

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 1, 2019

The Honorable José Serrano
Chairman, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice,
Science and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
H-310 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce,
Justice, Science and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Serrano and Ranking Member Aderholt:

We are writing to express our strong support for the Youth Mentoring Grant program managed by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). As you develop the Fiscal Year 2020 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies Appropriations bill, we respectfully request at least \$120 million in funding for this important program, which supports the implementation, delivery, and enhancement of evidence-based mentoring services to improve outcomes and ensure that at-risk or underserved youth have the supports they need to thrive academically, personally, and professionally.

Youth who grow up in poverty or low-resource families or communities are more likely than their peers to be at risk for juvenile delinquency¹. They are also more likely than their peers to have contact with the juvenile justice or child welfare systems². Nationwide, of the young people being served by mentoring programs, 51% of them are low-income, 36% are academically at-risk, 14% are first generation to go to college, and 8% have incarcerated parents or family members³. Mentoring provides an evidence-based support for youth that improves positive outcomes and can keep young people from entering the juvenile justice system. In addition, quality early interventions like mentoring that divert high-risk youth from engaging in repeat criminal offenses can save the public nearly \$5.7 million in costs over a lifetime⁴. This compares with the median youth mentoring program's yearly operating budget, which is under \$50,000 (two-thirds of programs are under \$100,000); these programs are performing critical services for our young people with very little.

Youth mentoring is an important support that improves positive social development and behaviors in young people. Mentoring programs are able to support young people by focusing on specific youth outcome areas like academic achievement, career exploration, college access, leadership development, life skills, resiliency, civic engagement, and family support. Young people who meet regularly with their mentors are 52 percent less likely than their peers to skip a day of school, and youth with recurring behavioral problems who have a mentor maintain better attitudes towards school. Youth who meet regularly with their mentors are 46 percent less likely than their peers to start using illegal drugs. Young people who face opportunity gaps but have mentors are 130 percent more likely to hold a leadership position. Mentors also provide youth, especially those at risk of being disconnected from school and work, with access to critical social capital. Young people who face opportunity

¹ Melissa Sickmund and Charles Puzanhera, eds. *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 2014 National Report*. National Center for Juvenile Justice, 2014.

² Yang Jiang, Mercedes Ekono, and Curtis Skinner. *Basic Facts About Low Income Children*. National Center for Children in Poverty 2017.

³ Michael Garringer, Heather McDaniel and Sam McQuillin. *Examining Youth Mentoring Services Across America: Findings from the 2016 National Mentoring Survey*. MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2017.

⁴ Mark Cohen and Alex Piquero. *New Evidence on the Monetary Value of Saving a High Risk Youth*. Vanderbilt University Law and Economics, 2007.

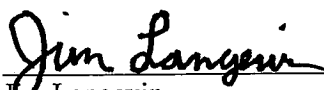
gaps but had a mentor were 55 percent more likely to enroll in college than their peers⁵. Mentors prepare young people for higher education and careers by introducing youth to resources they weren't familiar with, helping them set career goals and even using their personal contacts to help connect them and find careers in industries they did not have access to within their networks.

Mentoring provides young people at risk of engaging in negative behaviors with powerful tools to help them grow, develop and connect to social and economic opportunities. Despite the clear benefits of mentoring, the average mentoring program has 63 young people on its waitlist⁶, a challenge that can be solved by an increased investment in these programs. One in three young people is currently growing up without a mentor in the United States⁷, constituting a "mentoring gap" that demonstrates a need for collaboration, resources and investment in mentoring services. Funding for the Youth Mentoring Grant program helps close the mentoring gap and create meaningful relationships for young people at some of the most challenging times in their lives.

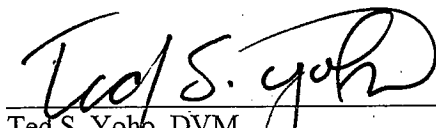
We respectfully request at least \$120 million in funding for the Youth Mentoring Grant program, which will save federal dollars over the long-term by reducing rates of incarceration, bolstering student academic achievement, and creating positive outcomes for young people.

Thank you for your consideration of this critical request to change the lives of our highest-needs young people.

