

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 12, 2013

The Honorable Tom Wheeler
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th St. SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler,

We respectfully ask that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) not open the door to wireless voice services being used by passengers on airplanes above 10,000 feet. It has come to our attention that on December 12th the FCC will consider a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to revise current rules governing mobile wireless services on airplanes. We are in support of new options for airline passengers to safely use wireless data for non-voice services such as text messaging, email, and internet browsing; but we are adamantly opposed to the use of cellular voice services during flights.

The majority of Americans have rejected the idea of cell phone calls during flights. Numerous polls, including a 2012 Apex/CEA poll, have shown that over 60% of Americans are opposed to the idea. Some polls, such as a recent Today Show instant poll, have shown overwhelming 90% opposition. Regardless of technological feasibility, it is evident that Americans do not want to fly in a cabin full of people talking on cell phones.

Even if the FCC were to find that cell phones on airplanes did not cause any signal interference, airborne cell phone conversations would have other safety implications. It has been demonstrated that people talking on cell phones were much less likely to aid someone in need*. Numerous other studies have demonstrated that cell phone conversations are particularly irritating and distracting to people nearby. The combination of these factors could make it much more difficult for crewmembers to give instructions and count on passenger assistance during an emergency. Altercations between passengers over cell phone use could also result in flight attendants having to act as referees to mitigate "air rage."

As is stated on your website, the FCC provides "leadership for consumers, public safety, accessibility, competition and technological and economic opportunity." We urge you to not forget about the first item on that list, American consumers. Consumers would benefit from new opportunities to use wireless devices for non-voice activities on airplanes, but they have made clear that they do not want their seatmate to be talking on a cell phone for the entire

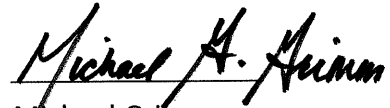
* Banjo, Hu, and Sundar (2008). Cell Phone Usage and Social Interaction with Proximate Others. Penn State University.

flight. In light of public opinion and potential safety implications, we ask that you reject any proposal to permit airline passengers to use cellular voice services on airborne planes.

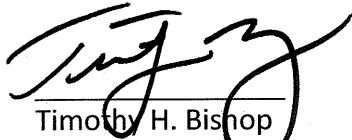
Sincerely,



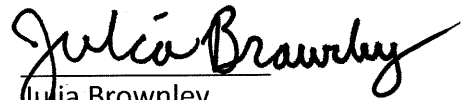
Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



Michael Grimm
Member of Congress



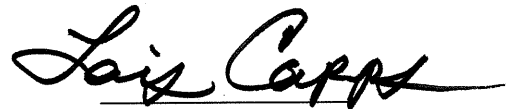
Timothy H. Bishop
Member of Congress



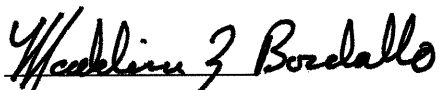
Julia Brownley
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
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Lois Capps
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Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress



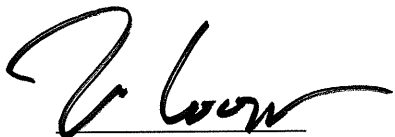
Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



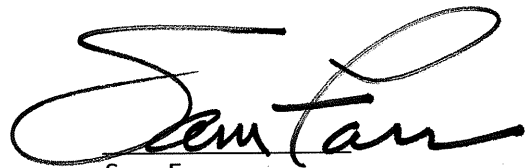
Robert A. Brady
Member of Congress



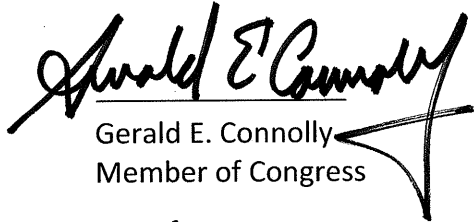
Steve Cohen
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Jim Cooper
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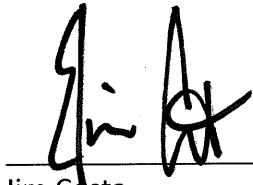
Sam Farr
Member of Congress



