

# Congress of the United States

Washington, D.C. 20515

June 26, 2007

The Honorable Elias A. Zerhouni  
Director  
National Institutes of Health  
1 Center Drive, Room 126  
Bethesda, MD 20892-0148

Dear Dr. Zerhouni:

We are writing to urge that you make Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) a higher priority at the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

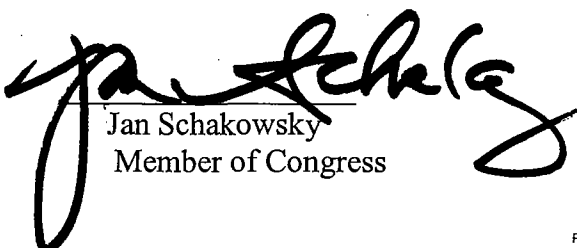
As you know, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, also called Chronic Fatigue and Immune Dysfunction Syndrome, is a complex and debilitating illness that affects brain and multiple body systems. Current research indicates that up to four million Americans suffer from this illness. Even more alarming, more than 80% of those individuals have not been diagnosed because there is no effective diagnostic test. Further, due to the lack of research resources, there is no single course of therapy or cure for the illness that has proven effective.

The increased prevalence of CFS and the alarming low rate of diagnosis – coupled with the fact that CFS can be as disabling as multiple sclerosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and end-stage renal failure – warrants greater federal investment in CFS research and education. Additionally, since it appears that CFIDS affects minorities in greater numbers, we also encourage the NIH to conduct research that might address this problem, in keeping with the mission of the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities.

We understand that the Office of Portfolio Analysis and Strategic Initiatives (OPASI) was created to identify gaps in biomedical research that do not fit into one single institute at NIH but instead are left to be covered by the agency as a whole. CFS is an ideal candidate for research funding offered through OPASI. As you know, CFS researchers are developing a better understanding of the multiple factors associated with CFS, including genetics, infectious agents, and other environmental factors, but more aggressive support from NIH, both intramurally and extramurally, is urgently needed.

We urge you to make CFS a priority for research funding so that we can better determine the cause of the disease to create effective treatments and find a cure.

Sincerely,

  
Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress

  
Sue Myrick  
Member of Congress



Ed Towns  
Member of Congress



Ron Paul  
Member of Congress



Lois Capps  
Member of Congress



Jim Gerlach  
Member of Congress



Robert Brady  
Member of Congress



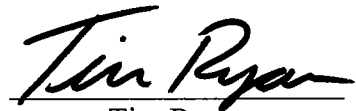
Eliot Engel  
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen  
Member of Congress



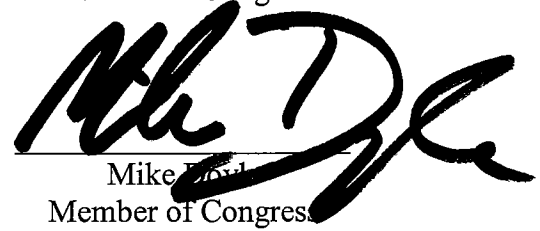
Elijah Cummings  
Member of Congress



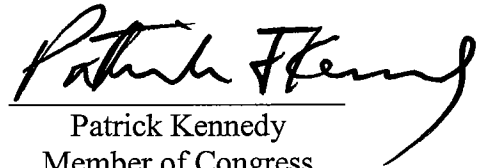
Tim Ryan  
Member of Congress



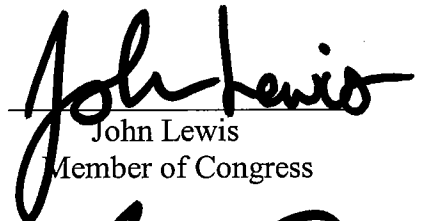
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



