

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 1, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Obama:

We urge you to rescind the regulatory framework behind the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System (NSEERS) located at 8 CFR 264.1(f). While we commend your Administration for effectively ending the program in 2011, we believe that eliminating the apparatus of NSEERS is consistent with our country's fundamental values of fairness and equality.

The NSEERS program was announced in the wake of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The most controversial portion of the NSEERS program involved a "domestic" registration system that targeted certain males who entered the United States on nonimmigrant visas from primarily Arab, Muslim-majority, African, and South Asian countries. The program was fundamentally flawed in its false assumption that people of a particular religion or nationality pose a greater national security risk and should be subject to racial profiling. The program is reminiscent of – and indeed has been compared to – the dark time in our history when innocent people were interned based on their Japanese ancestry.


When instituted in 2002, the program caused widespread and palpable fear in affected communities, separated families and caused much harm to people affected by it. Boys and men were required to register with local immigration offices, were interrogated, and subjected to serious due process violation. Communities saw family members and neighbors disappear in the middle of the night, held in overcrowded jails and deported without due process. More than 13,000 people were placed in removal proceedings, businesses closed down, and students were forced to leave school with degrees uncompleted.

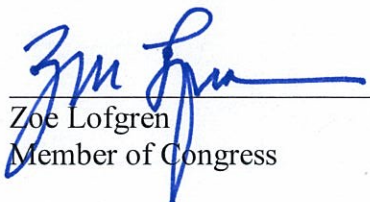
In addition to the harm that NSEERS caused to communities, the program was ineffective as a counter-terrorism tool. A 2012 Department of Homeland Security, Office of Inspector General report found the program to be inefficient and a waste of resources, costing American taxpayers more than \$10 million annually.¹ The report characterized the data collected through the program as unreliable. No known terrorism convictions have resulted from the program.

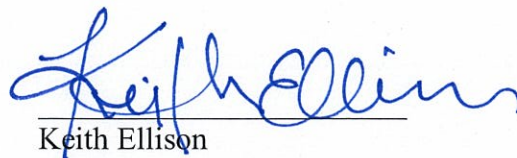
¹ DHS Office of Inspector General, Information Sharing on Foreign Nationals: Border Security (Redacted) (Feb. 2012) *available at* http://www.oig.dhs.gov/assets/Mgmt/2012/OIGr_12-39_Feb12.pdf.

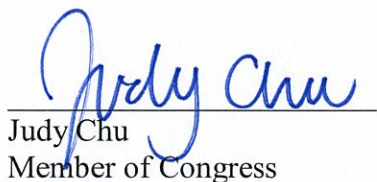
We stand together in opposition to policies that would target people based on their religion, race, ethnicity or national origin. We urge the Administration to immediately rescind the NSEERS regulation as a re-affirmation of its commitment to equal protection under the law.

