

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 14, 2016

The Honorable Barack Obama
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As Members of Congress who believe in the right for all to participate fully in our society and economy, we believe it is time to level the playing field in federal contracting so that all LGBT-owned businesses can compete for contracting opportunities without fear of discrimination. We respectfully urge you to direct all federal agencies to prohibit discrimination in federal government contracting and subcontracting based on the sexual orientation or gender identity of the business owner.

There are an estimated 1.4 million LGBT-owned businesses in the United States – in Congressional districts in all 50 states – that represent an untapped well of innovation, job creation, and economic growth. However, no protections exist to prohibit discrimination against these businesses in federal procurement. The history of discrimination against LGBT individuals by the federal government and lack of any protections for LGBT-owned businesses perpetuate a sense among these businesses that the federal government is not open to them, and among major federal contractors that seeking out LGBT-owned suppliers is not necessary.

LGBT-owned businesses have much to contribute and gain from federal government contracting opportunities. Ensuring that no barriers exist for LGBT-owned businesses in federal contracting will also benefit the federal government and American taxpayers by creating a larger and more visible pool of diverse suppliers who can provide goods and services to the federal government. It will also provide prime federal contractors with more options to find subcontractors that provide good value.

Your Administration has already taken significant steps to ensure there is LGBT equality in federal contracting, particularly as it related to the employees of federal contractors. Now it is time to finish the job and ensure that contractors and subcontractors themselves cannot face discrimination either.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that the federal government is clearly opening its doors for business with the LGBT community.

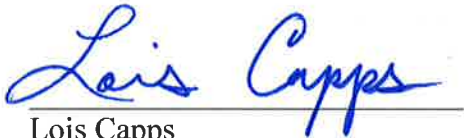
Sincerely,



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Richard Hanna
Member of Congress



Lois Capps
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



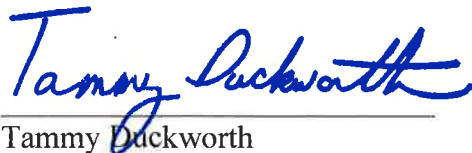
Elijah E. Cummings
Member of Congress



Suzan DelBene
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Theodore E. Deutch
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Tammy Duckworth
Member of Congress



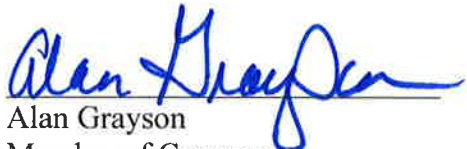
Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Alan Grayson
Member of Congress



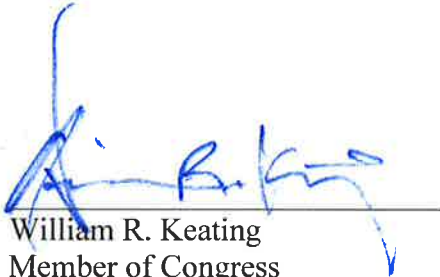
Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



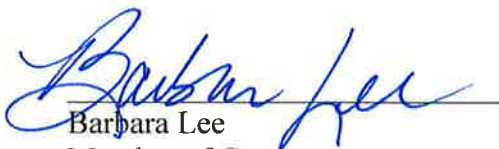
Derek Kilmer
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Jim Langevin
Member of Congress



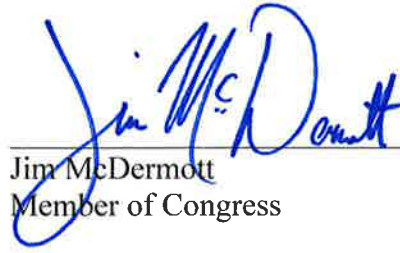
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



Jim McDermott
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James P. McGovern
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Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
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Patrick E. Murphy
Member of Congress



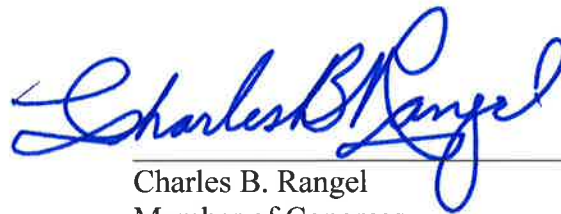
Eleanor Holmes Norton
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Beto O'Rourke
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Scott H. Peters
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Charles B. Rangel
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Lucille Roybal-Allard
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Jan Schakowsky
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