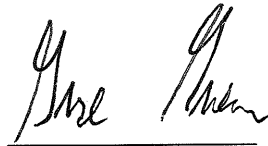
Gerald E. Connolly
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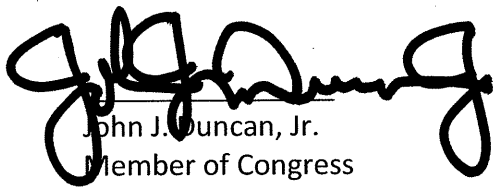
Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress



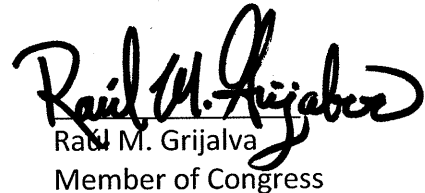
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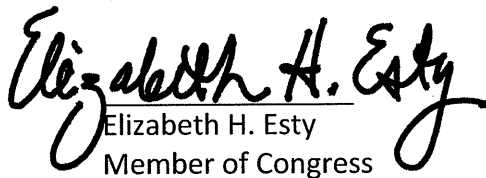
Raul M. Grijalva
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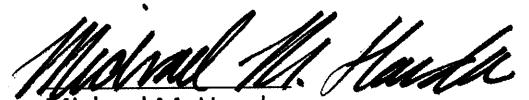
Keith Ellison
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Elizabeth H. Esty
Member of Congress

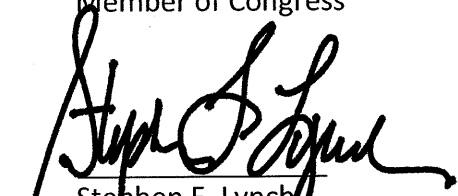



Michael M. Honda
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Henry C. Johnson,
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David Loebbecke
Member of Congress

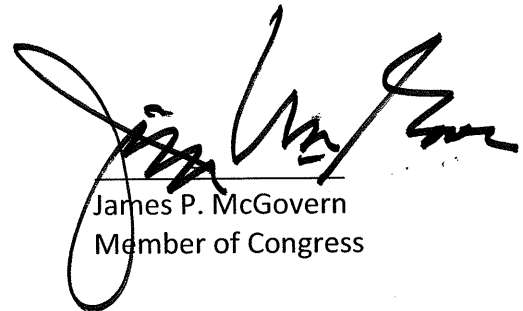

Walter B. Jones
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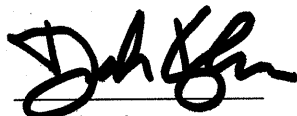

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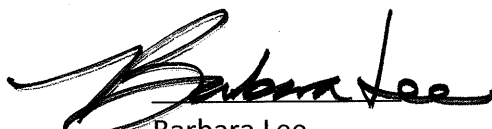

Betty McCollum
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William R. Keating
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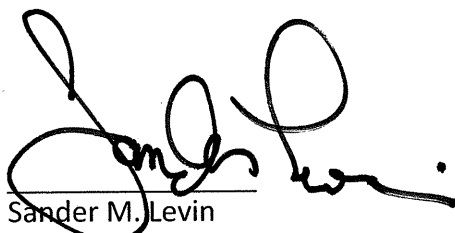

James P. McGovern
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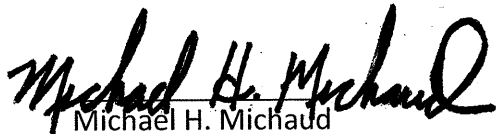

David B. McKinley
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Barbara Lee
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Ann McLane Kuster
Member of Congress

