

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bob Corker
Chairman
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Menendez
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
523 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

April 11, 2018

Dear Chairman Corker and Ranking Member Menendez:

We write to convey our opposition to the nomination of Mike Pompeo to be Secretary of State. One of the primary responsibilities of the Secretary of State is to embrace and promote American values as the foremost diplomat and representative of the United States abroad. Our allies and adversaries alike look to the Secretary of State as the guidepost for American priorities and principles in our foreign policy. We believe that Mr. Pompeo's track record of opposing equal rights for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community, and his support for the use of torture, which is a tactic often used against LGBTI and other vulnerable communities, should disqualify him from consideration for the position of Secretary of State.

The Secretary of State must convey values and positions that send a message not only to those observing from abroad, but also to the courageous men and women of the State Department, who have dedicated their lives to the service of our country. Mr. Pompeo's long track record of opposition to equality for LGBTI Americans does not represent American values and would act as an unfortunate signal to those leaders around the world who wish to engage in discrimination against LGBTI people.

As a Member of Congress Pompeo was a vocal opponent of repealing the military's "Don't Ask Don't Tell" policy that forced American service members to hide their sexuality, saying "we cannot use military to promote social ideas that do not reflect the values of our nation." He went so far as to send a letter in 2011 asking Senate Leadership to include language in a spending bill

that would force the Department of Defense to discriminate against LGBTI service members who wanted to hold private events on military properties.

Even after the Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act as unconstitutional in 2014, Mr. Pompeo joined on multiple pieces of legislation intended to circumvent the Supreme Court's ruling and give states the right to continue to discriminate against the LGBTI community. The fact that Mr. Pompeo chose to continue to oppose Americans' constitutional rights to equality despite the unequivocal ruling of the judiciary is extremely concerning and raises the question of whether Mr. Pompeo, as Secretary of State, could be trusted to execute the laws of this country, which require him to treat all State Department employees equally, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Additionally, many Americans of all orientations, religions, backgrounds, and ethnicities work abroad on behalf of the United States, sometimes in hazardous conditions, and they need to know they have support of State Department leadership.

Moreover, in recent years there has been a widespread and concerted effort by foreign leaders to engage in or encourage violence, discrimination, and marginalization against LGBTI or suspected LGBTI people. Over just the past year we have seen government-led crackdowns and violence against LGBTI communities in Russia, Egypt, Indonesia, Azerbaijan and others. The United States has a long bipartisan tradition of promoting the human and civil rights of all people. Mr. Pompeo's opposition to fundamental human rights and equality for LGBTI individuals sends the wrong message at home and abroad and leaves the door open to foreign leaders who would seek to persecute their LGBTI citizens.

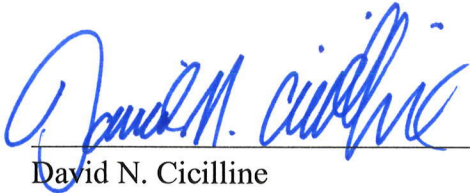
We are also extremely concerned by Mr. Pompeo's record on torture and the use of "enhanced interrogation techniques" by the United States. Mr. Pompeo has previously defended the use of "waterboarding," saying that it does not constitute torture. And though Mr. Pompeo committed in his CIA confirmation hearing that he would not follow any orders to break current law, he has since said—in public comments responding to a question lamenting that "black sites" are no longer available for interrogating detainees—that if presented with a situation where current law didn't "deliver," he would support efforts to rewrite laws to get what "America needs."

These positions were troubling when Mr. Pompeo was seeking the role of CIA Director, but are equally concerning as Mr. Pompeo seeks the position of Secretary of State. Vulnerable populations including the LGBTI community are at greater risk of being subject to torture and other illegal detention methods, whether by government, police, or non-government entities. As the country's top diplomat, Mr. Pompeo would be expected to represent the United States' positions with leaders of foreign governments, many of whom engage in torture. It is difficult to imagine that he would credibly be able to criticize or condemn foreign governments for engaging

in torture, in light of his own record on the subject. The elevation of Mr. Pompeo to the role of Secretary of State would clearly put these vulnerable communities at greater risk.

American foreign policy has been rooted in the belief of universal values and support for human rights for decades. We believe that the confirmation of Mike Pompeo to the position of Secretary of State is contrary to the American values of respect for the rule of law and human rights, especially respect for the safety of the individual and the fundamental right to security in one's person. The Secretary of State must be a champion of American values and Mr. Pompeo clearly does not represent the views of the nation. We respectfully urge you to oppose the confirmation of Mr. Pompeo to the position of Secretary of State.

Sincerely,



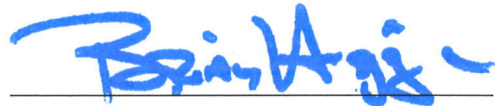
David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



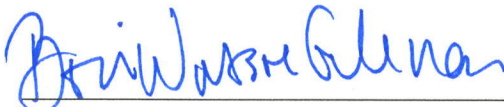
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Brian Higgins
Member of Congress



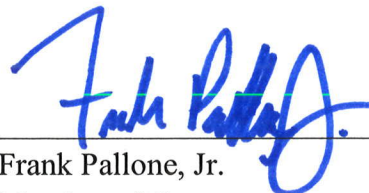
Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



