

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 2023

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden:

We write to commend you for your strong stance in budget discussions that you will protect children, veterans, older Americans, and people struggling to afford their basic needs. We are deeply disturbed by Speaker McCarthy's continued insistence on proposals that would increase hardship and raise costs for millions of Americans. We support negotiations for Congress to pass a clean debt ceiling and separately reach a budget agreement that does not undermine the social safety net programs that our communities need.

We are grateful for the principled public position you have taken that budget negotiations should not result in policies that would increase poverty or take away health care and food assistance from low-income Americans. Yet Speaker McCarthy once again has demanded policies that would impose or expand harsh and ineffective work requirements. Under his plan, up to 21 million Americans could lose their Medicaid, up to 1 million older adults could lose access to SNAP, and up to 1 million poor children could lose financial support through TANF.

These GOP proposals would have devastating impacts in our communities. Decades of research and real-world experience show that taking basic assistance away from people who do not meet rigid work-reporting requirements does not improve employment. Policies that create excess barriers to access social safety net programs only take away health care and food assistance away from people, which undermines goals to improve the strength and wellbeing of our economy and workforce. Labor market discrimination already punishes too many workers, and rigid work-reporting requirements would punish them a second time.

We stand by you, Mr. President, in rejecting the House-passed proposals and working to ensure that Congress passes a clean debt ceiling and separately reach a budget agreement that allows us to move forward with critical investments in the appropriations process. Thank you.

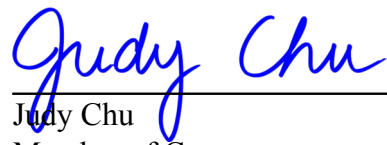
Sincerely,



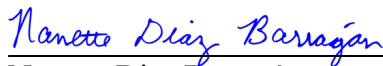
Barbara Lee
Member of Congress
Chair, House Democratic
Caucus Poverty Task Force



Steven Horsford
Member of Congress
Chairman, Congressional
Black Caucus



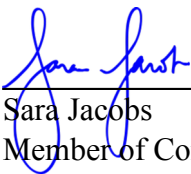
Judy Chu
Member of Congress
Chairwoman, Congressional
Asian Pacific American
Caucus



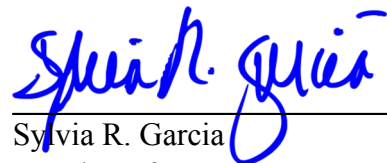
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress
Chairwoman, Congressional
Hispanic Caucus



James P. McGovern
Ranking Member, Committee
on Rules
Vice Chair on Hunger
House Democratic Caucus
Poverty Task Force



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress
Vice Chair on Economic
Mobility
House Democratic Caucus
Poverty Task Force



Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress
Vice Chair on Housing and
Transportation, House
Democratic Caucus Poverty
Task Force