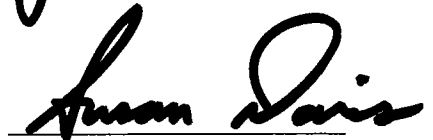
Mike Boyd  
Member of Congress



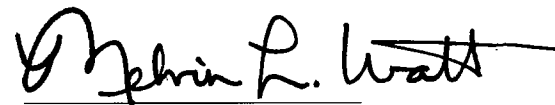
Patrick Kennedy  
Member of Congress



John Lewis  
Member of Congress



Susan Davis  
Member of Congress



Mel Watt  
Member of Congress



Rush Holt  
Member of Congress



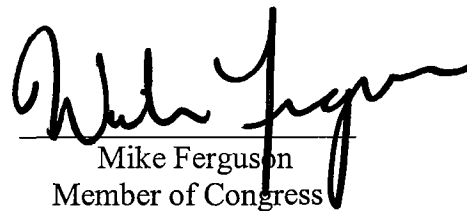
Rob Andrews  
Member of Congress



Tom Davis  
Member of Congress



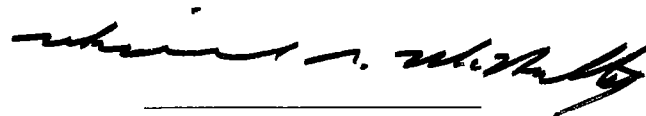
Nathan Deal  
Member of Congress



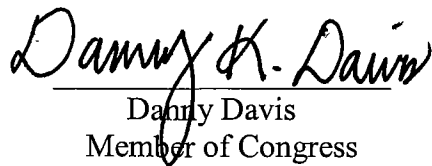
Mike Ferguson  
Member of Congress



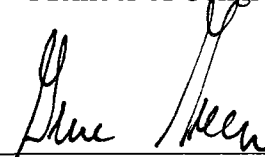
Raul Grijalva  
Member of Congress



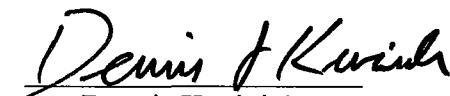
Michael McNulty  
Member of Congress



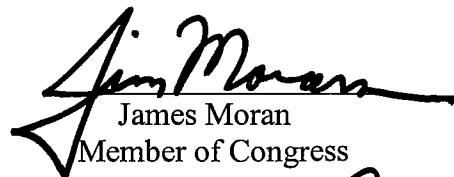
Danny Davis  
Member of Congress



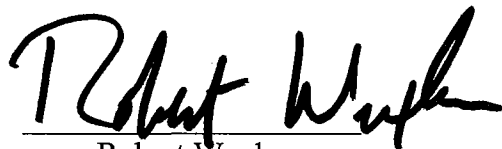
Gene Green  
Member of Congress



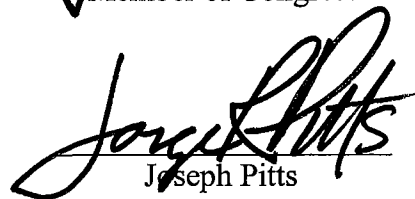
Dennis Kucinich  
Member of Congress



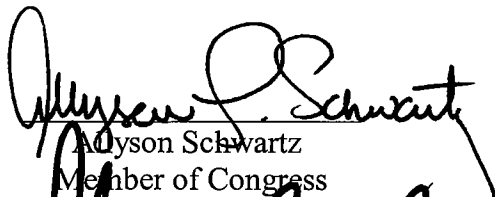
James Moran  
Member of Congress



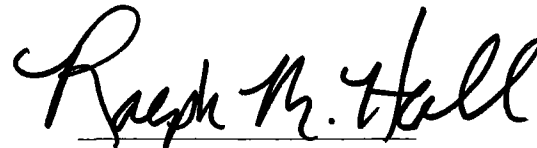
Robert Wexler  
Member of Congress



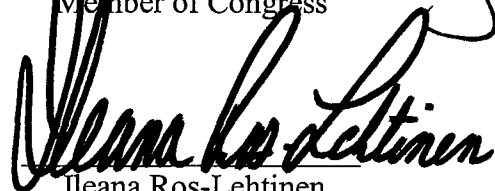
Joseph Pitts  
Member of Congress



Ayson Schwartz  
Member of Congress



Ralph Hall  
Member of Congress



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Member of Congress



Ron Klein  
Member of Congress