

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 12, 2025

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on National Security,
Department of State, and Related Programs
Room HT-2, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Lois Frankel
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on National Security,
Department of State, and Related Programs
2305 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart and Ranking Member Frankel:

Thank you for your leadership in supporting life-saving programs to remove ordnance, mines, and other explosive remnants of war left on battlefields around the world. We write to respectfully request that the Committee support \$271,703,000 for Conventional Weapons Destruction (CWD) programs within the Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining and Related (NADR) account at the U.S. Department of State.

The Conventional Weapons Destruction (CWD) account funds State Department humanitarian demining and weapons security management programs in nearly 50 countries. These programs address the security and humanitarian impacts of landmines, improvised explosive devices, and other explosive remnants of war, and combat the diversion of small arms and light weapons from government stockpiles to criminals and terrorists. Over the past several years, we have been pleased to see strong bipartisan support for CWD programs from Congress. However, to protect American interests and support stability, further funding is needed to ensure these programs can continue worldwide, as well as to address US legacy ordnance in key geostrategic areas, including Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia.

Though CWD programs have clear humanitarian benefits, such as saving lives, enabling the return of displaced people, and providing safe access for other forms of humanitarian aid to reach vulnerable populations, they are classified as International Security Assistance programs due to their impact making make America safer. These programs ensure explosive materials and weapons do not fall into the hands of terrorist and criminal networks, and by removing explosives that can harm servicemembers, contractors, and government officials stationed overseas. In Somalia, for example, CWD programs help ensure Al-Shabaab cannot easily access explosives and man-portable air-defense systems (MANPADS) that could be used to target the U.S. or allies. Further, information gained from demining programs, which benefit from equipment provided by the U.S. Department of Defense, are used to design new and better mine detection systems to protect American warfighters in the future.

CWD programs make America stronger by reducing security threats that could otherwise escalate into expensive crises for the United States, and by countering violence by keeping weapons out of the hands of

gangs and cartels – ensuring people can safely live in their home countries. Explosive ordnance removal provides a direct and measurable benefit to large swathes of the population, while the US flags worn on demining gear and vehicles provide a highly visible demonstration of American support in areas of strategic competition. Further, CWD programs protect our allies, as terrorist organizations repurpose explosive hazards for their own ends; Hamas recently used unexploded ordnance as payloads for their rockets into Israel. In Lebanon, CWD efforts provide Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) with training and infrastructure to secure its borders and ensure sole oversight of all weapons in Lebanon, contributing directly to upholding the terms of the current U.S.-led ceasefire, and strengthening the LAF's ability to respond to security threats from terrorist organizations which jeopardize regional stability.

CWD programs also support America's strength by deepening long-term partnerships with governments and national defense organizations, building trust that enables broader U.S. engagement. Demining efforts are critical to relationships with Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia, which remain heavily impacted by U.S. legacy cluster bombs and other explosive hazards. Laos is the most heavily bombed country in history and has suffered an estimated 70,000 casualties from explosive remnants of war. Cambodia, which contains additional significant landmine contamination, has suffered over 65,000 casualties from explosive hazards since 1964. In Vietnam, at least 105,000 casualties from explosive threats have been recorded. More resources are needed to remove this deadly detritus of war, demonstrate continued resolve for removing U.S. legacy ordnance, and strengthen diplomatic relations.

CWD programs also make America more prosperous. They strengthen the economies of our allies by making contaminated land usable for agriculture and infrastructure, such as in Ukraine, where over a million acres of farmland may contain explosives. These efforts allow post-conflict recovery, attracting U.S. investment, and transforming aid recipients into new markets. CWD programs promote self-sufficiency, help drive down global food prices, and strengthen bilateral relationships, helping to ensure other countries prioritize U.S. interests. Clearance of explosive ordnance also creates a multiplier effect on other investments, such as private foreign direct investment, on the economies of our allies.

We therefore urge the subcommittee to include the following report language for the CWD account:

“The Committee recommendation includes \$271,703,000 for Conventional Weapons Destruction programs, of which \$80,000,000 is for programs in Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia.”

