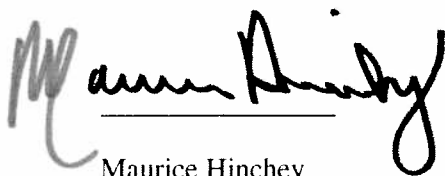
Sam Farr



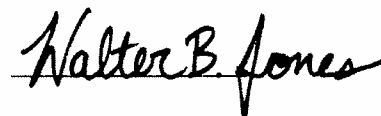
Bob Filner



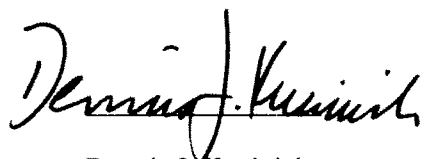
Barney Frank



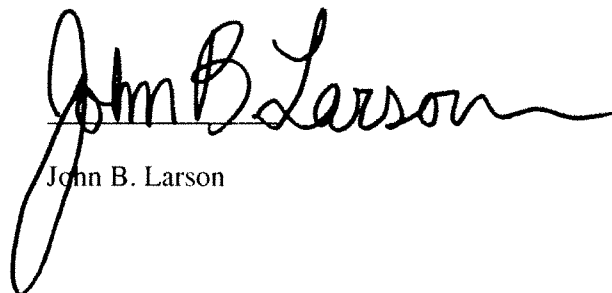
Maurice Hinchey



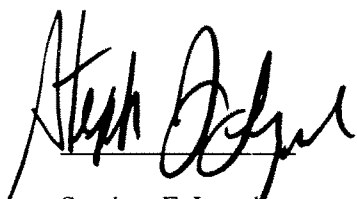
Walter B. Jones



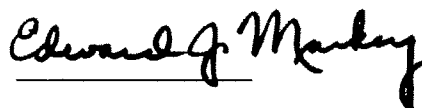
Dennis J. Kucinich



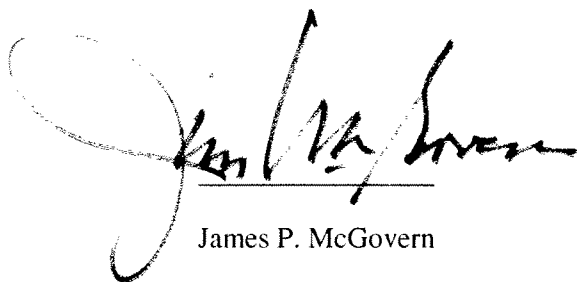
John B. Larson



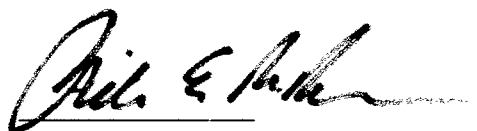
Stephen F. Lynch



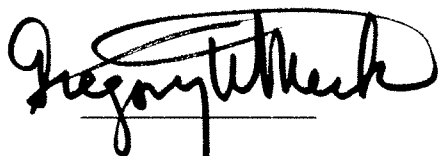
Edward J. Markey



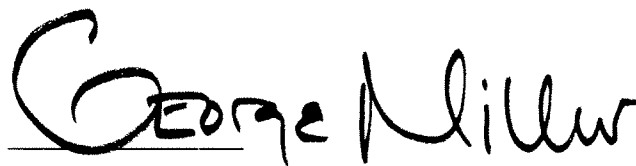
James P. McGovern



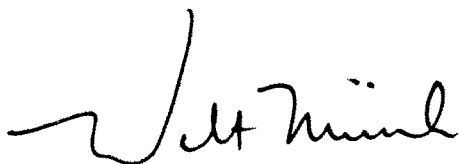
Michael E. McMahon



Gregory W. Meeks



George Miller



Walt Minnick



Jim Moran

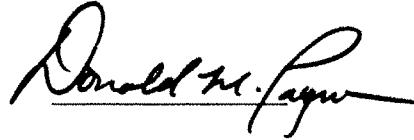


Richard E. Neal

John W. Olver



Bill Owens



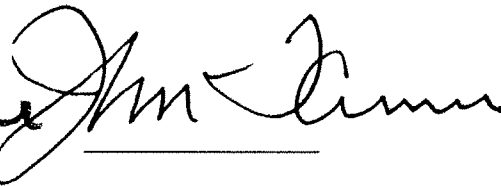
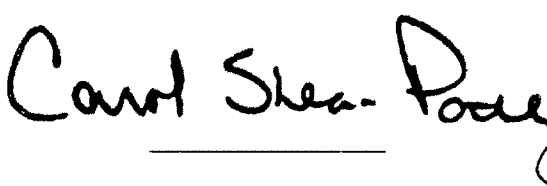
Donald M. Payne



Tim Ryan

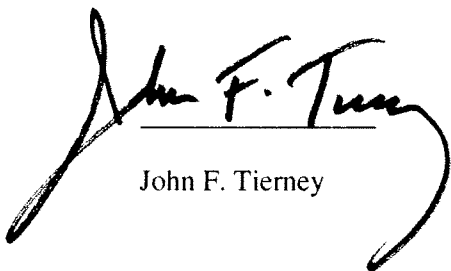


David Scott

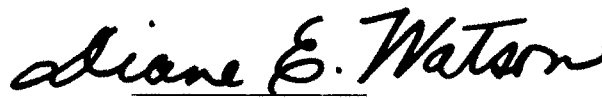


Carol Shea-Porter

John Tanner



John F. Tierney



Diane E. Watson

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Peter Welch". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "P".

Peter Welch