

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2004**

June 5, 2019

The Honorable Robert Wilkie  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
United States Department of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie,

We are writing this letter regarding the collective bargaining rights of federal workers at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. We are deeply concerned that the VA has pursued anti-labor policies with the union representing 260,000 of its frontline employees, the American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO (AFGE).

We believe the VA may be acting to precipitate a breakdown in negotiations by insisting on proposals that are similar to specific provisions of Executive Orders 13836, 13837, and 13839. Such proposals make it appear that the VA is seeking to circumvent the order of the United States District Court that enjoined many provisions of the Executive Orders.

Furthermore, beyond conflicts with the enjoined Executive Orders, we are alarmed that the VA's initial contract proposal is a gross departure from the current contract in place between the VA and AFGE. We are concerned that these actions will have a detrimental effect on veterans depending on the VA for medical care and other vital services.

Notably, the VA proposal includes limiting medical professionals in reporting violations that could threaten patient safety, bars employees from filing grievances against unjust disciplinary actions, and removes the ability of workers to challenge employer errors on payroll.

If the contract VA proposes was implemented, it would diminish labor protections and the collective bargaining rights that Congress intended, and would have a severe, destabilizing effect on agency operations, employee morale and the VA's ability to deliver high quality healthcare and benefits to America's Veterans.

As such, we strongly encourage the VA to bargain with AFGE in good faith, in full accordance with the established ground rules, and with the objective of improving care for our

veterans. Unions representing VA workers help improve the care veterans receive and the services they rely on by creating an efficient working environment.

Thank you for your consideration.



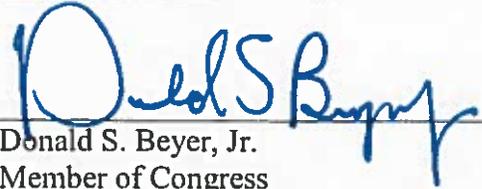
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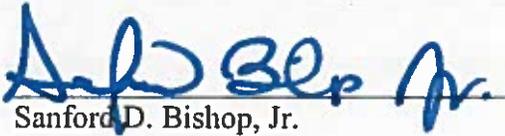
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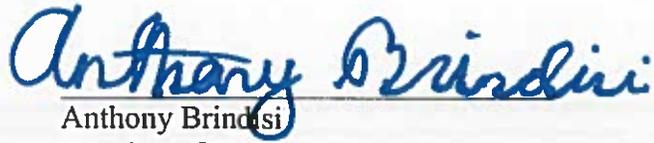
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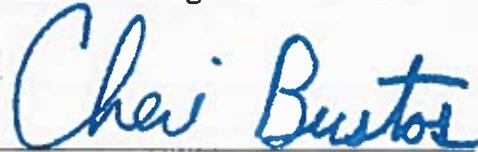
Brendan F. Boyle  
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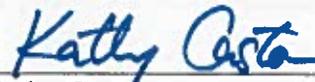
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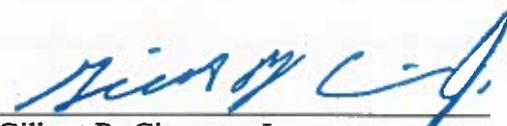
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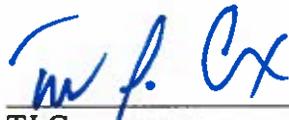
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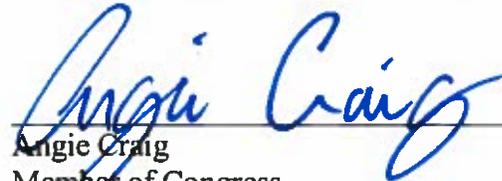
  
Yvette D. Clarke  
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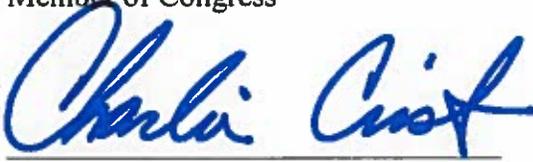
  
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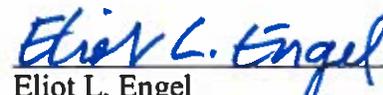
  
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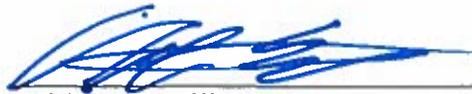
  
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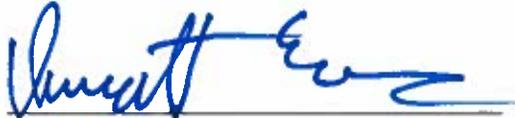
  