We are confident that if we maintain our commitment to demining and weapons security efforts around the world – especially in countries like Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Angola, and Ukraine – we can create a safer, stronger, and more prosperous world for civilians abroad and Americans at home.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



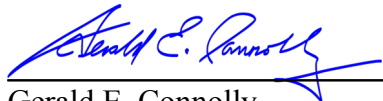
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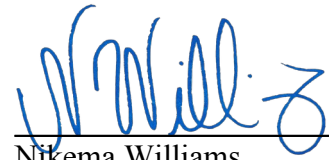
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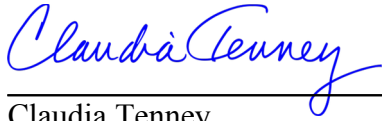
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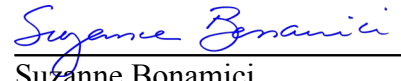
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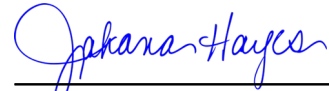
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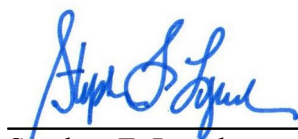
Jim Himes
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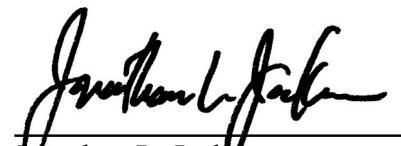
Bradley Scott Schneider
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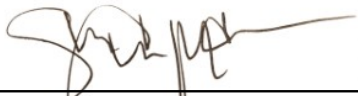
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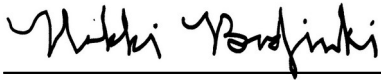
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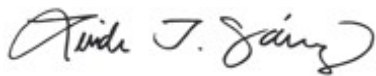
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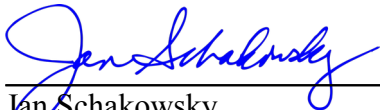
Becca Balint
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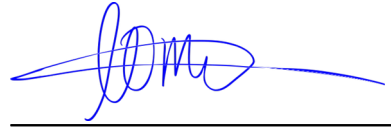
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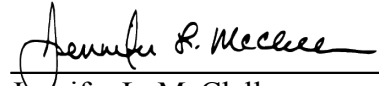
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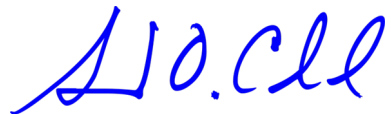
Shri Thanedar
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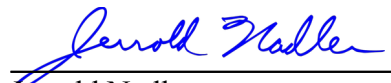
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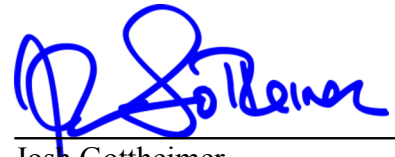
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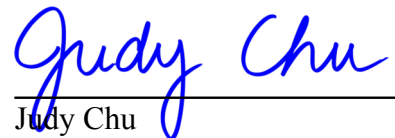
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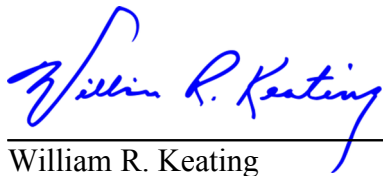
J. Luis Correa
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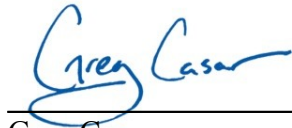
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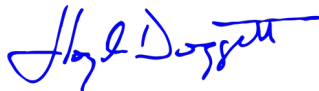
Robin L. Kelly
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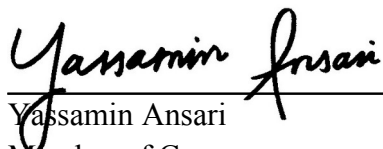
Sydney Kamlager Dove
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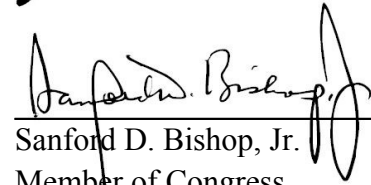
Lloyd Doggett
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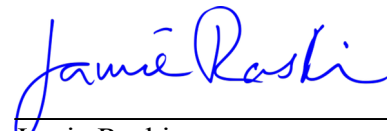
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Jamie Raskin
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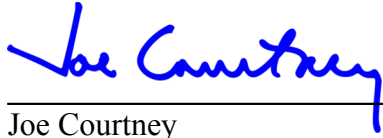
Janelle S. Bynum
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Rashida Tlaib
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Joe Wilson
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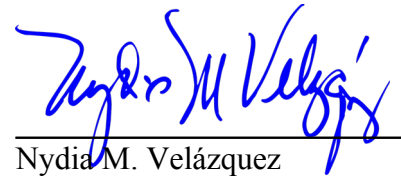
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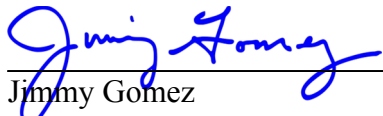
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Raja Krishnamoorthi
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Aumua Amata Coleman
Radewagen
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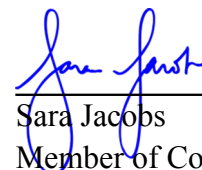
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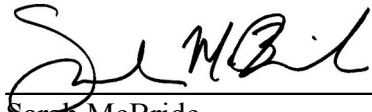
Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



