

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 15, 2008

The Honorable Barack Obama
The President-elect
Office of the President-elect
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President-Elect:

We congratulate you on your election as the 44th President of the United States of America. Your historic victory is truly a turning point for our country, and it is in the spirit of the change you promise to bring to American leadership abroad that we write to you concerning Iraq's ever-worsening humanitarian crisis. As you know, there are more than 4.7 million Iraqis who are currently displaced within their own country and in neighboring states such as Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Egypt and Lebanon. This is the largest displacement of individuals in the Middle East since 1948. Sadly, their situation has not improved and we are deeply troubled that the United States has not done enough to address this deteriorating crisis.

Our government has a moral obligation and responsibility to provide aid to those in need during humanitarian emergencies and to confront challenges to international security. The desperation of these Iraqi refugees in their efforts to survive in increasingly resentful host countries constitutes a direct threat to themselves and a threat to the future stability of the region.

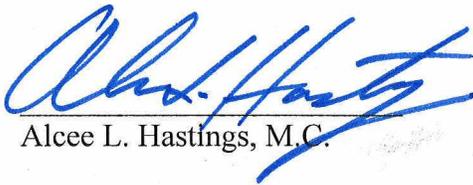
During your campaign, you pledged at least \$2 billion to expand services to Iraqi refugees in neighboring countries and to work together with the government of Iraq and our international partners to address this crisis. We sincerely hope that you honor your pledge and make the Iraqi refugee crisis a top priority. If ignored further, this situation will have far-reaching security implications for the Middle East, the United States, and the broader international community.

We urge you and your new Administration to take immediate action to provide greatly needed support and protection to Iraqi refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). What is needed now is a humanitarian surge in response to this crisis.

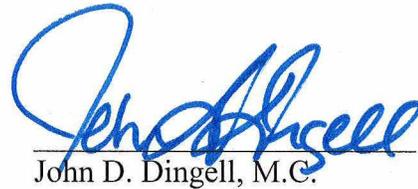
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Thank you for your consideration in this extremely important matter. We look forward to working with you on this and the many other issues facing our country both at home and abroad.

Sincerely,



Alcee L. Hastings, M.C.



John D. Dingell, M.C.



Maxine Waters, M.C.



John W. Olver, M.C.



Earl Blumenauer, M.C.



William D. Delahunt, M.C.



Dennis J. Kucinich, M.C.



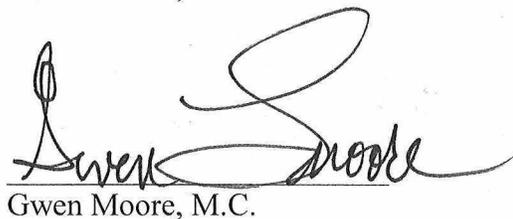
Barbara Lee, M.C.



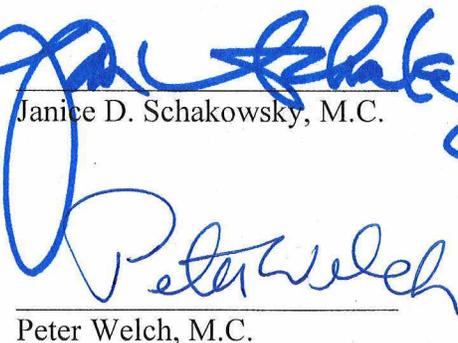
Rush D. Holt, M.C.



Janice D. Schakowsky, M.C.



Gwen Moore, M.C.



Peter Welch, M.C.