

JOHN A. YARMUTH
MEMBER OF CONGRESS
3RD DISTRICT, KENTUCKY

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
CHAIRMAN

HOUSE DEMOCRATIC STEERING
AND POLICY COMMITTEE



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1703

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September 17, 2019

The Honorable Adam Smith
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
2216 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable James Inhofe
Chairman
Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Committee on Armed Services
228 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith, Chairman Inhofe, Ranking Member Thornberry, and Ranking Member Reed,

As you begin deliberations for the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020 conference, we respectfully request you keep the House-passed repeal of the Survivor Benefit Plan/ Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (SBP/DIC) offset, also known as the "widow's tax," in the final agreement. Surviving families of the men and women of our military have been waiting for a fix to this unfair offset for 40 years.

Current law unfairly requires surviving spouses of deceased military members to forfeit part or all of their Department of Defense Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuity when they receive Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) from the Department of Veterans Affairs. More than 60,000 surviving families are negatively impacted by the SBP-DIC offset, which reduces surviving spouses' benefits by an average of \$924 per month, or \$11,000 annually. The House-passed NDAA eliminated this unfair offset.

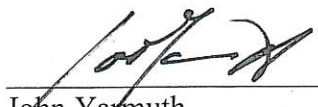
It is clear that Congress understands the importance of this issue and the need to finally end the widow's tax. The two pieces of legislation repealing this offset have a record number of bipartisan cosponsors. H.R. 553, The Military Surviving Spouses Equity Act currently has 372 cosponsors, and the companion legislation S. 622 has 75 cosponsors.

Our nation made promises to the surviving spouses of fallen service members, and it is among our highest moral responsibilities to see those promises honored. For far too long, Congress has failed to do what's right and keep our word to our heroes and their families. Now is the time to

repeal this offset once and for all, and send a clear message to those families that we value their sacrifice and we value the heroism of their loved ones.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We hope we can count on your support.

Sincerely,



John Yarmuth


C.A. Dutch Ruppertsberger


Val Demings


Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.


TJ Cox


Eleanor Holmes Norton


Brian Higgins


Mike Thompson


Jason Crow


Lori Trahan


Donald S. Beyer, Jr.

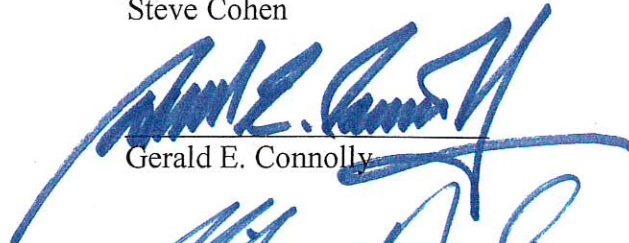

Chris Pappas


Debbie Dingell



Harley Rouda

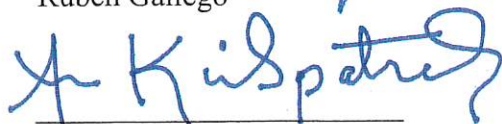

Ed Perlmutter


Steve Cohen


Gerald E. Connolly


Mike Doyle

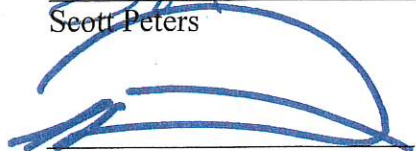

Ruben Gallego


Ann Kirkpatrick


Andy Kim

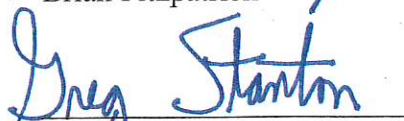

Anthony G. Brown



Scott Peters


Scott DesJarlais, M.D.



Vicente Gonzalez


Brian Fitzpatrick


Greg Stanton


Alan Lowenthal


Peter A. DeFazio

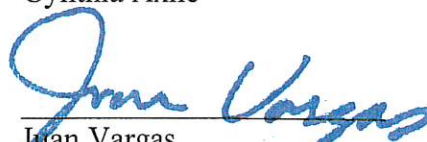

Elaine G. Luria

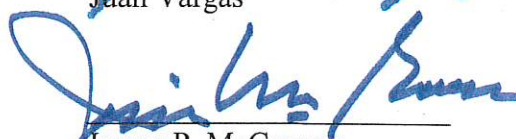

Peter Welch


Terri A. Sewell

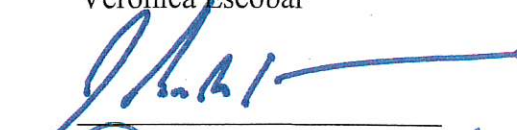

Bobby L. Rush


Cynthia Axne


Juan Vargas


James P. McGovern

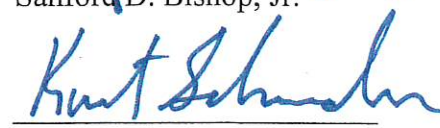

Veronica Escobar

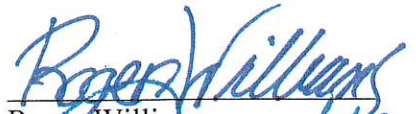

John Curtis

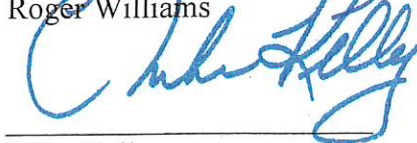

Deb Haaland



Jim Costa


Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.


Kurt Schrader


Roger Williams


Mike Kelly



Lisa Blunt Rochester



G. K. Butterfield


Lucille Roybal-Allard

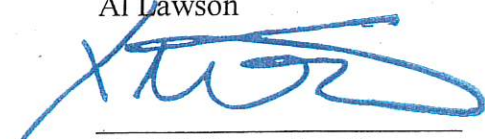

Alcee L. Hastings


Mark Takano


Randy K. Weber



David Trone


Al Lawson



Xochitl Torres Small


Tulsi Gabbard

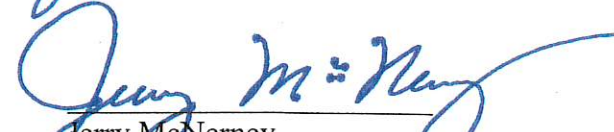

Linda T. Sánchez


Debbie Mucarsel-Powell



Ben Ray Luján


Sean Patrick Maloney


Jerrold Nadler


Jerry McNerney


Josh Harder



Pete Olson

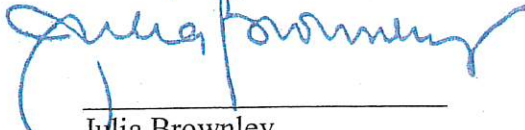

Katie Hill


Daniel W. Lipinski

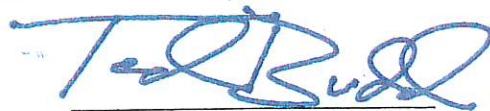

Jeff Van Drew



Bill Foster


Chellie Pingree


Julia Brownley

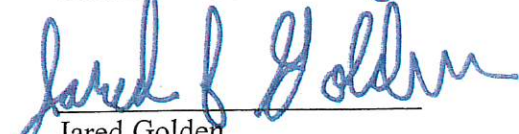

Albio Sires



Ted Budd


Max Rose



Sylvia R. Garcia


Raúl M. Grijalva


Jared Golden

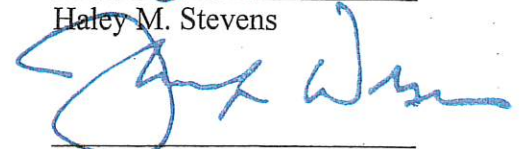

Kelly Armstrong



Ross Spano

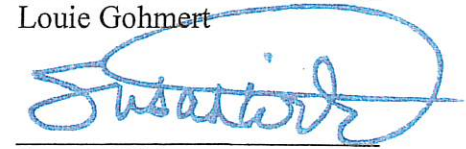

Raja Krishnamoorthi

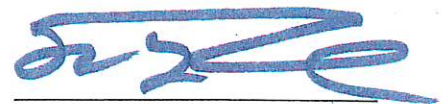

Diana DeGette


Haley M. Stevens


Jennifer Wexton

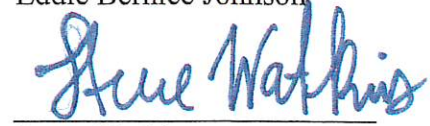

Louie Gohmert


Susan Wild



Cedric L. Richmond


Tom R. Suozzi


Eddie Bernice Johnson


Steve Watkins


Dina Titus


Rodney Davis



Betty McCollum



Conor Lamb

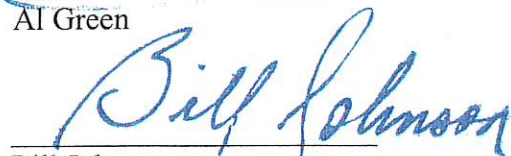

Ron Wright


Dean Phillips



Bill Pascrell, Jr.



Joseph P. Kennedy, III

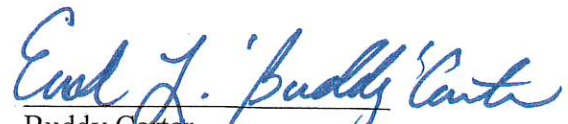

Al Green



Bill Johnson



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.


Gus Bilirakis



Lee Zeldin


Buddy Carter

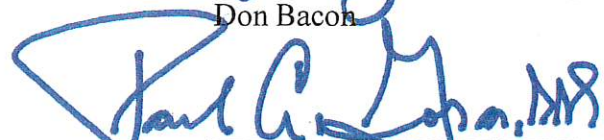

Joe Neguse



Sharice L. Davids

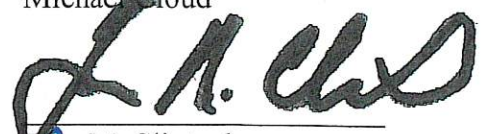

Peter King



Colin Allred

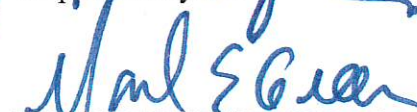

Don Bacon


Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.


Michael Cloud


Tom McClintock


Stephen F. Lynch


Mark Green

Don's Matsui

Doris O. Matsui

Dan Crenshaw

Dan Crenshaw

Lucy McBath

Lucy McBath

Ted S. Yoho

Ted S. Yoho, DVM

Danny K. Davis

Danny K. Davis

Jan Schakowsky

Jan Schakowsky

Sean Casten

Sean Casten

Greg Gianforte

Greg Gianforte

Ben McAdams

Ben McAdams

Kathy Castor

Kathy Castor

Ro Khanna

Ro Khanna

Angie Craig

Angie Craig

Mike Levin

Mike Levin

Salud Carbajal

Salud Carbajal

Don Young

Don Young

Emanuel Cleaver, II

Emanuel Cleaver, II

David N. Cicilline

David N. Cicilline

Darren Soto

Darren Soto

Tom O'Halleran

Tom O'Halleran

Suzan K. DelBene

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Stephanie Murphy

Stephanie Murphy

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

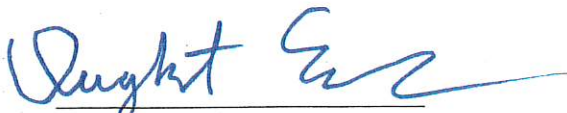
Robert C. "Bobby" Scott

French Hill

French Hill

Jahana Hayes

Jahana Hayes



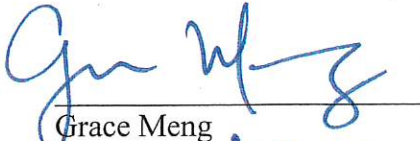
Dwight Evans



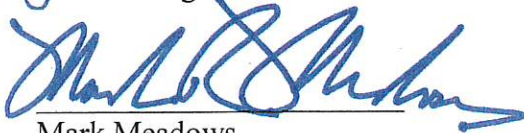
Scott R. Tipton



Rick Crawford



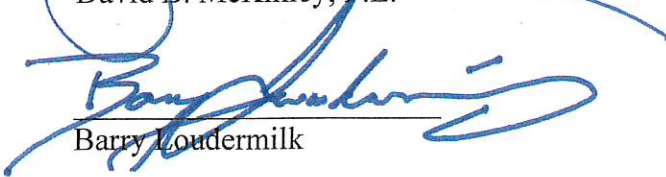
Grace Meng



Mark Meadows



David B. McKinley, P.E.



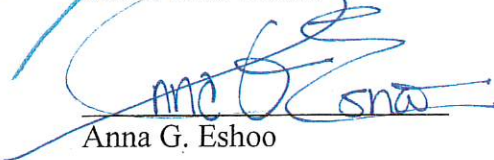
Barry Loudermilk



André Carson



Mario Diaz-Balart



Anna G. Eshoo



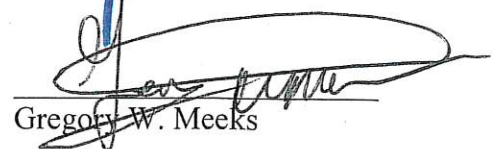
Mary Gay Scanlon



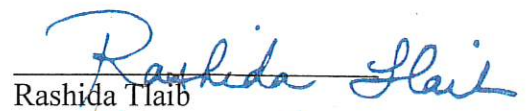
Antonio Delgado




Henry Cuellar



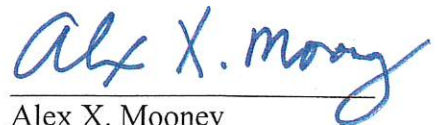
Gregory W. Meeks



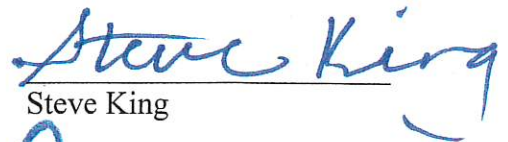
Rashida Tlaib



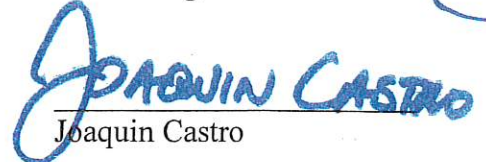
Ralph Norman



Alex X. Mooney



Steve King



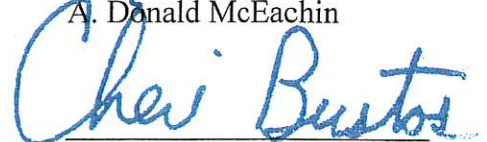
Joaquin Castro



Denver L. Riggleman, III



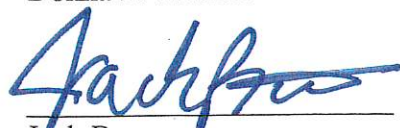
A. Donald McEachin



Cheri Bustos



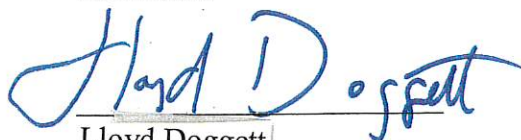
Donna E. Shalala



Jack Bergman



Bill Flores



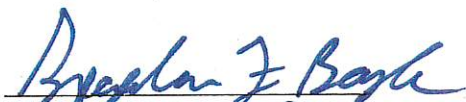
Lloyd Doggett



Ann McLane Kuster



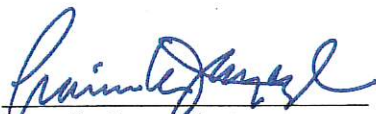
Abigail D. Spanberger



Brendan F. Boyle



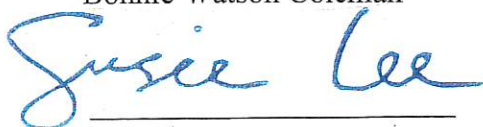
Katie Porter



Pramila Jayapal



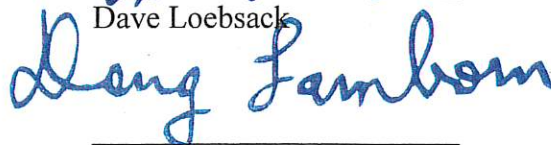
Bonnie Watson Coleman



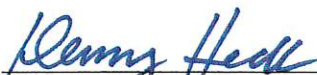
Susie Lee



Dave Loebsack



Doug Lamborn



Denny Heck



Jesus G. "Chuy" García



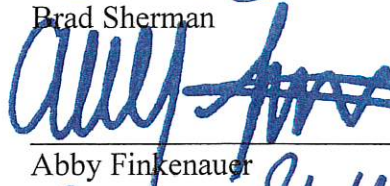
Norma J. Torres



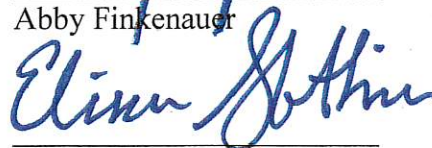
Charlie Crist



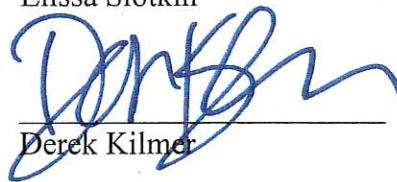
Brad Sherman



Abby Finkenauer



Elissa Slotkin



Derek Kilmer