

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

June 23, 2009

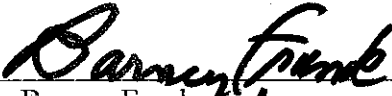
President Barack Obama  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

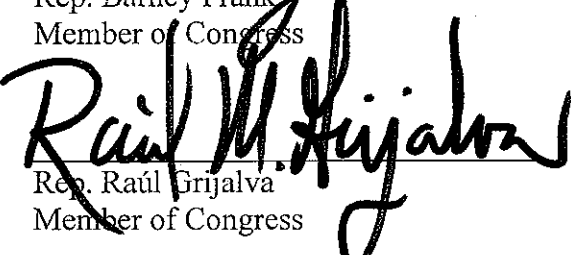
Dear Mr. President,


We were very disappointed to read in the *New York Times* on Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, that representatives of the administration are seeking to discourage the government of Iraq from holding a referendum – that it had promised to hold – on whether or not American troops should remain in that country, because of a fear that the majority of Iraqis will express a wish that we leave.

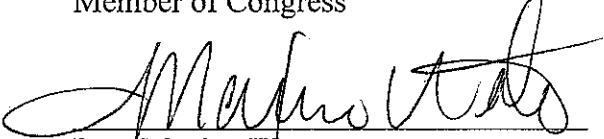
We are Members who opposed the Iraq war from the start and believe that the pace of withdrawal should be much quicker. We know that there are some who disagree with us on this, but we understood that at least a large part of that argument was that we somehow owed it to the Iraqi people to stay there until things were more stable, and that it was this obligation to them that played a major part in what we think is an unduly slow withdrawal timetable.

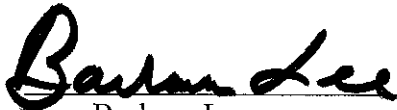
Given that, we were very unpleasantly surprised to learn of efforts by our government to prevent the people from Iraq from expressing their views on this very point. If it is in fact the case that a majority of the Iraqis are ready to vote for us to withdraw, the argument for our staying – in defiance of their wishes – becomes a very weak one. Apparently, it is the fear of having a large part of the rationale for a longer stay than we think wise demolished by the Iraqi people that is leading us to try to block the holding of a vote to which that government is committed. Thwarting democracy in the name of our advancing it is hardly a policy to which we think we should be committed, and so we urge you to make it very clear that the American government is in no way opposed to the holding of the referendum, and that if in fact a majority of the Iraqi people vote to ask us to leave more quickly, we will comply.

  
Rep. Barney Frank  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Raúl Grijalva  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Lynn Woolsey  
Member of Congress

  
Rep. Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress



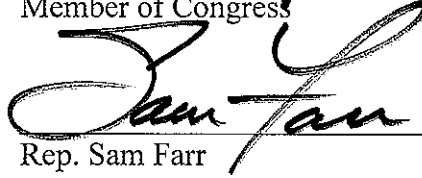
Rep. Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



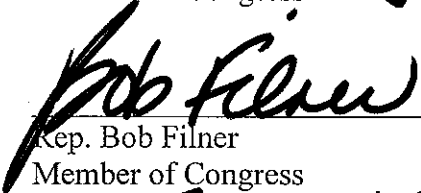
Rep. Michael Capuano  
Member of Congress



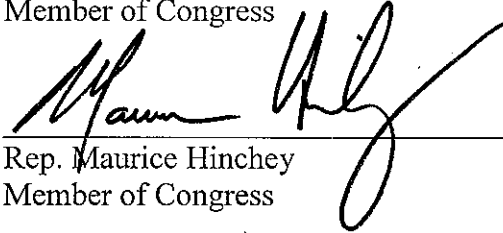
Rep. John Conyers  
Member of Congress



Rep. Sam Farr  
Member of Congress



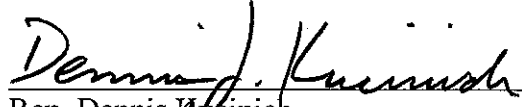
Rep. Bob Filner  
Member of Congress



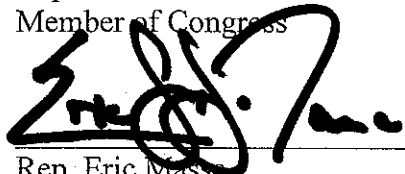
Rep. Maurice Hinchey  
Member of Congress



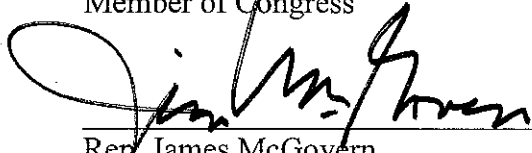
Rep. Rush Holt  
Member of Congress



Rep. Dennis Kucinich  
Member of Congress



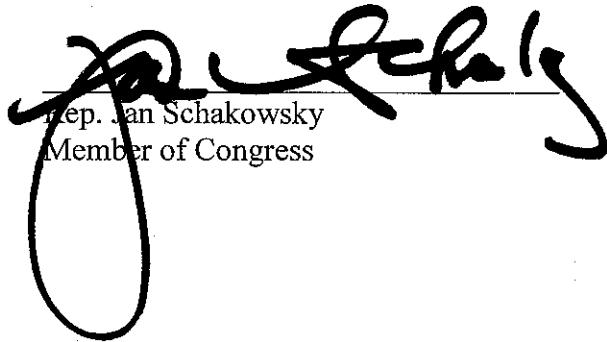
Rep. Eric Massa  
Member of Congress



Rep. James McGovern  
Member of Congress



Rep. Gwen Moore  
Member of Congress



Rep. Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress