Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

March 31, 2016

The Honorable Jenny R. Yang
Chair
U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
131 M Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20507

Dear Chair Yang:

We are writing to express our strong support for your proposal to update the Employer Information Report (EEO-1) to include and gather data about compensation from employers. We believe this revision is necessary in identifying and ending patterns of pay disparity.

Women make up half the workforce, and are two-thirds of primary or co-breadwinners in America. Yet, after more than five decades after the passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963, a woman still makes only 79 cents, on average, for every dollar earned by a man. That gap is even wider for women of color. Compared to white men, African American women are paid 60 cents, Native American women are paid 59 cents, and Hispanic Women are paid 55 cents.

In 2009, President Obama made a powerful first step when he signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act into law, ensuring women who are discriminated against have the right to sue as long as their discriminatory pay continues. Yet, the discrimination associated with the pay gap persists.

Robust data can help address the problem today. Data exposes trends in hiring, paying, and promoting employees, which can inform appropriate interventions. It can reveal sex segregated jobs, a lack of women and people of color in upper management, and disparate salaries, benefits, or bonuses. And it can arm businesses with the information that they need to remedy any gaps.

We believe that the revised EEO-1 form will achieve this goal and is necessary to shine a light on pay practices, reveal trends, and support employers in proactively improving systems and closing gaps. This proposed revision will increase transparency in compensation, support employer efforts to self-monitor compensation policies, and strengthen EEOC and DOL's existing technical assistance programs and enforcement efforts, furthering their charge to eliminate workplace discrimination.

Moreover, some employers interested in eliminating the gender pay gap may not have taken the important first step of examining the extent of the issue on their own payrolls. With new data from the revised EEO-1, businesses will be able to empower their human resources departments to make data-driven changes, avoiding more costly interventions down the road.

Paying people fairly for the work they do shouldn't be dependent on their gender, race or ethnicity. We strongly believe that the proposed revisions to the EEO-1 are a fair and reasonable way to gather that data.

By acting for women now, and ensuring they get paid the same as men for the same work, we can give them, their families and our entire economy the tools to recover and thrive.

Sincerely,

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Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Eleanor Holmes Norton
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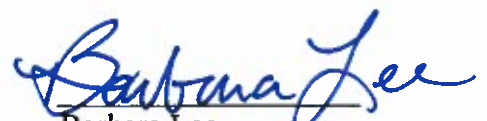John Conyers, Jr
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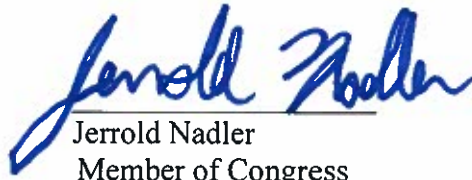Member of Congress

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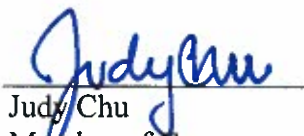Chris Van Hollen
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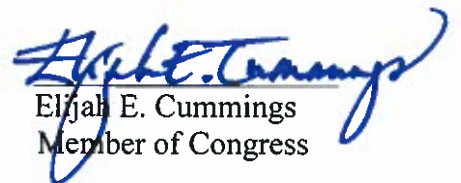Mark Takano
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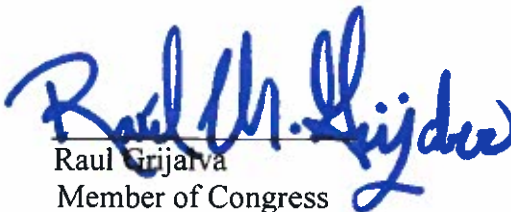
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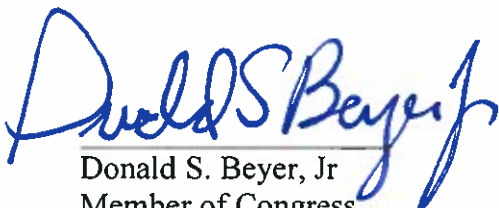Member of Congress

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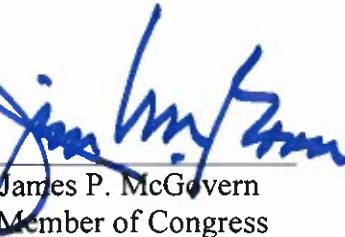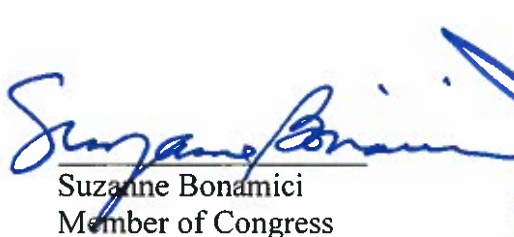Member of Congress

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