

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 22, 2016

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations,
and Related Programs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Granger and Ranking Member Lowey:

We write to express our strong support for continued funding of HIV/AIDS vaccine research and development. We are gratified that America's leadership in the global effort to address this pandemic has a history of strong bipartisan support, both in Congress and in Republican and Democratic administrations. The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) was initiated by President George W. Bush, and that critical leadership has continued through today. Through the PEPFAR bilateral program and support for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, U.S. government resources have provided critically needed prevention and treatment that has saved millions of lives across the globe. As President Obama noted in his 2016 State of the Union Address, "we're moving toward a historic accomplishment – the first AIDS-free generation."

As we work to maintain our commitments to PEPFAR and the Global Fund, investment in the research and development of an HIV vaccine must be part of a comprehensive strategy to achieve the vision of an AIDS-free generation. Vaccines are highly powerful and cost-effective tools for controlling the spread of a virus and continued investments in them by the United States government could lead the way to stopping the AIDS pandemic in its tracks.

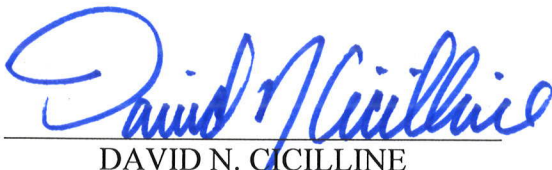
Over the last 30 years, HIV/AIDS has claimed an estimated 39 million lives. Nearly 37 million people currently live with HIV, and 2 million become newly infected every year. But the good news is that sustained, bipartisan federal support has already led to major advances in AIDS vaccine research and development, including notable progress in the last couple of years. American researchers, as well as small- and medium-sized biotechnology companies, are driving much of this innovative research.

In the FY2016 Report to the State, Foreign Operations Appropriations Bill, the Subcommittee included language that highlighted how important vaccine development is to the fight against HIV and malaria: "The Committee agrees that developing a vaccine is essential to the fight against malaria and HIV and encourages USAID to continue funding to support their advancement as part of a comprehensive prevention, diagnostic, and treatment strategy to reduce malaria and HIV worldwide." We encourage the Subcommittee to include the same language in the FY 2017 Report.

The AIDS vaccine field continues to achieve important scientific breakthroughs. American leadership is the linchpin to sustaining this momentum. The promise of an HIV vaccine cannot and will not be realized without the abiding, bipartisan commitment to research funding by this Congress and our government.

Thank you for your consideration.

