

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

January 31, 2025

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We are writing to express our concern about the ramifications of withdrawing from the World Health Organization (WHO) and encourage you to reconsider your decision.

On January 20, 2025, you signed an Executive Order to withdraw the United States from WHO. At a public event on January 25, 2025, you said you might reconsider that position. We hope that you will indeed reverse your decision so that the United States can retain its leadership in global health and continue to receive the benefits of being a member of WHO.

We are aware of your expressed concern of “unfairly onerous payments” by the United States to WHO. WHO is funded through assessed contributions and voluntary contributions. Assessed contributions, which account for approximately 20 percent of the World Health Organization’s funding, are the dues paid by member countries, which are based on a formula considers the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) and its population.¹ In 2024, the United States’ GDP was 50% higher than that of the next highest country – China.² Under the WHO formula, our country’s dues for WHO in 2024-25 of \$130 million per year are in line with China’s dues of \$90 million per year.³ The remaining funds WHO receives are voluntary contributions that come from member states, philanthropic foundations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and private citizens. As of November 2024, voluntary donations from the United States totaled nearly \$700 million during the calendar year and are typically used to fund specific programs.⁴ This level of support speaks to the the leadership role that the United States has played in global health and the generosity of our country, especially that of the NGOs and private citizens. Our participation in WHO translates into incalculable goodwill in countries around the world. The United States has long been a leader in global health partnerships, and we should not cede that title.

WHO funding does not only support the organization and foreign countries. The United States receives 46 cents of every dollar we pay to WHO in assessed contributions in the form of procurement contracts that support American businesses and jobs.⁵ WHO supports research at 72 centers across eighteen states and Washington, DC to advance health research and innovation, allowing them and public health officials in the United States access to data that is invaluable and irreplaceable.⁶ Withdrawing from WHO would mean a loss of

¹ <https://www.who.int/about/funding>

² <https://www.forbesindia.com/article/explainers/top-10-largest-economies-in-the-world/86159/1>

³ <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/assessed-contributions-payable-summary-2024-2025>

⁴ <https://open.who.int/2024-25/contributors/contributor?name=United%20States%20of%20America>

⁵ <https://betterworldcampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/HealthForUS-Campaign-1.pdf>

⁶ <https://betterworldcampaign.org/health>

manufacturing jobs in the United States and less funding to support communities across the country that are partnering WHO in the search for treatments and cures.

In addition to the economic reasons to maintain membership, we ask that you consider the dramatic improvements to global health due to the United States' participation in the World Health Organization. Since its founding in 1948, the World Health Organization has led wide-ranging initiatives such as controlling measles, reducing mother-to-child disease transmission, addressing maternal mortality, defeating meningitis, reducing malaria, and advancing childhood cancer treatment. Due to its collaboration, WHO was successful in eradicating smallpox in 1980. After the launch of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative in 1988, the Americas were certified polio free in 1994, and the virus is now only endemic in two countries.⁷ We are on the verge of eliminating this horrible virus as well. To withdraw the United States from WHO now may stop – or worse, reverse – the progress that has been made on so many fronts.

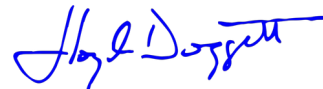
Withdrawing from WHO may also have implications for the health of American citizens due to the globalized world in which we live. According to the United States Travel Association, the United States welcomed nearly 67 million international visitors in 2023, or approximately 183,000 per day. Total U.S. citizen departures reached 98.5 million in 2023, or approximately 270,000 per day.⁸ If the United States is no longer a member of WHO, Americans around the world would be more susceptible to disease, but they could also carry it back to the United States and infect multitudes. Further, health officials would have an unnecessarily difficult time tracing a new outbreak, whether a new strain of influenza or an unknown antimicrobial resistant bacteria. This could lead to increased illnesses, hospitalizations, and deaths anywhere in the world, including the United States.

We appreciate your openness to reevaluate your Executive Order and your consideration of the many benefits that membership in the World Health Organization brings to our citizens and the world.

