

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 28, 2014

Léon Kengo Wa Dondo
President, Senate
Palais du Peuple, Kinshasa

Aubin Minaku
Speaker, National Assembly

c/o Dr. Faïda Matifu
Ambassador to the United States
Democratic Republic of Congo
1726 M Street NW, Suite 601
Washington, DC 20036

Dear President Kengo and Speaker Minaku:

We the undersigned members of the United States (U.S.) Congress send greetings to you and the members of the National Assembly and the Senate. We value the good relationship between our two countries, and hope that the United States of America and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) will continue to work together on issues of mutual concern. As fellow legislators, we also understand and respect your commitment to serving the needs of the constituents you have been elected to represent.

We understand that your government has been engaged in a year-long process to strengthen your country's intercountry adoption process. We share your concern that this process be as protective of the children as possible. At the same time we recognize how vital it is for children living without the love and protection of a family to be placed with an appropriate family as quickly as possible. As Parliament considers the agenda for this legislative session, we ask that legislation to strengthen the adoption process be a top priority.

We are concerned about the welfare of the hundreds of Congolese children who have been legally adopted under Congolese law by U.S. citizens but who are unable to depart the DRC even though they possess valid visas to immediately enter the U.S. Some of these children have remained separated from their legal parents for over a year waiting for this final departure permission from the DRC. Tragically, some of these children have died while waiting for exit permission, and others are very ill and need immediate medical attention. We hope that you will agree that swift action is necessary to prevent further loss of innocent lives and the continued suffering and distress for the children and their legal parents.

We are aware of your concerns about the integrity of the DRC intercountry adoption process, and we respect your duty to discern how to protect the best interests of Congolese children. For this reason, we reiterate our April 17, 2014 offer to President Kabila and Prime Minister Ponyo to

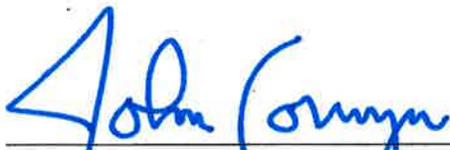
support your government's efforts to follow up on the well-being of Congolese children adopted by U.S. citizens and to work together to ensure that intercountry adoptions between our countries continue to be conducted in an ethical, transparent manner.

As lawmakers, we wish to assure you that U.S. law protects all children in our country, regardless of their country of birth or citizenship. For example, for 40 years the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) has provided our states with support to improve their child protective services, ensuring that communities are able to prevent, assess and treat cases of child abuse and neglect. CAPTA sets high standards that have helped greatly in ensuring that all incidents of abuse or neglect are reported in a consistent manner and has enabled us to provide better protection and assistance to children experiencing abuse or neglect.

The U.S. Congress has also enacted many laws that prohibit trafficking, sexual abuse and exploitation of any children in the U.S., regardless of their country of birth. The laws also impose stiff penalties, up to life imprisonment or death, for those convicted of committing such horrible crimes. With respect to intercountry adoptions, Congress has passed two laws in the past 15 years which have strengthened our internal systems for overseeing and managing international adoption service providers. These two laws, the Intercountry Adoption Act (P.L. 106-279) and the Intercountry Adoption Universal Accreditation Act (P.L. 112-276), together require that all U.S. adoption service providers be accredited through a rigorous review process which holds them to high ethical and performance standards. These changes have resulted in a sharp decline in the number of adoption service providers because only those who meet these high standards are allowed to operate in the U.S.

In conclusion, we remain committed to ensuring that federal laws in the U.S. continue to protect all children against abuse and neglect, and to appropriately punish any persons who violate these laws. We respectfully request that the Congolese National Assembly and Senate prioritize legislation that strengthens the Congolese intercountry adoption process. This legislation would ensure that intercountry adoptions of Congolese children can be completed in an honest, ethical manner, and that the children who are currently waiting to be united with their legal parents can finally benefit from living with the security of a permanent, loving family.

Sincerely,



John Cornyn, United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar, United States Senator



Mitch McConnell, United States Senate
Minority Leader



John A. Boehner, U.S. Representative



Bob Corker, United States Senator



Robert Menendez, United States Senator



Edward R. Royce, U.S. Representative



Christopher H. Smith, U.S. Representative



Charles Grassley, United States Senator



Karen Bass, U.S. Representative



Lamar Alexander, United States Senator



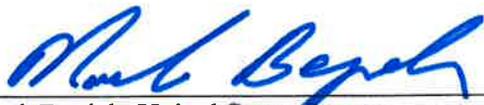
Kelly Ayotte, United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin, United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D., United States Senator



Mark Begich, United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal, United States Senator



Roy Blunt, United States Senator



John Boozman, United States Senator



Barbara Boxer, United States Senator



Sherrod Brown, United States Senator



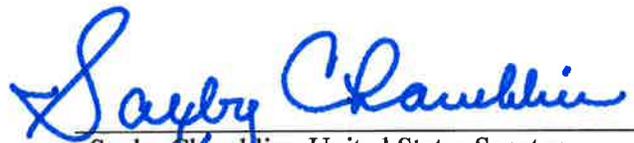
Richard Burr, United States Senator



Maria Cantwell, United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr. United States Senator



Saxby Chambliss, United States Senator



Dan Coats, United States Senator



Susan Collins, United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons, United States Senator



Mike Crapo, United States Senator



Ted Cruz, United States Senator



Joe Donnelly, United States Senator


Michael B. Enzi, United States Senator

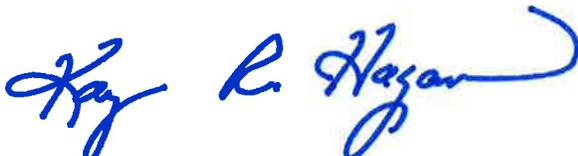

Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator


Deb Fischer, United States Senator


Jeff Flake, United States Senator


Al Franken, United States Senator


Kirsten Gillibrand, United States Senator


Kay Hagan, United States Senator


Tom Harkin, United States Senator


Orrin Hatch, United States Senator


Heidi Heitkamp, United States Senator


Dean Heller, United States Senator


John Hoeven, United States Senator


James Inhofe, United States Senator


Johnny Isakson, United States Senator



Mike Johanns, United States Senator



Ron Johnson, United States Senator



Tim Johnson, United States Senator



Angus King, United States Senator



Mark Kirk, United States Senator



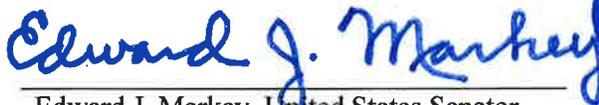
Mary Landrieu, United States Senator



Carl Levin, United States Senator



Joe Manchin, United States Senator



Edward J. Markey, United States Senator



Claire McCaskill, United States Senator



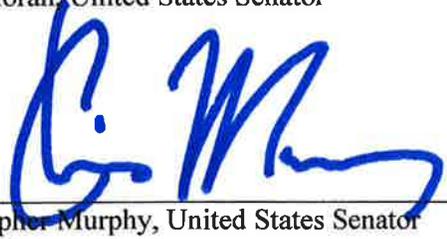
Jeff Merkley, United States Senator



Jerry Moran, United States Senator



Lisa Murkowski, United States Senator



Christopher Murphy, United States Senator



Patty Murray, United States Senator



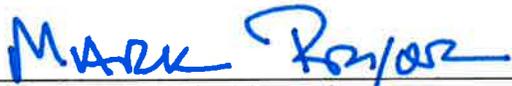
Bill Nelson, United States Senator



Rand Paul, M.D., United States Senator



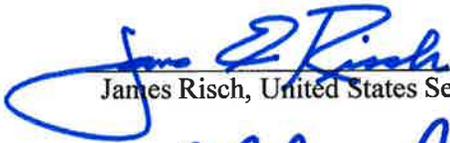
Rob Portman, United States Senator



Mark Pryor, United States Senator



Jack Reed, United States Senator



James Risch, United States Senator



Pat Roberts, United States Senator



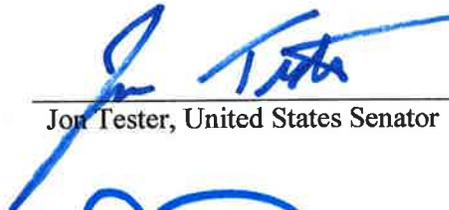
Marco Rubio, United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen, United States Senator