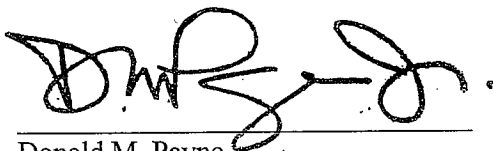
Sincerely,



Jim Langevin
Member of Congress



Ted S. Yoho, DVM
Member of Congress



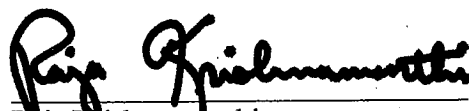
Donald M. Payne
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



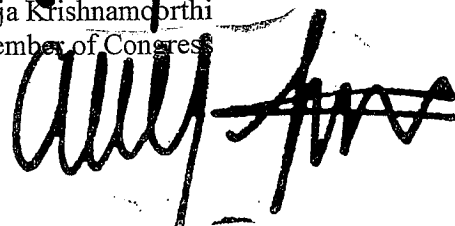
Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress



Raja Krishnamoorthi
Member of Congress



Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Abby Finkenauer
Member of Congress

⁵ Mary Bruce and John Bridgeland. *The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring*. Civic Enterprises with Hart Research Associates for MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2014.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

Pete Stauber

Pete Stauber
Member of Congress

Greg Stanton

Greg Stanton
Member of Congress

Daniel J. Kildee

Dan Kildee
Member of Congress

Val B. Demings

Val Demings
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Mike Doyle
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Ann McLane Kuster

Ann McLane Kuster
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John Yarmuth

John Yarmuth
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Jim McGovern

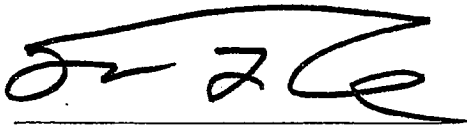
James P. McGovern
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Mark Takano

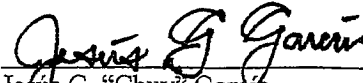
Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier

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Member of Congress



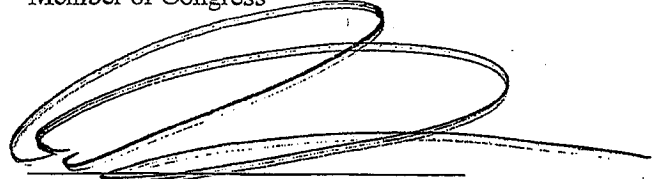
Cedric Richmond
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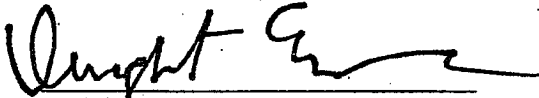
Jesus G. "Chuy" Garcia
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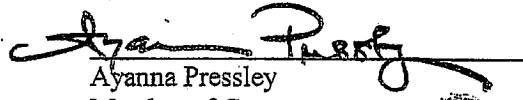
Nanette Diaz Barragan
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Antonio Delgado
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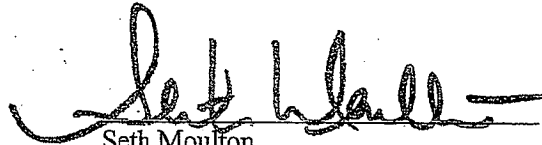
Dwight Evans
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Ayanna Pressley
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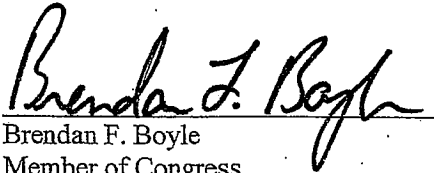
Earl Blumenauer
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Seth Moulton
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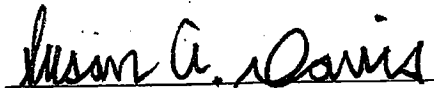
Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



