

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

July 20, 2015

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

The House Republicans have included campaign finance disclosure restrictions in the FY 2016 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill. These provisions are designed to protect secret money in our elections. They would prevent the Executive Branch from issuing rules to require public disclosure by government contractors and non-profit social welfare organizations, as well as shareholder disclosure by corporations.

The 2010 Supreme Court decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* opened the floodgates to secret campaign spending by corporations, and other outside organizations. In response, the DISCLOSE Act was introduced to require these groups to disclose their campaign spending. The House passed the DISCLOSE Act in 2010. Unfortunately, it fell one vote short of passing the Senate.

As a result, a wave of secret money has flowed into political campaigns from outside groups. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, in the 2012 Presidential election year, \$674.8 million of the \$1.294 billion outside campaign spending was not fully disclosed.

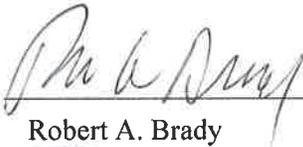
The Securities and Exchange Commission has received in excess of 1.2 million comments in favor of requiring corporations to disclose their campaign spending to their shareholders. Likewise, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has received extensive comments regarding the flawed IRS regulations which have allowed 501 (c)(4), social welfare organizations, to spend vast amounts of undisclosed money to influence federal elections. Finally, as you know, the White House has been working on an Executive Order to require Federal contractors to disclose their campaign finance activities.

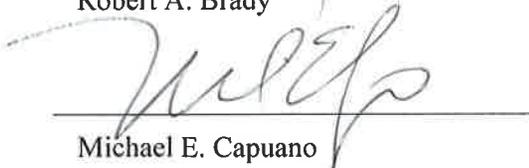
Eight of the nine Supreme Court Justices supported donor disclosure in the *Citizens United* case. Since then national polls show an overwhelming majority of Americans favor the disclosure of campaign finance activities. A recent poll commissioned by CBS and the New York Times found that “three-quarters of ‘self-identified Republicans’ supported greater disclosure by outside spending organizations”.

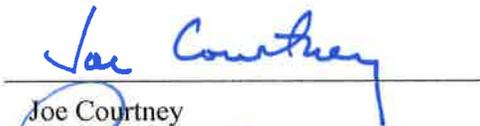
Unfortunately, in the face of an increasing public demand for disclosure by corporations and outside groups, the House Appropriations Committee has inserted provisions in the FY 2016 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill that would prohibit the disclosure of secret money designed to influence elections. We request that you strongly oppose the inclusion of these limitations on greater transparency in the FY 2016 Financial Services and General Government Appropriations bill. The American people have a right to know who is bankrolling elections and who is attempting to influence their votes. If these legislative restrictions on transparency are not removed, we strongly urge you veto this bill.

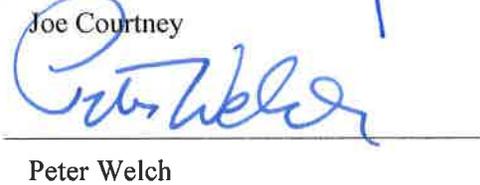
Sincerely,


Chris Van Hollen

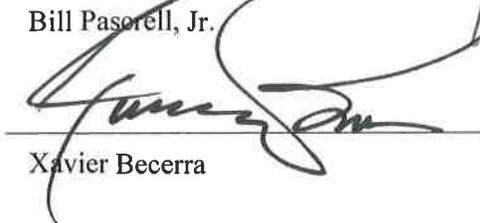

Robert A. Brady


Michael E. Capuano

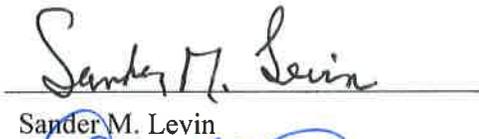

Joe Courtney


Peter Welch


Bill Pasarell, Jr.