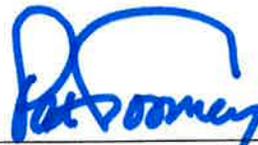
Debbie Stabenow, United States Senator



Jon Tester, United States Senator



John Thune, United States Senator



Pat Toomey, United States Senator

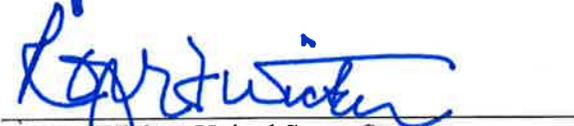

David Vitter, United States Senator

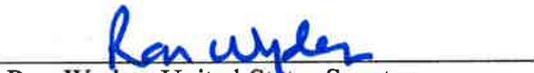

John Walsh, United States Senator


Mark Warner, United States Senator

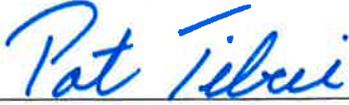

Elizabeth Warren, United States Senator


Sheldon Whitehouse, United States Senator


Roger Wicker, United States Senator


Ron Wyden, United States Senator


Tim Scott, United States Senator



Patrick Tiberi, U.S. Representative



Mike Pompeo, U.S. Representative



Cynthia M. Lummis, U.S. Representative



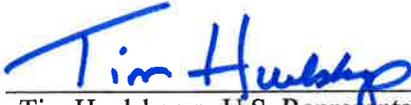
John J. Duncan, U.S. Representative



Bill Posey, U.S. Representative



Scott Perry, U.S. Representative



Tim Huelskamp, U.S. Representative



Jim Renacci, U.S. Representative



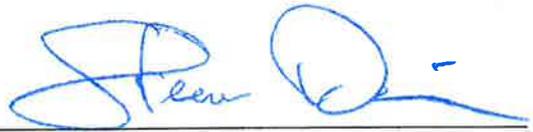
Michael T. McCaul, U.S. Representative



Ann McLane Kuster, U.S. Representative



Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Representative



Steve Daines, U.S. Representative



Marsha Blackburn, U.S. Representative



Robert Pittenger, U.S. Representative



James Lankford, U.S. Representative



Charles J. "Chuck" Fleischmann, U.S. Representative

Thomas Massie

Thomas Massie, U.S. Representative

Suzan DelBene

Suzan DelBene, U.S. Representative

Aaron Schock

Aaron Schock, U.S. Representative

Peter King

Peter King, U.S. Representative

Dave Camp

Dave Camp, U.S. Representative

Marc Veasey

Marc Veasey, U.S. Representative

Tom Cotton

Tom Cotton, U.S. Representative

Joyce Beatty

Joyce Beatty, U.S. Representative

Tom McClintock

Tom McClintock, U.S. Representative

Ann Wagner

Ann Wagner, U.S. Representative

Suzanne Bonamici

Suzanne Bonamici, U.S. Representative

Phil Gingrey

Phil Gingrey, M.D., U.S. Representative

George Holding

George Holding, U.S. Representative

Austin Scott

Austin Scott, U.S. Representative

Steve Stivers

Steve Stivers, U.S. Representative

Vicky Hartzler

Vicky Hartzler, U.S. Representative


Kay Granger, U.S. Representative

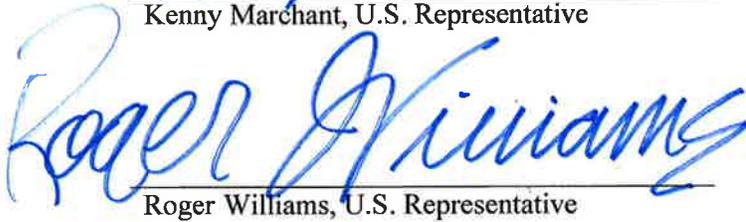

Bill Flores, U.S. Representative


Kevin Cramer, U.S. Representative


Jim McDermott, U.S. Representative


Kenny Marchant, U.S. Representative


Stephen Fincher, U.S. Representative


Roger Williams, U.S. Representative


Sam Farr, U.S. Representative


Dave Reichert, U.S. Representative

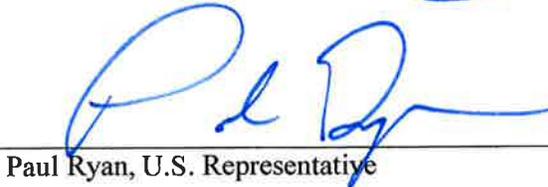

Jaime Herrera Beutler, U.S. Representative

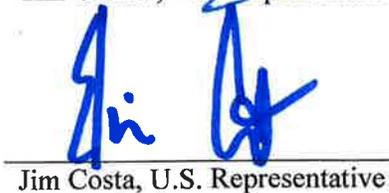

Sean P. Duffy, U.S. Representative


Bill Huizenga, U.S. Representative


Brad Wenstrup, U.S. Representative


Tim Griffin, U.S. Representative


Paul Ryan, U.S. Representative

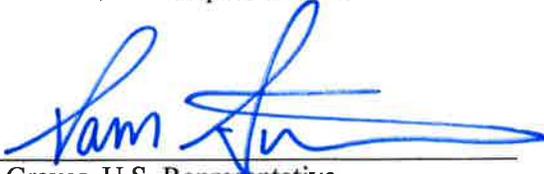

Jim Costa, U.S. Representative



Luke Messer, U.S. Representative



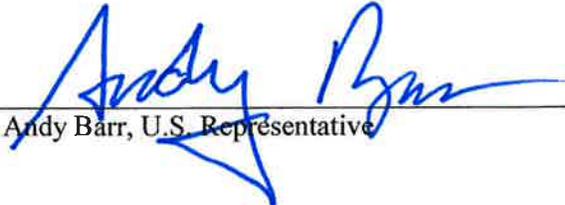
Chellie Pingree, U.S. Representative



Sam Graves, U.S. Representative



Alan Nunnelee, U.S. Representative



Andy Barr, U.S. Representative



John Larson, U.S. Representative



Susan Brooks, U.S. Representative



Reid Ribble, U.S. Representative



Jeff Fortenberry, U.S. Representative



Mark Meadows, U.S. Representative



Susan A. Davis, U.S. Representative



Diane Black, U.S. Representative



Billy Long, U.S. Representative



Chris Van Hollen, U.S. Representative



Michael M. Honda, U.S. Representative



Beto O'Rourke, U.S. Representative



Mike Michaud, U.S. Representative



Marlin Stutzman, U.S. Representative



Collin C. Peterson, U.S. Representative



Rick Larsen, U.S. Representative



Stephen F. Lynch, U.S. Representative



Peter DeFazio, U.S. Representative



Greg Walden, U.S. Representative



Ed Whitfield, U.S. Representative



Howard Coble, U.S. Representative



Jason Smith, U.S. Representative



Pete Sessions, U.S. Representative



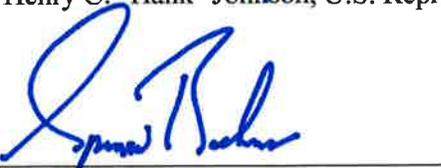
John Tierney, U.S. Representative



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, U.S. Representative



Keith Ellison, U.S. Representative



Spencer Bachus, U.S. Representative



James P. Moran, U.S. Representative



Adam Smith, U.S. Representative



Lee Terry, U.S. Representative



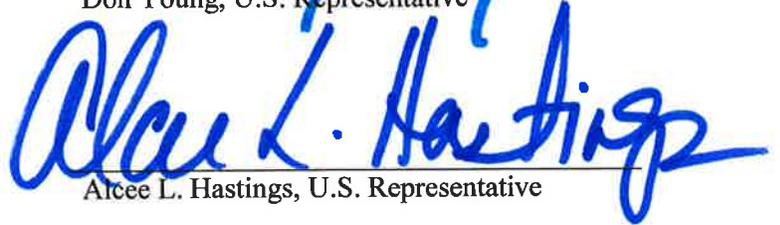
Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, U.S. Representative