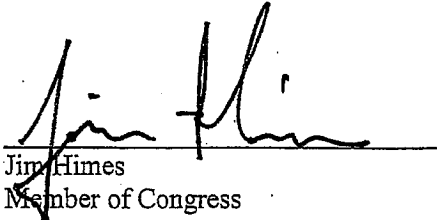
Brendan F. Boyle
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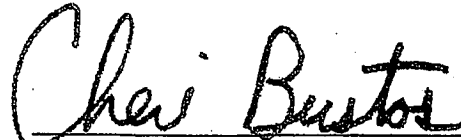
Dave Loebsack
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Susan A. Davis
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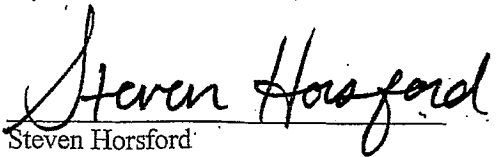
Jim Himes
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Cheri Bustos
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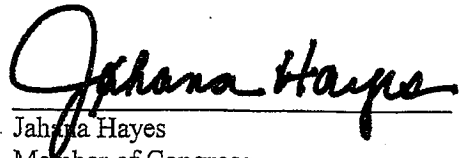
Anthony Brown
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Steven Horsford
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Jennifer González-Colón
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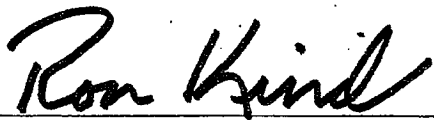
Jahana Hayes
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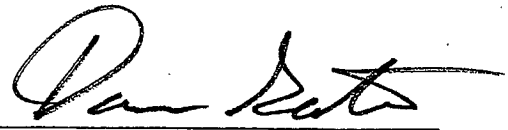
Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress



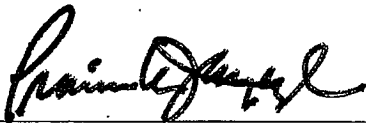
Tulsi Gabbard
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Ron Kind
Member of Congress



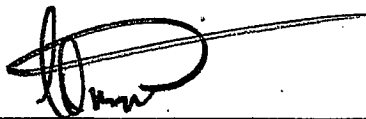
Darren Soto
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Pramila Jayapal
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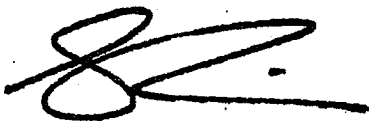
Lucy McBath M.C.
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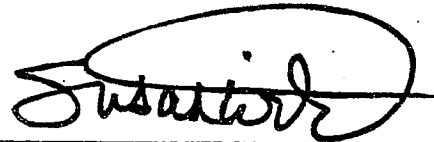
Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress



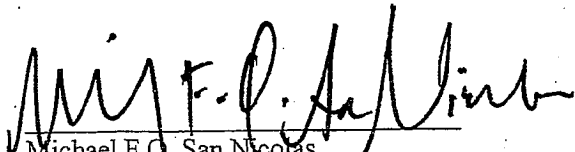
Mary Gay Scanlon
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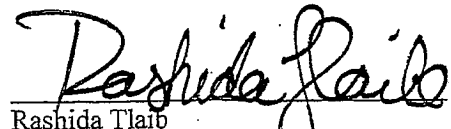



Sharice Davids
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Susan Wild
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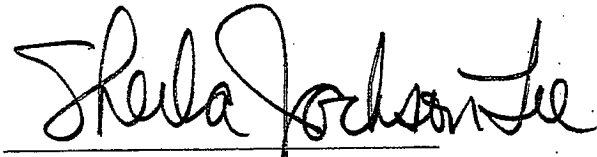

Rashida Tlaib
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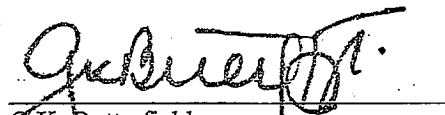

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Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

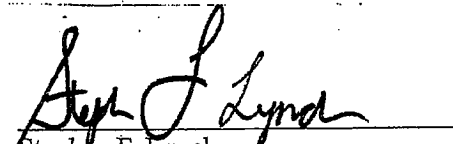

Kathy Castor
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Karen Bass
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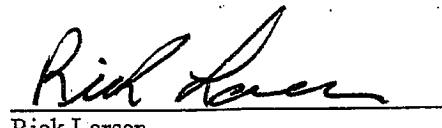

Sheila Jackson Lee
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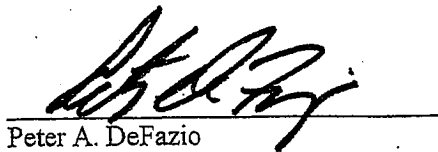

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Eddie Bernice Johnson

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Lloyd Doggett

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Gregory W. Meeks

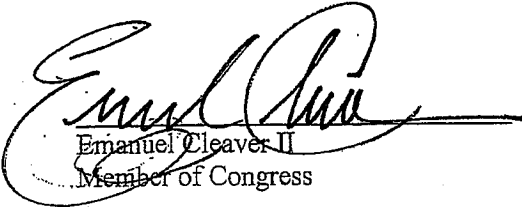
Gregory W. Meeks
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Sean Patrick Maloney
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Joe Courtney
Member of Congress



