

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 19, 2015

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Services, and Education
Rayburn House Office Building, 2358-B
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education
Longworth House Office Building, 1016
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, we respectfully request that the Subcommittee continue to support congenital heart disease-related public health research and surveillance initiatives at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD) focused on addressing the lifelong needs of the growing population of Americans with congenital heart disease.

Congenital heart disease (CHD) is the most common birth defect and the leading cause of birth defect-related infant mortality. Nearly 1 in 100 babies are born with a CHD - five percent of which will not live to see their first birthday. Even for those who receive successful intervention, it is not a cure. Children and adults born with a CHD require ongoing, costly, specialized cardiac care, and face a lifelong risk of permanent disability and premature death. As a result, healthcare utilization among the CHD population is significantly higher than the general population. It is estimated that compared to their peers, the medical costs for individuals with congenital heart disease are 10 to 20 times greater. Hospitalization costs for pediatric patients alone total more than \$5.6 billion each year, which is 15 percent of all hospitalization costs for patients 20 years of age and younger.

Previous Congressional support for the congenital heart disease activities at the NCBDDD has yielded an increased understanding in the public health burden of this condition. Continued federal investment is necessary to provide rigorous epidemiological and longitudinal public health surveillance and research on infants, children, adolescents and adults to better understand congenital heart disease across the lifespan, improve outcomes and reduce costs.

We thank you and commend you for your leadership in ensuring that our federal commitment to investments that improve our nation's health outcomes for many diseases and disorders, such as congenital heart disease, do not falter.

Sincerely,



ADAM B. SCHIFF
Member of Congress



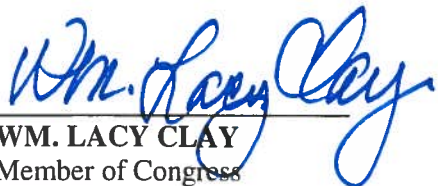
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Member of Congress



MATT CARTWRIGHT
Member of Congress



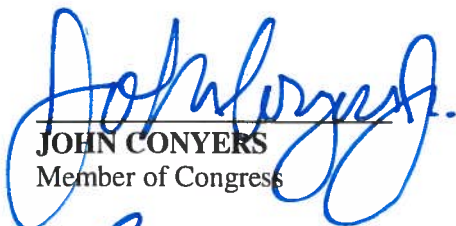
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WM. LACY CLAY
Member of Congress



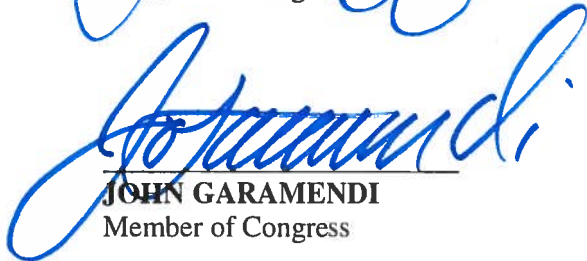
MIKE COFFMAN
Member of Congress



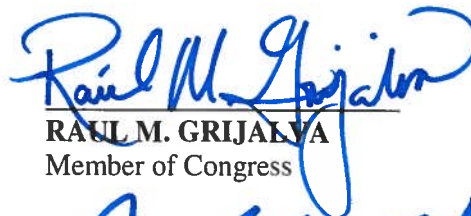
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RICHARD HANNA
Member of Congress



RICHARD HUDSON
Member of Congress



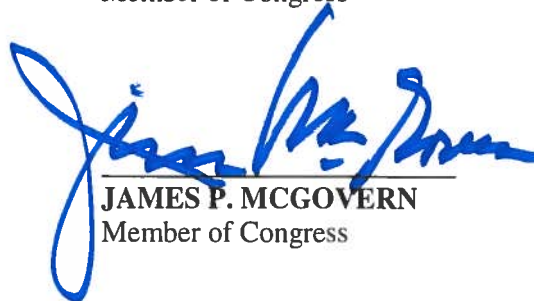
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Member of Congress



DAVE LOEBSACK
Member of Congress



CAROLYN MALONEY
Member of Congress



JAMES P. MCGOVERN
Member of Congress



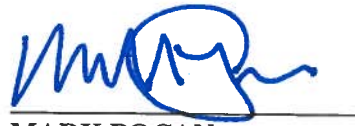
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CHARLES B. RANGEL
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