Don Young, U.S. Representative



Patrick McHenry, U.S. Representative



Alcee L. Hastings, U.S. Representative



Charles Rangel, U.S. Representative



Jack Kingston, U.S. Representative



Mike Fitzpatrick, U.S. Representative



David Jolly, U.S. Representative



Lamar Smith, U.S. Representative



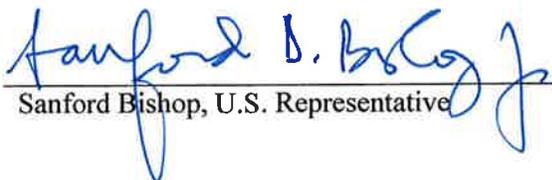
Adam Schiff, U.S. Representative



Michele Bachmann, U.S. Representative



Mike McIntyre, U.S. Representative



Sanford Bishop, U.S. Representative

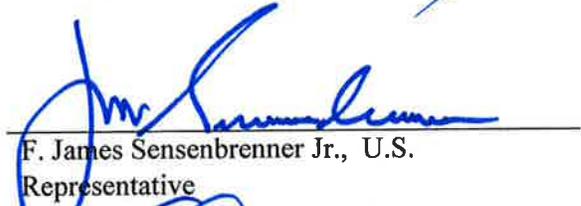


Trent Franks, U.S. Representative

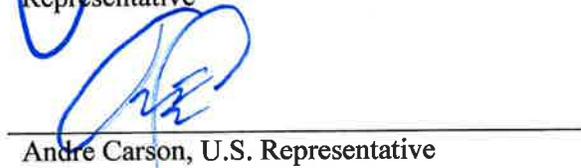

John Kline, U.S. Representative


Blaine Luetkemeyer, U.S. Representative


Richard Nolan, U.S. Representative


F. James Sensenbrenner Jr., U.S.
Representative


John Shimkus, U.S. Representative


Andre Carson, U.S. Representative


Eddie Bernice Johnson, U.S. Representative

Signatures of Members of United States Congress***United States Senate***

Lamar Alexander, United States Senator
 Kelly Ayotte, United States Senator
 Tammy Baldwin, United States Senator
 John Barrasso, M.D., United States Senator
 Mark Begich, United States Senator
 Richard Blumenthal, United States Senator
 Roy Blunt, United States Senator
 John Boozman, United States Senator
 Barbara Boxer, United States Senator
 Sherrod Brown, United States Senator
 Richard Burr, United States Senator
 Maria Cantwell, United States Senator
 Robert P. Casey, Jr. United States Senator
 Saxby Chambliss, United States Senator
 Dan Coats, United States Senator
 Susan Collins, United States Senator
 Christopher A. Coons, United States Senator
 Bob Corker, United States Senator
 John Cornyn, United States Senator
 Mike Crapo, United States Senator
 Ted Cruz, United States Senator
 Joe Donnelly, United States Senator
 Michael B. Enzi, United States Senator
 Dianne Feinstein, United States Senator
 Deb Fischer, United States Senator
 Jeff Flake, United States Senator
 Al Franken, United States Senator
 Kirsten Gillibrand, United States Senator
 Charles Grassley, United States Senator
 Kay Hagan, United States Senator
 Tom Harkin, United States Senator
 Orrin Hatch, United States Senator
 Heidi Heitkamp, United States Senator
 Dean Heller, United States Senator
 John Hoeven, United States Senator
 James Inhofe, United States Senator
 Johnny Isakson, United States Senator
 Mike Johanns, United States Senator
 Ron Johnson, United States Senator
 Tim Johnson, United States Senator
 Angus King, United States Senator
 Mark Kirk, United States Senator
 Amy Klobuchar, United States Senator
 Mary Landrieu, United States Senator
 Carl Levin, United States Senator
 Joe Manchin, United States Senator
 Edward J. Markey, United States Senator
 Claire McCaskill, United States Senator

Mitch McConnell, United States Senate
 Minority Leader
 Robert Menendez, United States Senator
 Jeff Merkley, United States Senator
 Jerry Moran, United States Senator
 Lisa Murkowski, United States Senator
 Christopher Murphy, United States Senator
 Patty Murray, United States Senator
 Bill Nelson, United States Senator
 Rand Paul, M.D., United States Senator
 Rob Portman, United States Senator
 Mark Pryor, United States Senator
 Jack Reed, United States Senator
 James Risch, United States Senator
 Pat Roberts, United States Senator
 Marco Rubio, United States Senator
 Tim Scott, United States Senator
 Jeanne Shaheen, United States Senator
 Debbie Stabenow, United States Senator
 Jon Tester, United States Senator
 John Thune, United States Senator
 Pat Toomey, United States Senator
 David Vitter, United States Senator
 John Walsh, United States Senator
 Mark Warner, United States Senator
 Elizabeth Warren, United States Senator
 Sheldon Whitehouse, United States Senator
 Roger Wicker, United States Senator
 Ron Wyden, United States Senator