Xavier Becerra


David E. Price

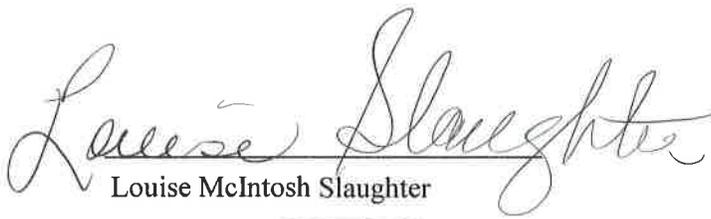

Sander M. Levin


John B. Larson

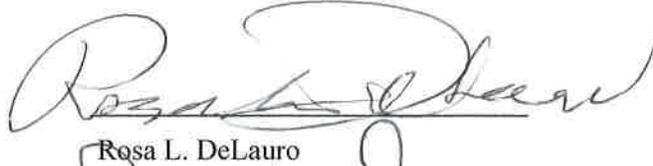

Elijah E. Cummings

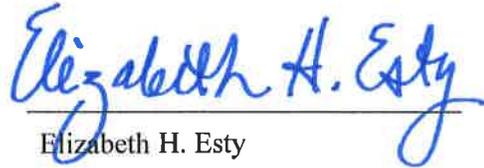

John P. Sarbanes


Raul M. Grijalva


Louise McIntosh Slaughter


Eric Swalwell


Rosa L. DeLauro


Elizabeth H. Esty

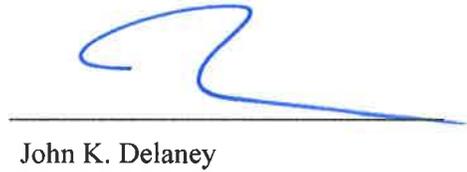

James P. McGovern


Chellie Pingree


Adam B. Schiff


Steve Israel

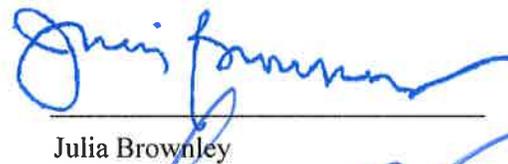

Anna G. Eshoo


John K. Delaney

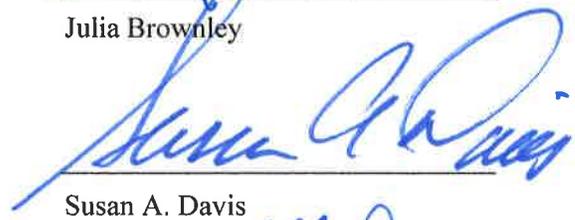

Peter A. DeFazio

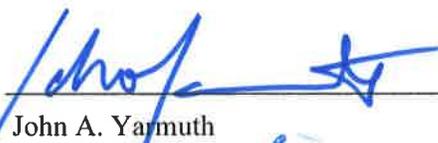

Eliot L. Engel

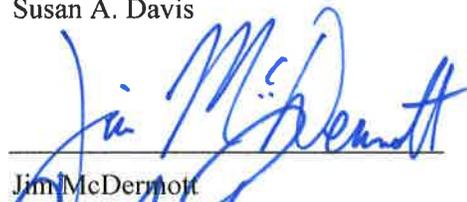

Suzan K. DelBene

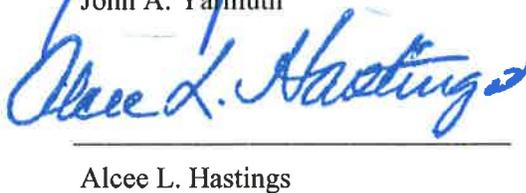

Julia Brownley


Sam Farr


Susan A. Davis


John A. Yarmuth


Jim McDermott


Alcee L. Hastings

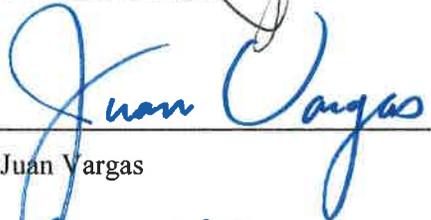

C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger



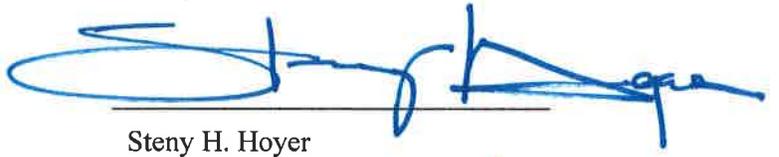
Charles B. Rangel



Theodore E. Deutch



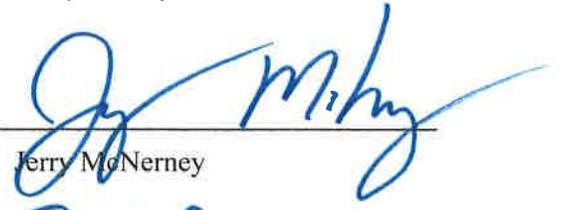
Juan Vargas



Steny H. Hoyer



Beto O'Rourke



Jerry McNerney



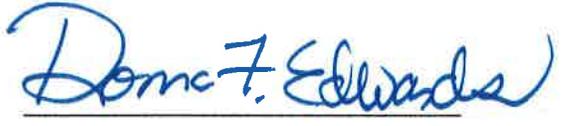
Paul D. Tonko



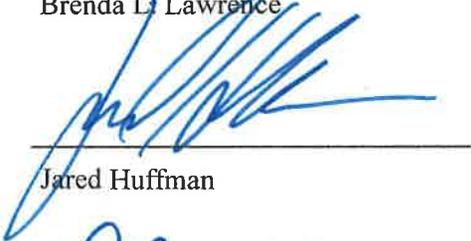
Frank Pallone, Jr.



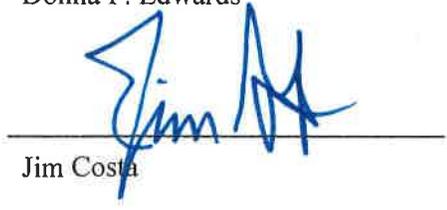
Brenda L. Lawrence



Donna F. Edwards



Jared Huffman



Jim Costa



Alan S. Lowenthal



Brendan F. Boyle