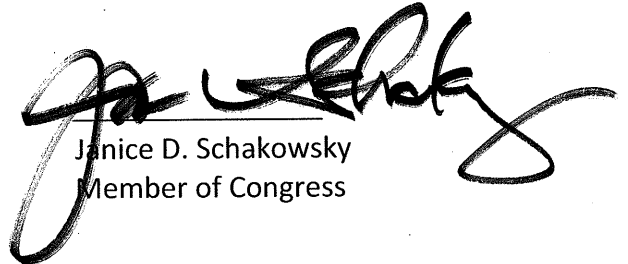

Sander M. Levin
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Patrick Meehan
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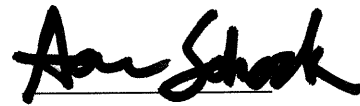

Michael H. Michaud
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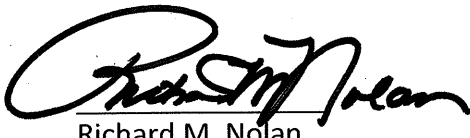

C.A. Dutch Ruppertsburger
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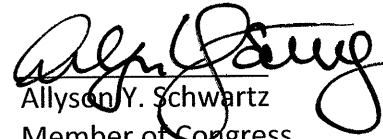

George Miller
Member of Congress

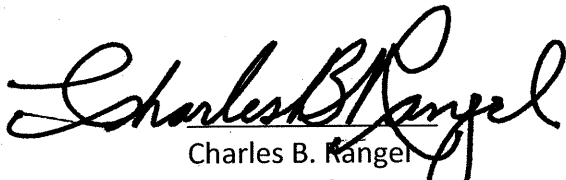

Janice D. Schakowsky
Member of Congress

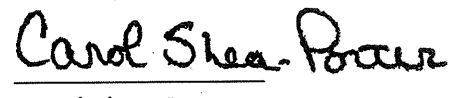

Patrick Murphy
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Aaron Schock
Member of Congress

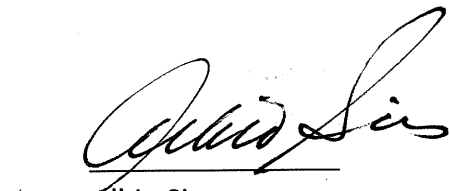

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Member of Congress

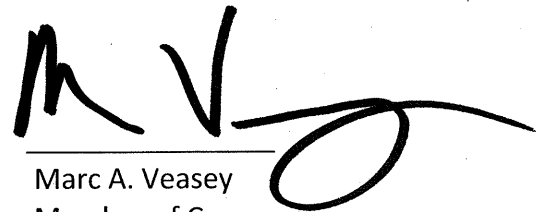

Charles B. Rangel
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Carol Shea-Porter
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Lucille Roybal-Allard
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Albio Sires
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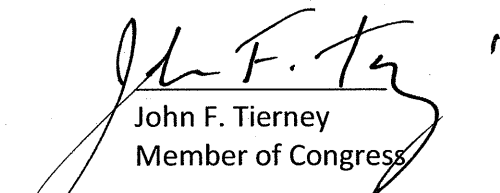

Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress

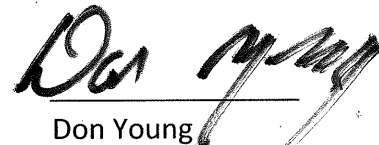

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

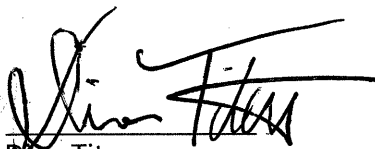

Debbie Wasserman Schultz
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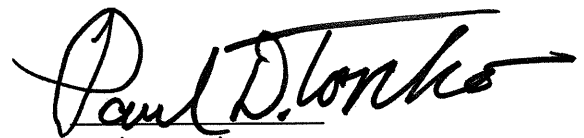

Mark Takano
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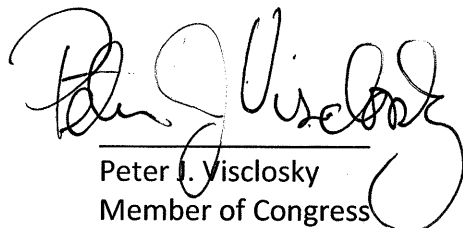

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Don Young
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