

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

April 26, 2022

To Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
2413 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

To Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
2207 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As you consider Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations legislation, we respectfully urge you to support the work of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to address the impact of climate change on the health of Americans. Specifically, we request at least \$3 million in funding for the Office of Climate Change and Health Equity, which is consistent with the President's FY 2023 Budget Request.

As you know, President Biden's Executive Order 14008 established the Office of Climate Change and Health Equity (OCCHE) under the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Health. The first office of its kind, OCCHE was established to enhance overall population health by working at the intersection of social determinants of health and climate resiliency. The requested funding would allow OCCHE to continue advancing its mission of addressing climate change and health equity by building community health resiliency hubs, mitigating the impact of environmental factors on health outcomes (e.g., reducing cardiovascular disease), and decarbonizing the healthcare sector.

According to the latest report from the United Nation's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, climate change is a growing threat to our wellbeing and a healthy planet—and we are already seeing the public health impact. Record-breaking heatwaves, hurricanes, droughts, floods, and other increasingly severe disasters, climate change are already challenging our public health capacity and harming our biodiverse planet. Although the climate crisis affects everyone, those most susceptible include communities of color, older adults, children, pregnant persons, people with lower incomes, those who live or work in areas with greater exposure, as well as people with pre-existing physical, behavioral, or chronic health conditions. This proposed funding level would provide the necessary resources to align the department's COP26 commitments as well as promote multi-sectoral and multi-agency collaboration, technical assistance, and innovation to combat climate-induced health disparities while training the future climate and healthcare workforce.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's work in recent years towards increasing our national health infrastructure to bolster climate resiliency and invest in improving social determinants of health. The House-passed Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 omnibus included more than \$259 million in funding to address the climate crisis across all federal agencies and allocated \$117.6 billion in base discretionary funding for HHS. This 21.6% increase in funding from the previous year reflects a congressional awareness of the importance and urgency of investing in our health infrastructure. We believe this funding is a necessary starting point to invest in a comprehensive, environmentally just health strategy that considers the [four major consequences](#) of climate change on human health, identified by the OCCHE as rising temperatures, more extreme weather, rising sea levels, and increased levels of CO2.

Thank you for your leadership on the House Appropriations Committee and for your continued support of HHS and OCCHE. Congress has shown a strong commitment to mitigating legacy damage from climate change and building an environment where every person is safe and healthy. We urge the Committee to continue this critical work and include \$3 million to fund this important HHS program and support implementation efforts in FY 2023.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Bradley Scott Schneider  
Member of Congress



Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress



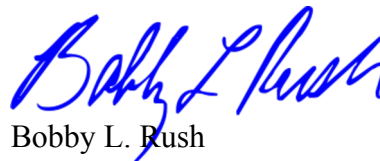
Nanette Diaz Barragan  
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Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



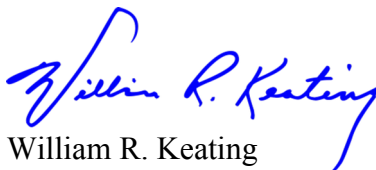
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Bobby L. Rush  
Member of Congress



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William R. Keating  
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Diana DeGette  
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Thomas R. Suozzi  
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Earl Blumenauer  
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Mary Gay Scanlon  
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Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



Alan Lowenthal  
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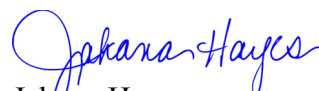
Lisa Blunt Rochester  
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Tony Cárdenas  
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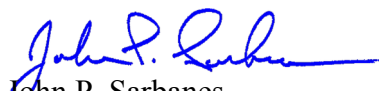
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Jahana Hayes  
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Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
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John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress



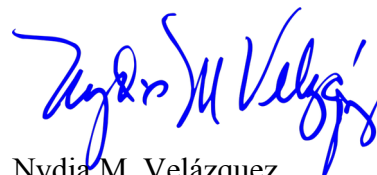
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Veronica Escobar  
Member of Congress



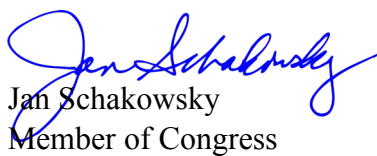
Troy Carter  
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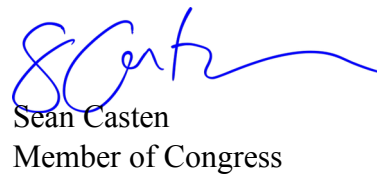
Nydia M. Velázquez  
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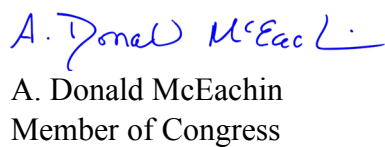
Sara Jacobs  
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Jan Schakowsky  
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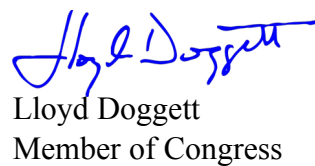
Sean Casten  
Member of Congress



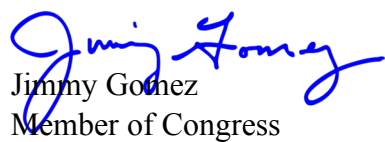
A. Donald McEachin  
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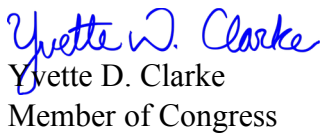
Jimmy Panetta  
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Lloyd Doggett  
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Jimmy Gomez  
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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



Mike Doyle  
Member of Congress