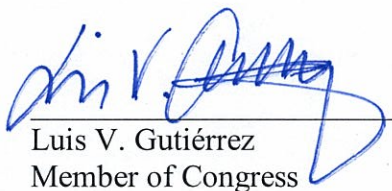
Sincerely,

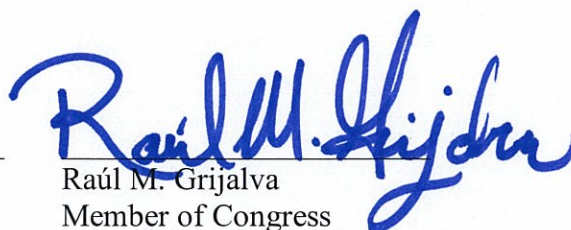

John Conyers, Jr.
Member of Congress

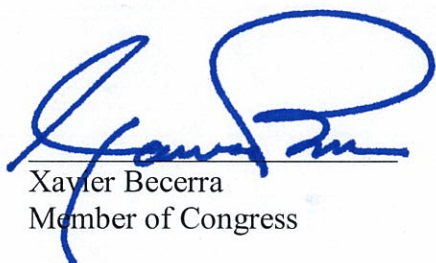

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress

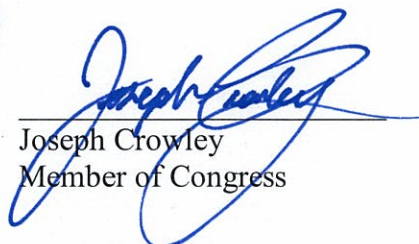

Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

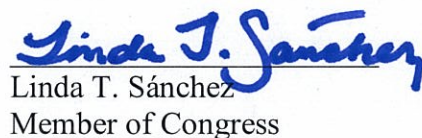

Judy Chu
Member of Congress

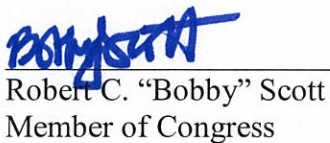

Luis V. Gutiérrez
Member of Congress

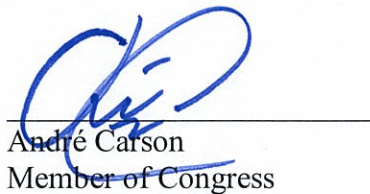

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

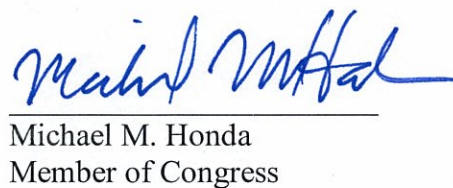

Xavier Becerra
Member of Congress


Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress

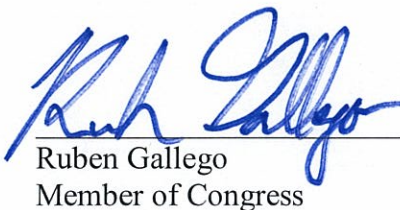

Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

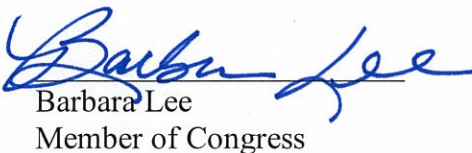

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress

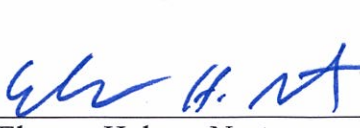

André Carson
Member of Congress

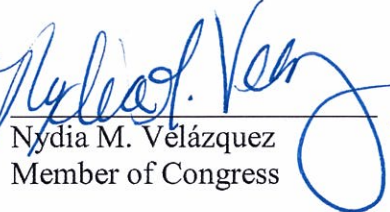

Michael M. Honda
Member of Congress



Doris Matsui
Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress

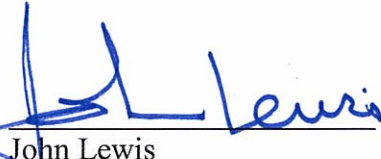

Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress



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


Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress


John Lewis
Member of Congress


David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

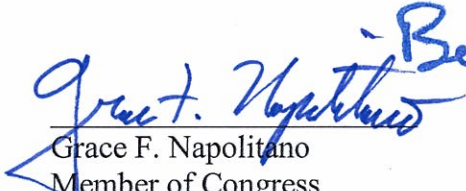

Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Betty McCollum
Member of Congress


Ted Lieu
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress


Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress


Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress


Beto O'Rourke
Member of Congress


Grace Meng
Member of Congress


Gwen Moore
Member of Congress


Jared Huffman
Member of Congress

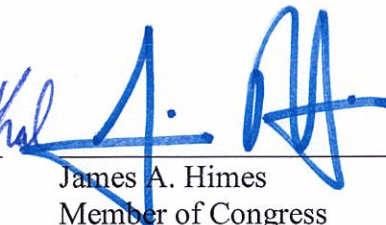

Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress



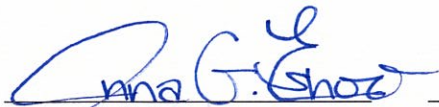
Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



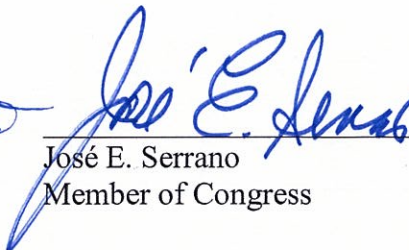
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



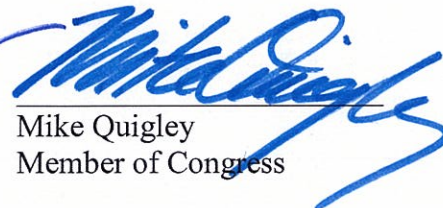
James A. Himes
Member of Congress



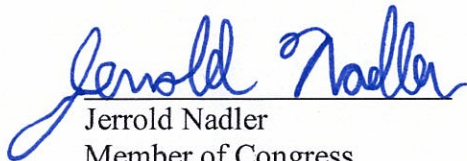
Anna G. Eshoo
Member of Congress



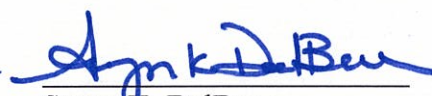
José E. Serrano
Member of Congress



Mike Quigley
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress




Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



Mark Pocan
Member of Congress



Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



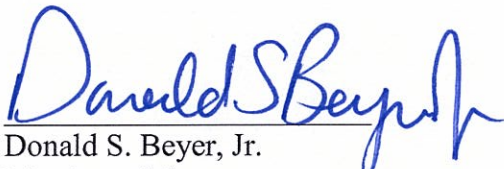
Joseph P. Kennedy, III
Member of Congress



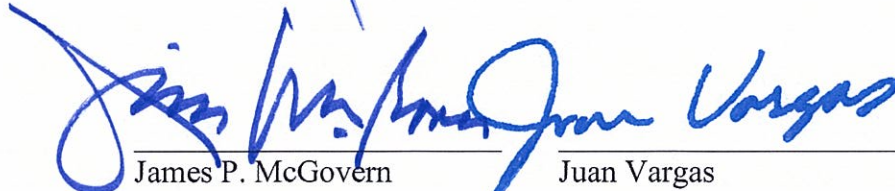
Colleen Hanabusa
Member of Congress



David E. Price
Member of Congress



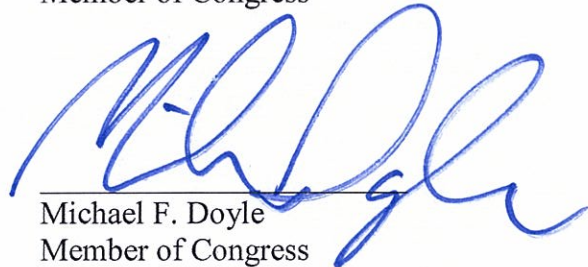
Donald S. Beyer, Jr.
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress



Michael F. Doyle
Member of Congress

Cc: Secretary Jeh Johnson