

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

November 3, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray
Co-Chair, Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling
Co-Chair, Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction
129 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Murray and Chairman Hensarling:

We are writing to express our concern with reports that the House and Senate Agriculture Committees intend to use the expedited legislative process of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction to authorize new Farm Bill programs and entitlements outside of regular order. As part of the Deficit Reduction process, the Agriculture Committees are responsible for reviewing existing programs and identifying where the Congress can find savings. However, we are greatly troubled by any attempt to use the Joint Select Committee to authorize costly new mandatory programs without adequate Congressional review.

As you know, Congress charged the Joint Select Committee with the task of reducing the deficit by \$1.5 trillion between 2012 and 2021 and provided for its legislative recommendations to be brought to the floor of both the House and the Senate for expedited consideration. Furthermore, its recommendations are not subject to amendment or filibuster. These rules are prudent to dull the pain of politically contentious but fiscally responsible measures. Yet, it has become apparent that some believe they can create new programs and entitlements with limited Congressional scrutiny and input.

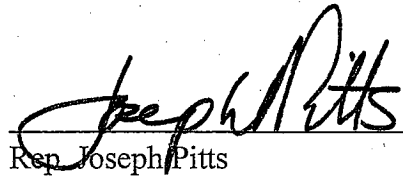
We urge the Joint Select Committee to resist proposals that would go beyond its mandate of deficit reduction and authorize new, complicated agriculture programs that have not been the subject of Congressional review. The Joint Select Committee should instead act to find efficiencies within existing programs. If the Agricultural Committees believe that

these cuts will require a fundamental redesign of agricultural programs, those Committees can and should move legislation through regular order.

Sincerely,



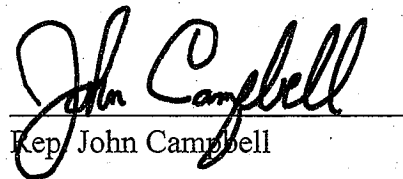
Rep. Ron Kind



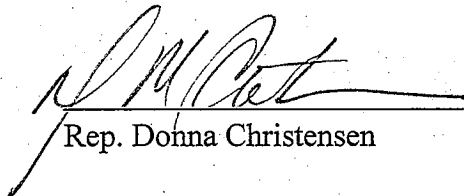
Rep. Joseph Pitts



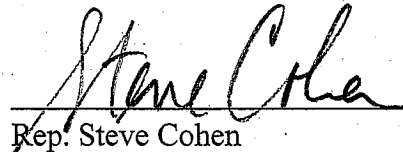
Rep. Earl Blumenauer



Rep. John Campbell



Rep. Donna Christensen



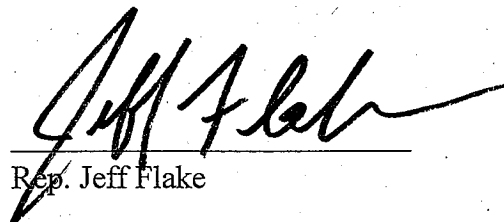
Rep. Steve Cohen



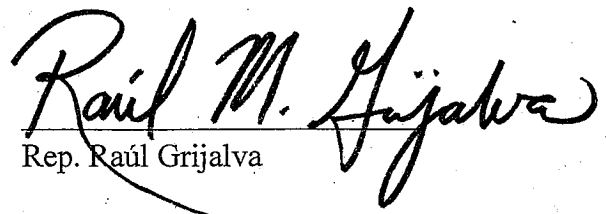
Rep. Peter DeFazio



Rep. Keith Ellison



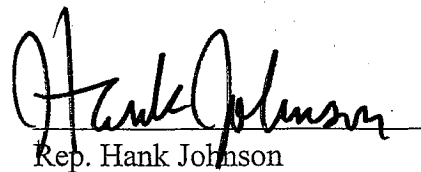
Rep. Jeff Flake



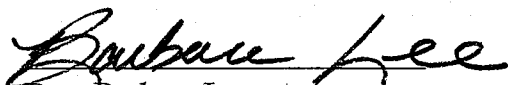
Rep. Raúl Grijalva

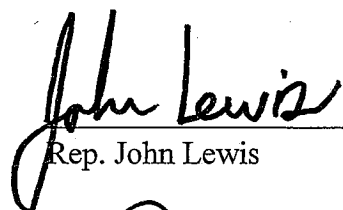


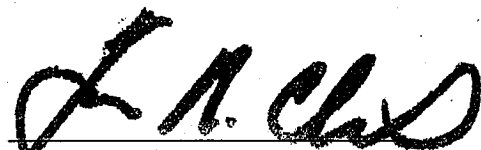
Rep. Rush Holt

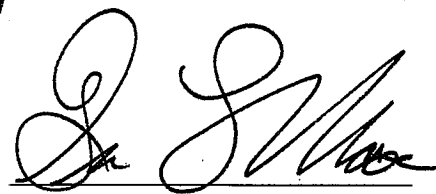


Rep. Hank Johnson


Rep. Barbara Lee

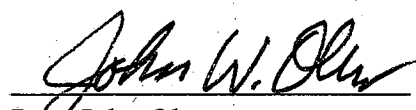

Rep. John Lewis

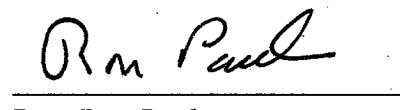

Rep. Tom McClintock

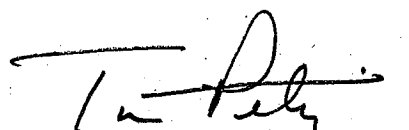

Rep. Gwen Moore

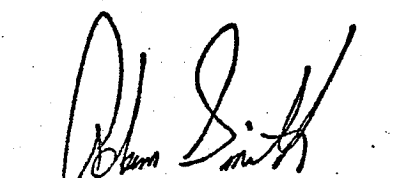

Rep. Jim Moran

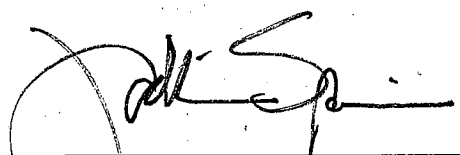

Rep. Mick Mulvaney


Rep. John Olver

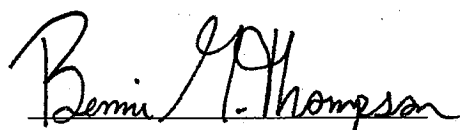

Rep. Ron Paul

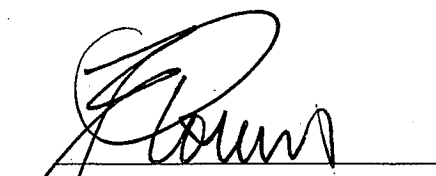

Rep. Tom Petri


Rep. Adam Smith


Rep. Jackie Speier


Rep. Pete Stark


Rep. Bennie G. Thompson


Rep. Edolphus Towns


Rep. Henry Waxman