

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 14, 2011

The Honorable Patty Murray
Co-Chair, Joint Select Committee
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jeb Hensarling
Co-Chair, Joint Select Committee
129 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Co-Chair Hensarling and Co-Chair Murray:

As Co-Chairs of the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction, we urge you, and the entire Committee, to embrace job creation, raising revenue and protecting Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security as the necessary components to truly repair the American economy.

Our country is in the midst of a jobs crisis. Americans across the country are demanding good jobs now. Without immediate action, our economy will continue to stagnate. The Bureau of Labor Statistics has reported that the economy gained no jobs in August and had only a modest increase in September, a trend that will likely continue without passage of emergency jobs legislation. Creating jobs is the best way to get our economy back on track and the only significant way to reduce our deficit.

At the same time, our country must raise needed revenue and end the irresponsible giveaways of the past decade. Our deficits, in large part, are so high because a handful of very wealthy individuals and corporations enjoy exorbitant profits and low taxes while millions of others continue to struggle. The income disparity between rich and poor in our country continues to grow as we see the middle class slip away. It is time to get rid of tax breaks for millionaires and billionaires, end the Bush-era tax handouts, and close corporate loopholes for companies that ship jobs overseas.

The Committee must also protect Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, the overwhelmingly popular programs that form the bedrock of America's middle and working classes. We should not be cutting the lifelines that millions of Americans have paid for and depend on, particularly during tough economic times. Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security cuts should be off the table in any debt reduction discussions. It is unconscionable to sacrifice these programs to pay for more corporate greed.

We ask that you lead the Select Committee by these simple core principles. The American people have spoken loud and clear on their priorities for our nation. They want Social Security, Medicaid and Medicare protected, they want billionaires and corporations to finally pay their faire share and they want to be able to get back to work to earn a fair living. We stand ready and willing to work with you to uphold America's priorities.

Sincerely,


Raul M. Grijalva
Co-Chair, Progressive Caucus


Keith Ellison
Co-Chair, Progressive Caucus



Joe Baca
Member of Congress



André Carson
Member of Congress



Michael Capuano
Member of Congress



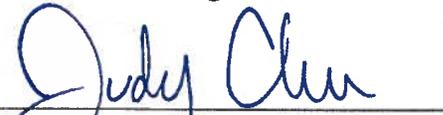
Donna Christensen
Member of Congress



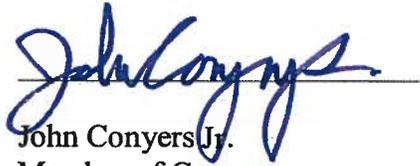
Yvette Clarke
Member of Congress



William Lacy Clay, Jr.
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



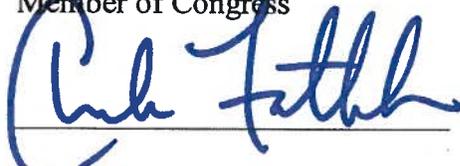
John Conyers Jr.
Member of Congress



Danny Davis
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress



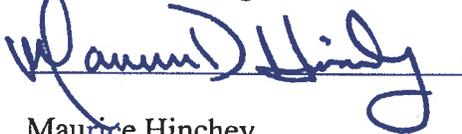
Bob Filner
Member of Congress



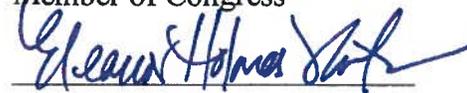
Barney Frank
Member of Congress



Luis Gutierrez
Member of Congress



Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress

Jesse Jackson, Jr.

Jesse Jackson, Jr.
Member of Congress

Hank Johnson

Hank Johnson
Member of Congress

Marcy Kaptur

Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress

Dennis J. Kucinich

Dennis Kucinich
Member of Congress

Edward J. Markey

Edward Markey
Member of Congress

Jim McDermott

Jim McDermott
Member of Congress

James McGovern

James McGovern
Member of Congress

George Miller

George Miller
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

Gerold Nadler

Gerold Nadler
Member of Congress

Barbara Lee

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

John W. Olver

John Olver
Member of Congress

Chellie Pingree

Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress

José Serrano

José Serrano
Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter

Louise Slaughter
Member of Congress

Louise M. Slaughter

Louise Slaughter
Member of Congress

Edolphus Towns

Edolphus Towns
Member of Congress

Frederica D. Wilson

Frederica Wilson
Member of Congress

Carolyn M. Maloney

Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress

John F. Tierney

John Tierney
Member of Congress

Melvin Watt

Melvin Watt
Member of Congress

Lynn Woolsey

Lynn Woolsey
Member of Congress

Donna F. Edwards

Donna Edwards
Member of Congress