

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
H-305 Capitol,
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building,
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Lowey and Ranking Member Granger,

In support of the Congressional Lupus Caucus and on behalf of the thousands and possibly millions of Americans living with lupus, we are writing to express our support for critically important lupus programs in the FY 2020 appropriations bills.

We respectfully ask you to consider the following **funding request in the Department of Defense Appropriations bill**:

\$10 million for the Defense Health Program, Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs, Peer-Reviewed Lupus Research Program – Emerging research has found that those who serve in the military may be at greater risk of developing lupus. Robust funding for this program will support the development of innovative, high impact research to advance the understanding of lupus and lead to improved outcomes for our active-duty Service Members, Veterans, and other Americans with lupus. After initial Congressional funding in 2017, the response to the first Department of Defense grant solicitation by the nation’s research community was overwhelmingly positive – a total of 220 grant applications were received during the program’s first two years, representing an estimated \$80 million in requested funding. The \$5 million provided in each year has allowed funding for only 13 proposals during the first year and we expect that only 17 proposals will be funded for the second round of solicitations. This would leave 190 high quality projects without funding. The response from the research community to this opportunity demonstrates the tremendous interest, need and capacity for new lupus scientific research that would be possible as a result of this funding increase.

In addition, we ask that you consider the following **funding requests in the Labor, Health, and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill**:

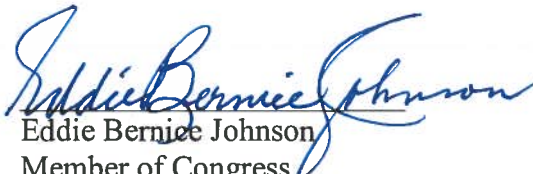
\$8 million for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, National Lupus Patient Registry – Since 2003, Congress has continued funding for the National Lupus Registry Program and the program has made important strides in lupus research and education. For example, the program funded research to help determine the incidence and prevalence of the disease in the United States and identified racial


disparities in the disease – that African American, Hispanic, Asian and Native American women are two to three times more likely to develop the disease. Moreover, in FY 2019, the Registry program is funding research into childhood lupus in order to learn more about the impacts of the disease on the pediatric population. And the program continues to educate the public, including health care providers, about lupus in order to speed time to diagnosis and ensure people receive the care they need as soon as possible. Funding is needed to continue this important work.


\$2 million for the Office of the HHS Secretary, Office of Minority Health, National Lupus Training, Outreach & Clinical Trial Program – Previous Congressional appropriations have enabled the OMH to identify barriers to minority participation in clinical trials and resulted in the development of clinical trial action plans. Continued funding is needed to implement these action plans and increase minority participation in clinical trials with a focus on African Americans, Hispanics, Asians and Native Americans, populations that are at greater risk of developing the disease. This will speed enrollment in trials, help ensure trials are representative of the lupus population and, ultimately, accelerate the development of potential new treatments for the disease.


Thank you for your support of these initiatives.


Sincerely,


Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Congressional Lupus Caucus


William R. Keating
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Congressional Lupus Caucus


Peter T. King
Member of Congress
Co-Chair, Congressional Lupus Caucus



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
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Mark DeSaulnier
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Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress


Katie Hill
Member of Congress

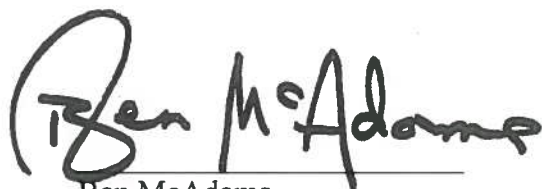

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

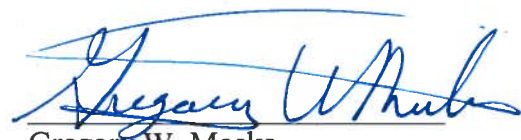

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Ben McAdams
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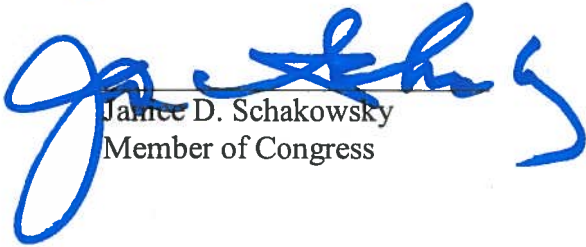

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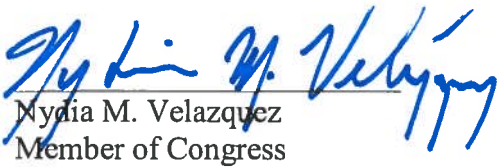
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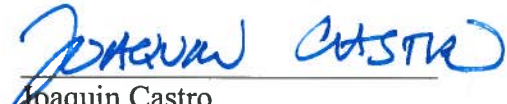
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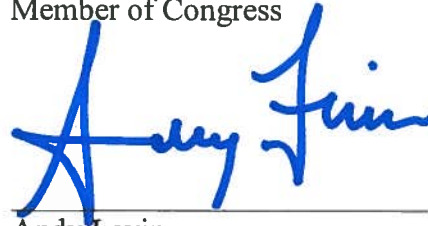
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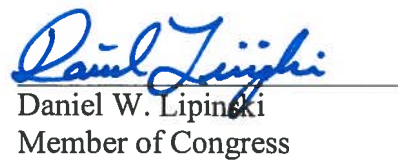
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



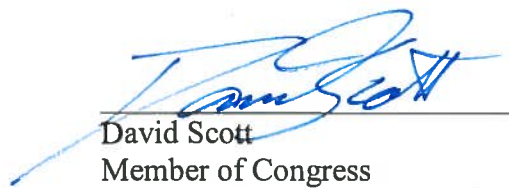
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Jahana Hayes
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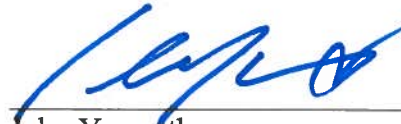
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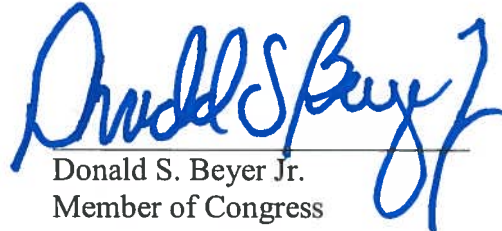
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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Jennifer Wexton
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Kathy Castor
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