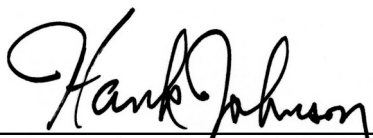
Sincerely,



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Lloyd Doggett
Member of Congress



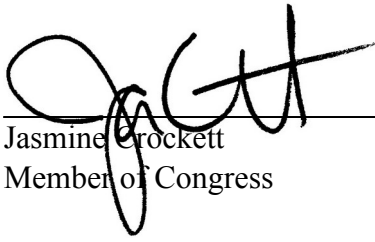
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



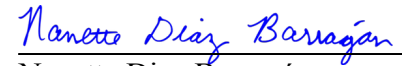
Dina Titus
Member of Congress

⁷ <https://polioeradication.org/about-polio/history-of-polio/>

⁸ <https://www.trade.gov/feature-article/ntto-releases-international-travel-statistics-2023>



Jasmine Crockett
Member of Congress



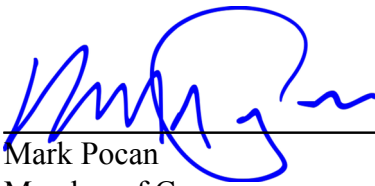
Nanette Diaz Barragan
Member of Congress



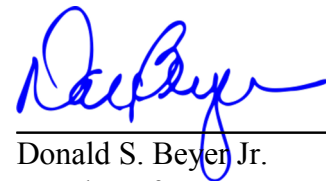
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



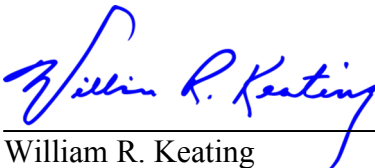
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
Member of Congress



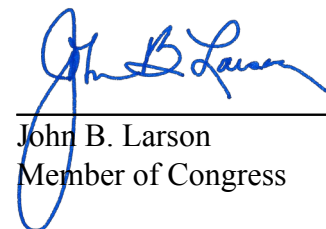
Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



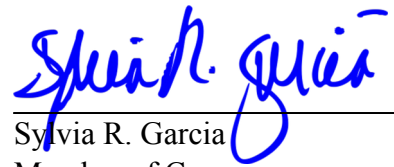
Kathy Castor
Member of Congress



John B. Larson
Member of Congress



Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



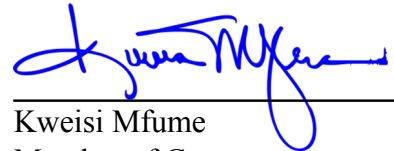
Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



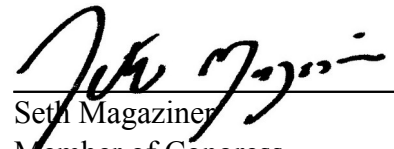
Maxine Waters
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress



Ed Case
Member of Congress



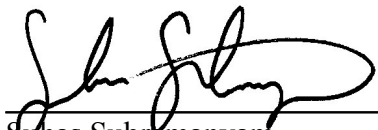
Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



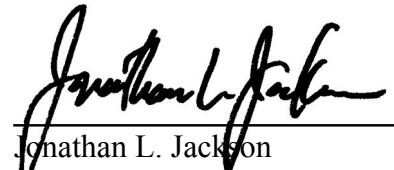
Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



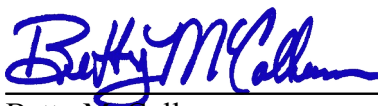
Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



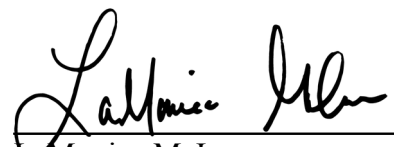
Suhas Subramanyam
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Jonathan L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress



Bonnie Watson Coleman
Member of Congress



Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



Yassamin Ansari
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



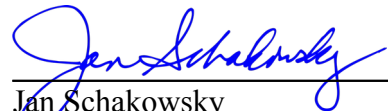
Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



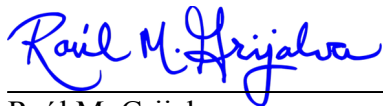
JM Tokuda
Member of Congress



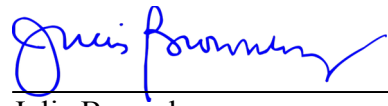
Robert Garcia
Member of Congress



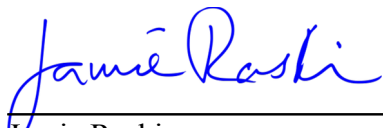
Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress