

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

July 22, 2021

The Honorable Antony Blinken
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C St NW
Washington, DC 20520-0099

Dear Secretary Blinken:

Thank you for making the Directorate of Passport Services available last week for a staff briefing on the backlog of passport applications facing passport centers around the country and the long delays experienced by our constituents. While we understand and appreciate that improvements are being made to address the problems, we write today to urge your department to accelerate the implementation of policies and procedures that increase timely issuance of passports.

After more than a year of travel restrictions and health concerns due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many Americans have already traveled internationally or are planning to in the near future. Families are trying to reunite with loved ones, students are trying to study abroad, and businesses are trying to reconnect with customers and expand overseas market share. However, many of our constituents are facing long delays and canceled trips due to an inability at passport centers to receive, process, and deliver passports in a timely manner. Currently, routine service can take up to 18 weeks, while expedited service can take up to 12 weeks for an additional \$60 fee.

We also have heard from constituents who have had to stay on hold for several hours after calling into the National Passport Information Center to request an update on their passport application. Further, Congressional staff calling on constituents' behalf have also experienced hours' long delays, reducing our office's ability to help a greater number of constituents in need.

In response to these concerns, we urge you to pursue any and all available means to improve service to our constituents including, but not limited to, resolving delays caused by your service partners and accelerating your stated plans to increase staffing at passport offices, increase the number of available walk-in appointments, and increase capacity at the call centers.

Should you require any additional authority from Congress to address these concerns, we urge you to notify us as soon as possible. We thank you for your consideration and look forward to working with you to address this important issue.

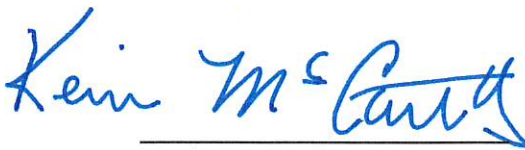
Sincerely,



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House Republican Leader



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Member of Congress



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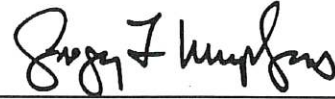
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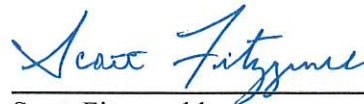
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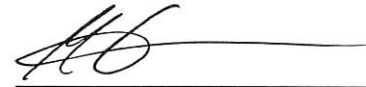
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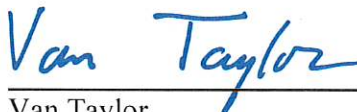
Alan Lowenthal
Member of Congress



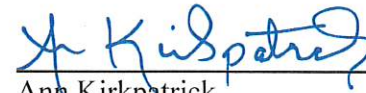
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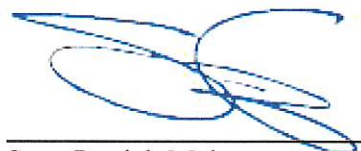
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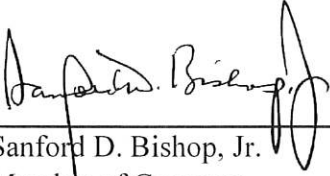
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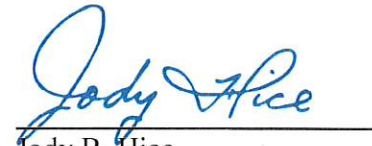
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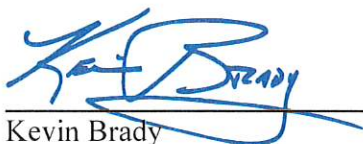
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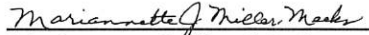
Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

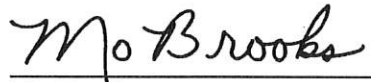



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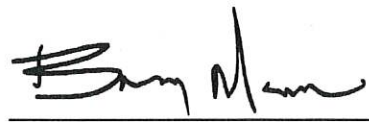

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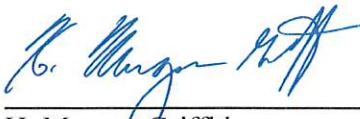
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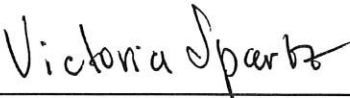
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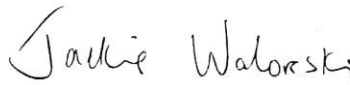
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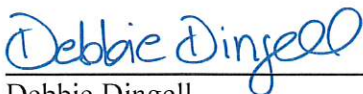
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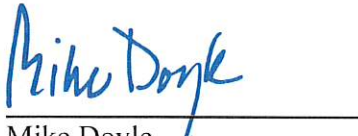
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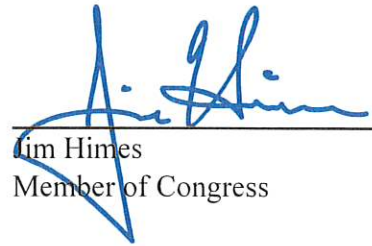
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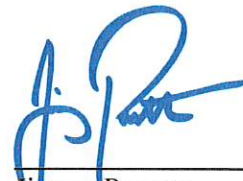
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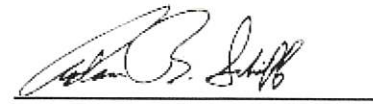
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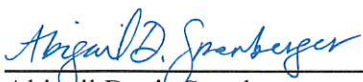
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Albio Sires
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Abigail Davis Spanberger
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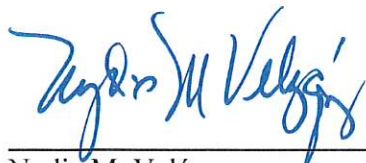
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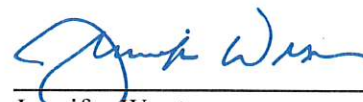
Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



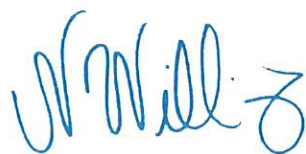
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