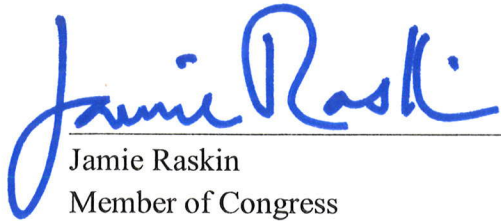
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



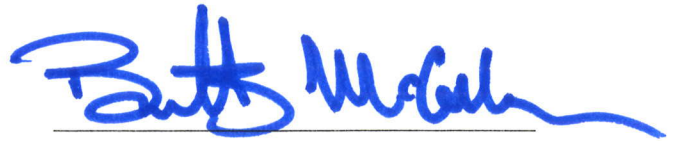
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



Frank Pallone, Jr.
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
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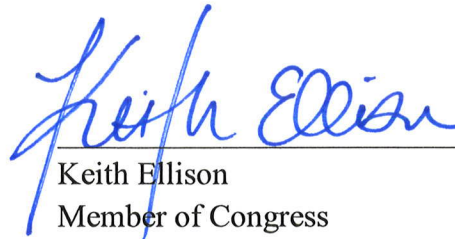
Mark DeSaulnier
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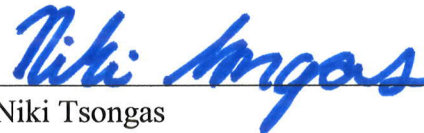
Donald A. McEachin
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Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress



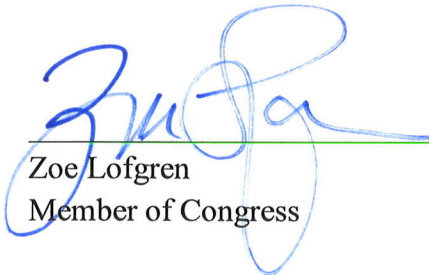
Niki Tsongas
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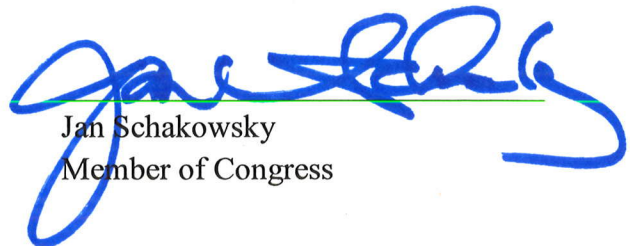
Bradley S. Schneider
Member of Congress



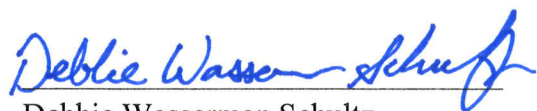
Darren Soto
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Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



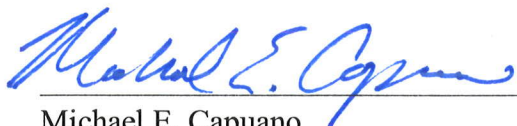
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Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



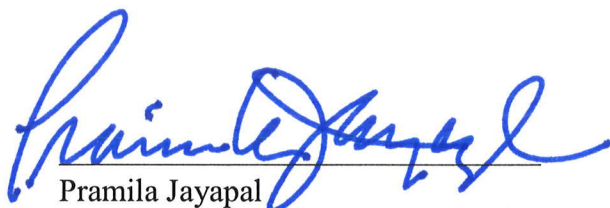
Nanette Diaz Barragán
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Michael E. Capuano
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Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



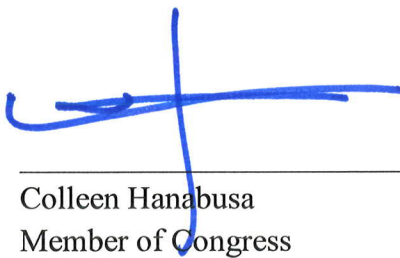
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Bill Foster
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Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress



Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



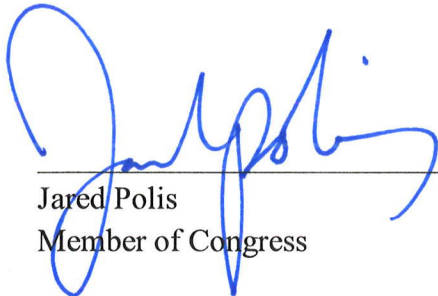
Suzan DelBene
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Carol Shea-Porter
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Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



Jared Polis
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



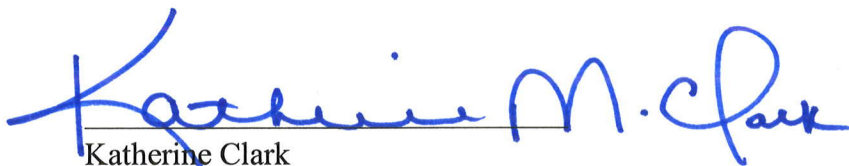
Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



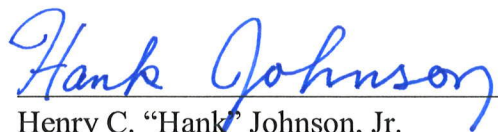
Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Karen Bass
Member of Congress



Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



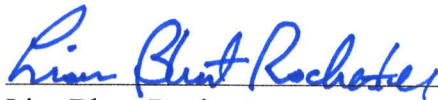
Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress



Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Lisa Blunt Rochester
Member of Congress



Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress

CC:

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, US Senate

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader, US Senate

Members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations