

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 13, 2014

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling
Chairman
Financial Services Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Hensarling,

In recognition of the 50th Anniversary of the War on Poverty announced by President Lyndon Baines Johnson on January 8, 1964, we request that the Financial Services Committee commit to holding a series of hearings on strategies to reduce and eliminate poverty. The War on Poverty aimed to reduce joblessness, eliminate inadequate housing and housing discrimination, and address inadequate incomes. A number of the laws enacted and programs implemented since 1964 fall under the jurisdiction of the Financial Services Committee.

The gap between the rich and the poor in America has become a chasm. Today, 20 percent of the income in our country goes to the top one percent of Americans. The top one percent holds about 40 percent of the country's wealth. This inequity trickles down into our communities, our housing and rental markets, and our financial system, where a lack of access to banking services often causes households to take on large debt burdens.

We would be glad to work with you to hold hearings to explore what we have learned and what else we need to do to improve wages, housing adequacy and affordability and increase access to the financial mainstream. Hearings could examine strategies that improve accountability in the financial system, expand access to financial services in urban, rural, tribal and suburban communities, invest in locally-based community development activities, community development corporations, community development financial institutions, and enable remittances.

We welcome the opportunity to collaborate on hearings that note our successes at reducing poverty and recommend suggestions that strengthen our future.

Sincerely,



Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress

Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress

William Lacy Clay
Member of Congress

Carolyn McCarthy
Member of Congress

Stephen Lynch
Member of Congress

David Scott
Member of Congress

Al Green
Member of Congress

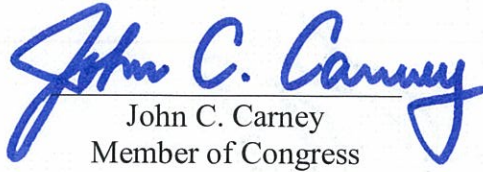
Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress


Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

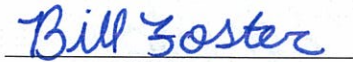
Ed Perlmutter
Member of Congress

James Himes
Member of Congress

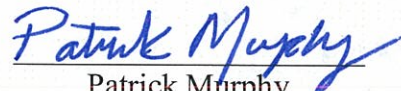
Gary Peters
Member of Congress



John C. Carney
Member of Congress



Terri Sewell
Member of Congress

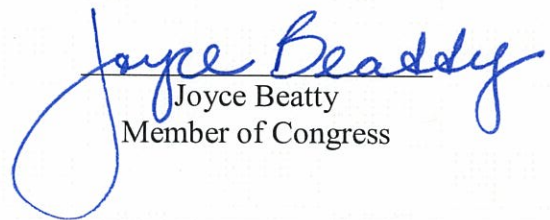

Bill Foster
Member of Congress

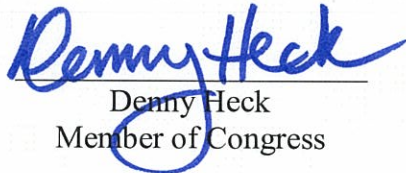

Daniel T. Kildee
Member of Congress


Patrick Murphy
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John K. Delaney
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Kyrsten Sinema
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Joyce Beatty
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Denny Heck
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