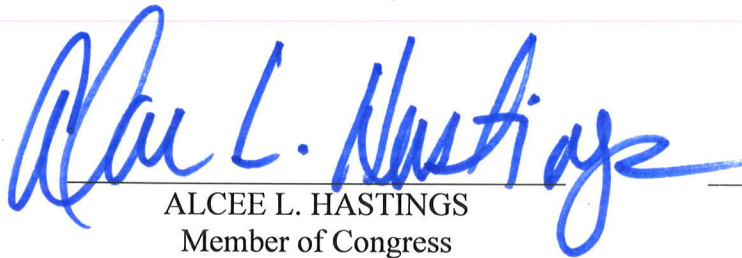
Sincerely,

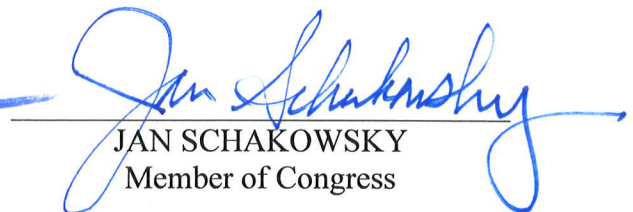

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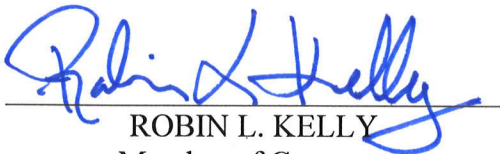
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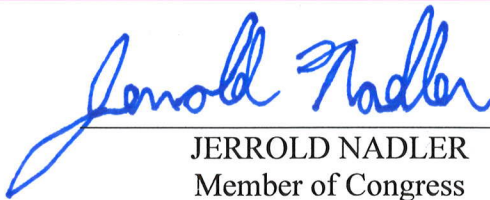
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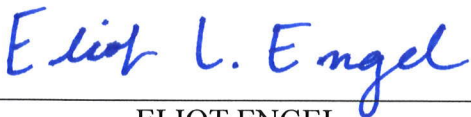
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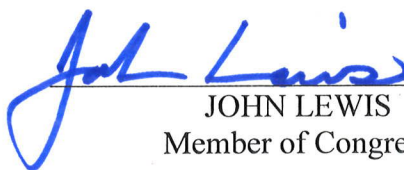
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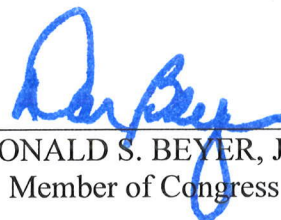
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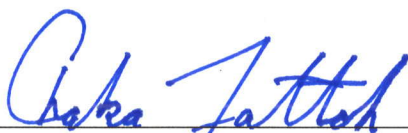
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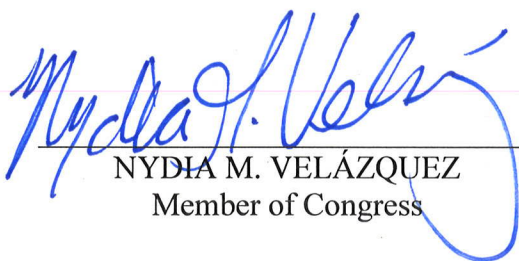
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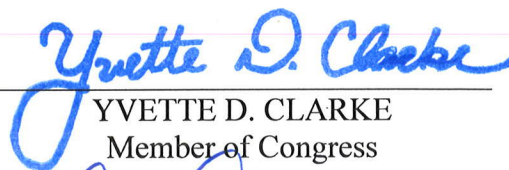
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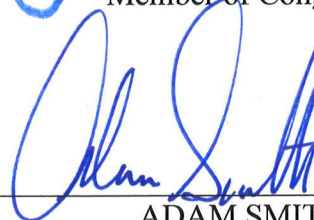
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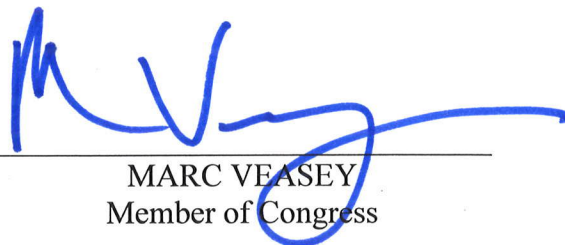
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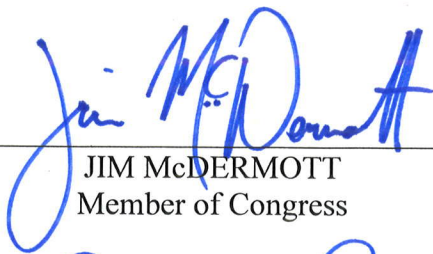
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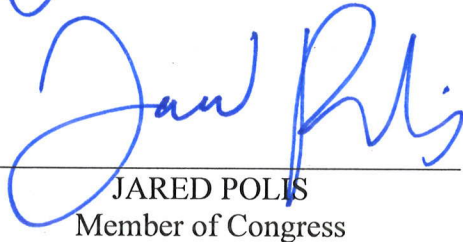
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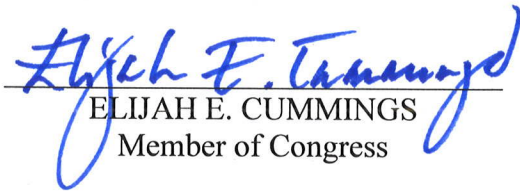
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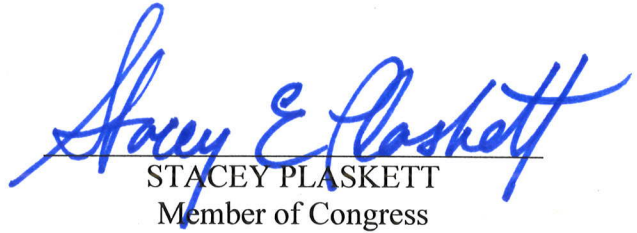
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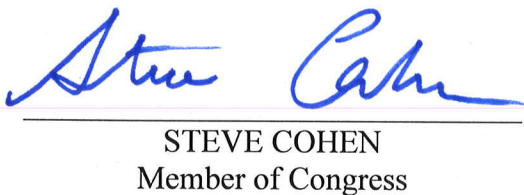
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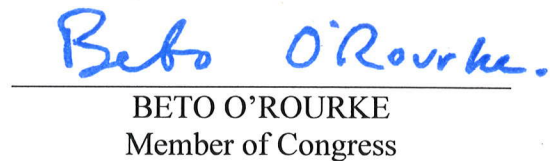
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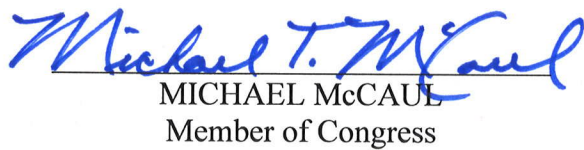
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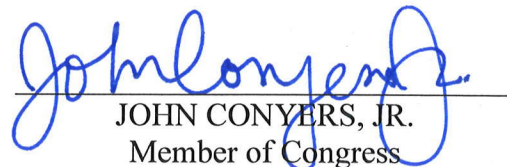
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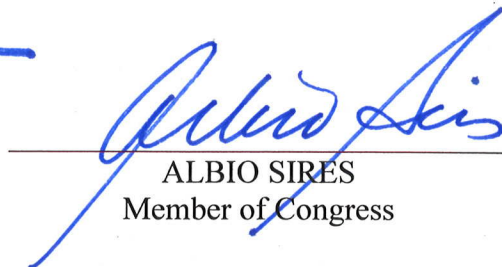
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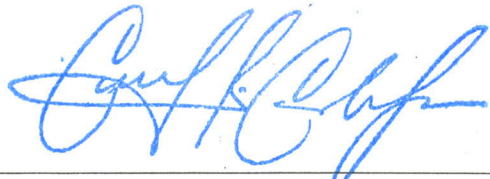
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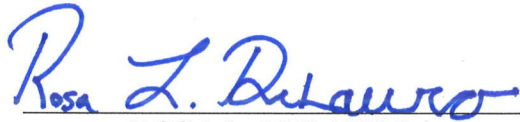
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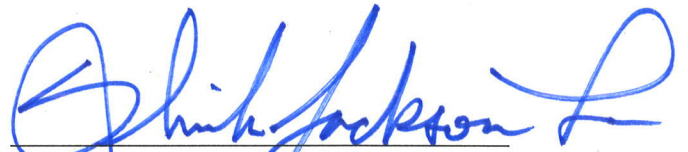
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