United States House of Representatives

Michele Bachmann, U.S. Representative
 Spencer Bachus, U.S. Representative
 Andy Barr, U.S. Representative
 Karen Bass, U.S. Representative
 Joyce Beatty, U.S. Representative
 Sanford Bishop, U.S. Representative
 Diane Black, U.S. Representative
 Marsha Blackburn, U.S. Representative
 John A. Boehner, U.S. Representative
 Suzanne Bonamici, U.S. Representative
 Susan Brooks, U.S. Representative
 Dave Camp, U.S. Representative
 Andre Carson, U.S. Representative
 Howard Coble, U.S. Representative
 Jim Costa, U.S. Representative
 Tom Cotton, U.S. Representative
 Kevin Cramer, U.S. Representative
 Steve Daines, U.S. Representative

Susan A. Davis, U.S. Representative
Peter DeFazio, U.S. Representative
Suzan DelBene, U.S. Representative
Sean P. Duffy, U.S. Representative
John J. Duncan, U.S. Representative
Keith Ellison, U.S. Representative
Sam Farr, U.S. Representative
Stephen Fincher, U.S. Representative
Mike Fitzpatrick, U.S. Representative
Charles J. "Chuck" Fleischmann, U.S. Representative
Bill Flores, U.S. Representative
Jeff Fortenberry, U.S. Representative
Trent Franks, U.S. Representative
Phil Gingrey, M.D., U.S. Representative
Kay Granger, U.S. Representative
Sam Graves, U.S. Representative
Tim Griffin, U.S. Representative
Vicky Hartzler, U.S. Representative
Alcee L. Hastings, U.S. Representative
Jaime Herrera Beutler, U.S. Representative
George Holding, U.S. Representative
Michael M. Honda, U.S. Representative
Tim Huelskamp, U.S. Representative
Bill Huizenga, U.S. Representative
Eddie Bernice Johnson, U.S. Representative
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, U.S. Representative
David Jolly, U.S. Representative
Peter King, U.S. Representative
Jack Kingston, U.S. Representative
John Kline, U.S. Representative
Ann McLane Kuster, U.S. Representative
James Lankford, U.S. Representative
Rick Larsen, U.S. Representative
John Larson, U.S. Representative
Billy Long, U.S. Representative
Blaine Luetkemeyer, U.S. Representative
Cynthia M. Lummis, U.S. Representative
Stephen F. Lynch, U.S. Representative
Kenny Marchant, U.S. Representative
Thomas Massie, U.S. Representative
Michael T. McCaul, U.S. Representative
Tom McClintock, U.S. Representative
Jim McDermott, U.S. Representative
Patrick McHenry, U.S. Representative
Mike McIntyre, U.S. Representative
Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, U.S. Representative
Cathy McMorris Rodgers, U.S. Representative
Mark Meadows, U.S. Representative
Luke Messer, U.S. Representative

Mike Michaud, U.S. Representative
James P. Moran, U.S. Representative
Richard Nolan, U.S. Representative
Alan Nunnelee, U.S. Representative
Beto O'Rourke, U.S. Representative
Scott Perry, U.S. Representative
Collin C. Peterson, U.S. Representative
Chellie Pingree, U.S. Representative
Robert Pittinger, U.S. Representative
Mike Pompeo, U.S. Representative
Bill Posey, U.S. Representative
Charles Rangel, U.S. Representative
Dave Reichert, U.S. Representative
Jim Renacci, U.S. Representative
Reid Ribble, U.S. Representative
Edward R. Royce, U.S. Representative
Paul Ryan, U.S. Representative
Adam Schiff, U.S. Representative
Aaron Schock, U.S. Representative
Austin Scott, U.S. Representative
F. James Jr. Sensenbrenner, U.S. Representative
Pete Sessions, U.S. Representative
John Shimkus, U.S. Representative
Adam Smith, U.S. Representative
Christopher H. Smith, U.S. Representative
Jason Smith, U.S. Representative
Lamar Smith, U.S. Representative
Steve Stivers, U.S. Representative
Marlin Stutzman, U.S. Representative
Lee Terry, U.S. Representative
Patrick Tiberi, U.S. Representative
John Tierney, U.S. Representative
Chris Van Hollen, U.S. Representative
Marc Veasey, U.S. Representative
Ann Wagner, U.S. Representative
Greg Walden, U.S. Representative
Brad Wenstrup, U.S. Representative
Ed Whitfield, U.S. Representative
Roger Williams, U.S. Representative
Don Young, U.S. Representative