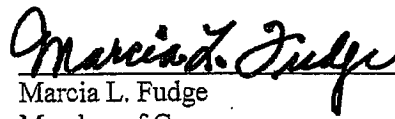
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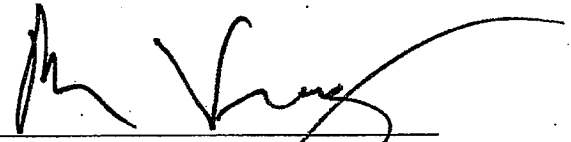
Raul Ruiz
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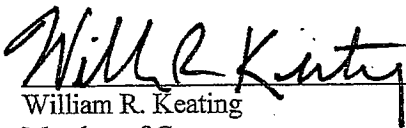
Marcia L. Fudge
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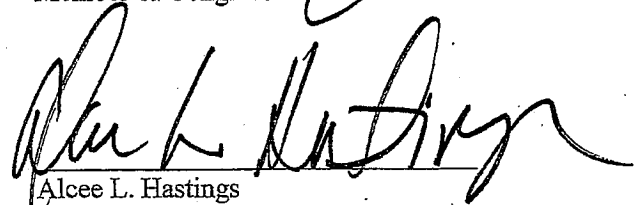
Al Green
Member of Congress



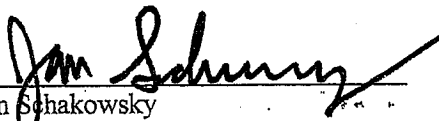
Marc Veasey
Member of Congress



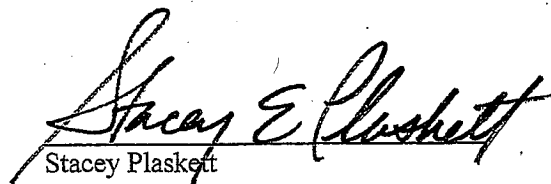
William R. Keating
Member of Congress



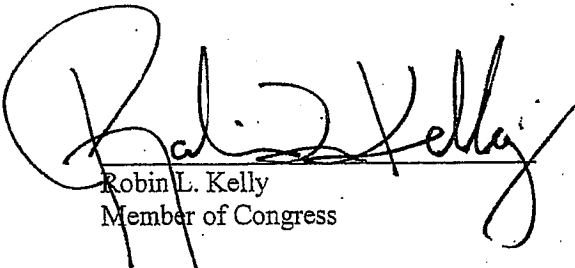
Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



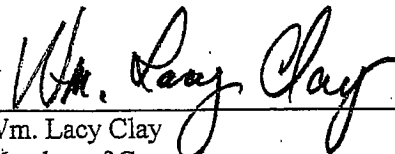
Jan Schakowsky
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Stacey Plaskett
Member of Congress



Robin L. Kelly
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Wm. Lacy Clay
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Tony Cárdenas

Tony Cárdenas
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Denny Heck

Denny Heck
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Joyce Beatty

Joyce Beatty
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Joe Neguse

Joe Neguse
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Frank Pallone, Jr.

Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress

Jennifer Wexton

Jennifer Wexton
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Deb Haaland

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Frederica Wilson

Frederica Wilson
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Barbara Lee

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

Donald Norcross

Donald Norcross
Member of Congress

Elijah E. Cummings

Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress

David Trone

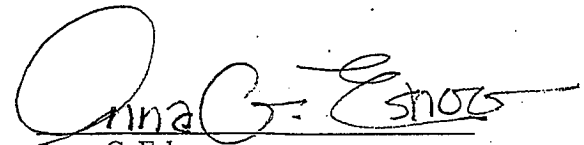
David Trone
Member of Congress

Conor Lamb

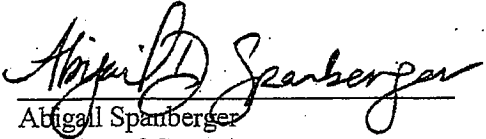
Conor Lamb
Member of Congress



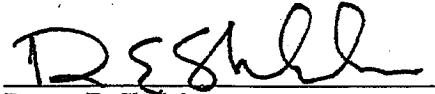
Elaine G. Luria
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Anna G. Eshoo
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Abigail Spanberger
Member of Congress



Donna E. Shalala
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