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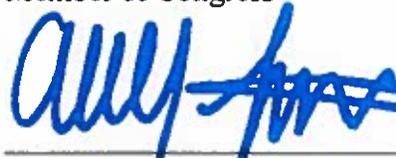
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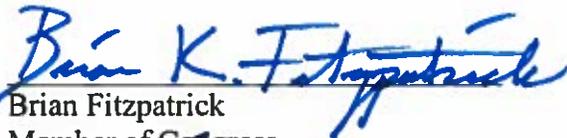
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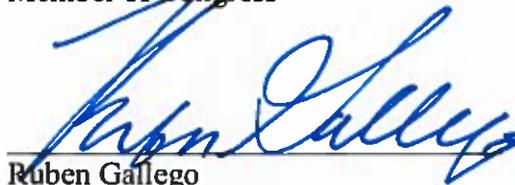
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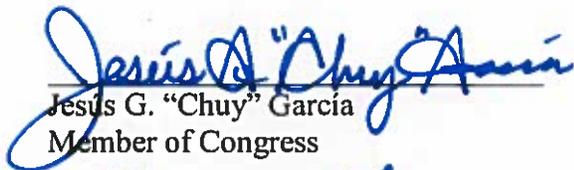
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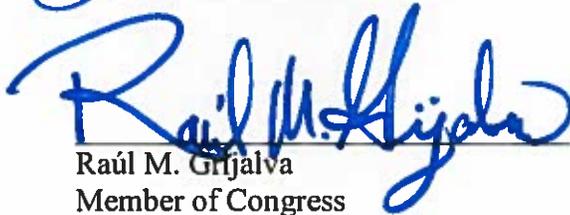
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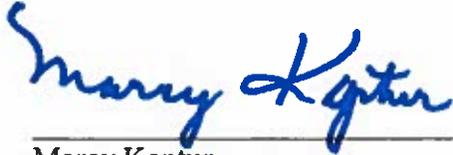
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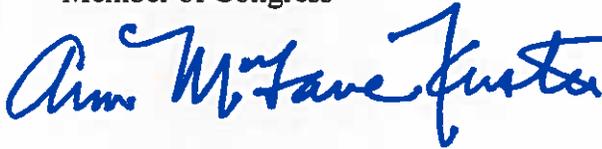
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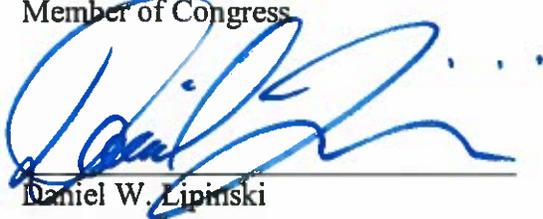
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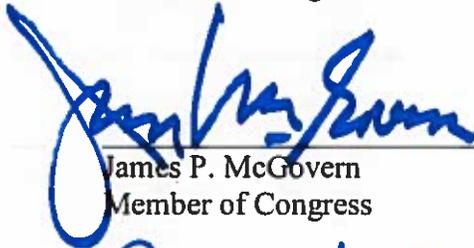
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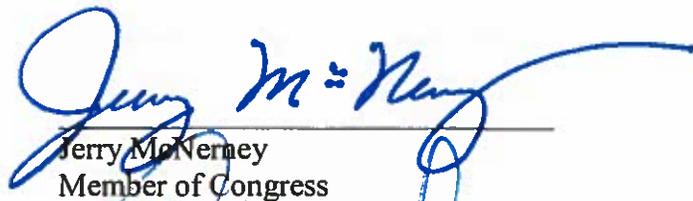
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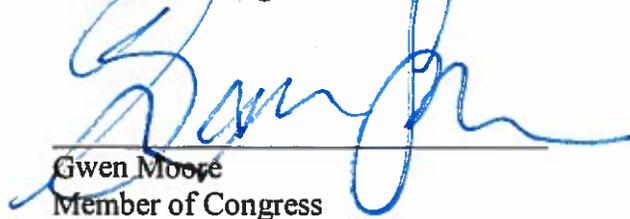
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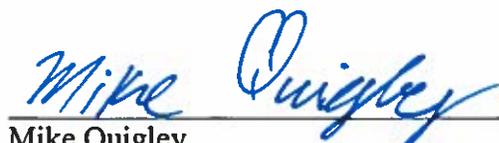
  
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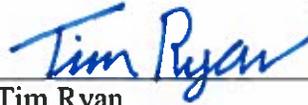
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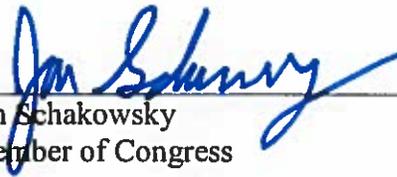
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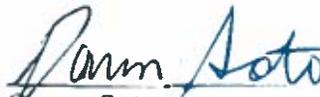
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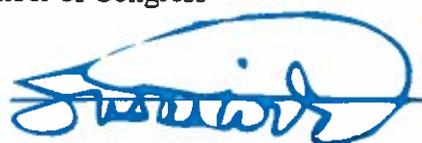
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