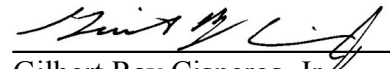
April McClain Delaney
Member of Congress



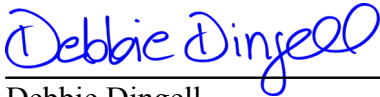
Michael R. Turner
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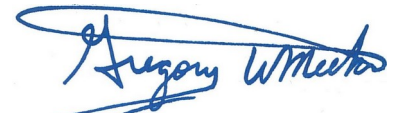
Sarah McBride
Member of Congress



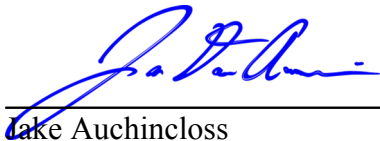
Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
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Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Ranking Member
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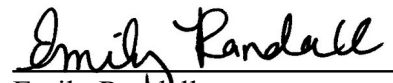
Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee
Member of Congress



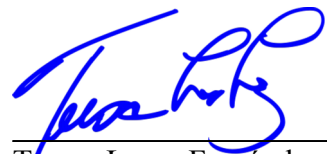
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Emily Randall
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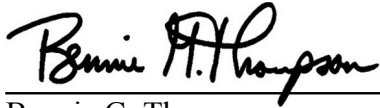
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Maggie Goodlander
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Michael T. McCaul
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Donald G. Davis
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Nellie Pou
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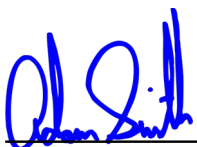
Diana DeGette
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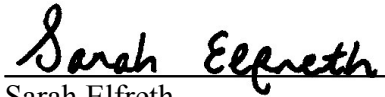
Ted W. Lieu
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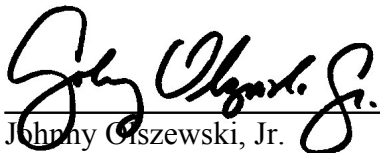
Adam Smith
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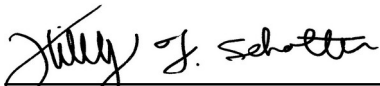
Sarah Elfreth
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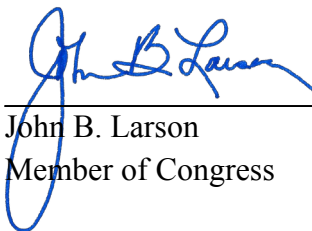
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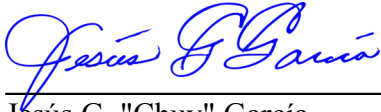
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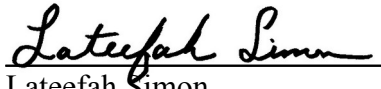
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Jesús G. "Chuy" García
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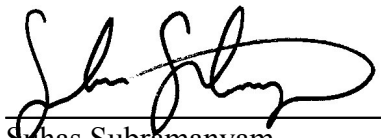
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