Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 30, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Chairman
House Committee on Energy and Commerce
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Rangel
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
House Committee on Education and Labor
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Madam Speaker, Chairman Waxman, Chairman Rangel, and Chairman Miller:

We write to voice our opposition to the negotiated health care reform agreement under consideration in the Energy and Commerce Committee.

We regard the agreement reached by Chairman Waxman and several Blue Dog members of the Committee as fundamentally unacceptable. This agreement is not a step forward toward a good health care bill, but a large step backwards. Any bill that does not provide, at a minimum, for a public option with reimbursement rates based on Medicare rates – not negotiated rates – is unacceptable. It would ensure higher costs for the public plan, and would do nothing to achieve the goal of "keeping insurance companies honest," and their rates down.

To offset the increased costs incurred by adopting the provisions advocated by the Blue Dog members of the Committee, the agreement would reduce subsidies to low- and middle-income families, requiring them to pay a larger portion of their income for insurance premiums, and would impose an unfunded mandate on the states to pay for what were to have been Federal costs.

In short, this agreement will result in the public, both as insurance purchasers and as taxpayers, paying ever higher rates to insurance companies.

We simply cannot vote for such a proposal.

Sincerely,

Lynn Woolsey Raul M. Grijalva

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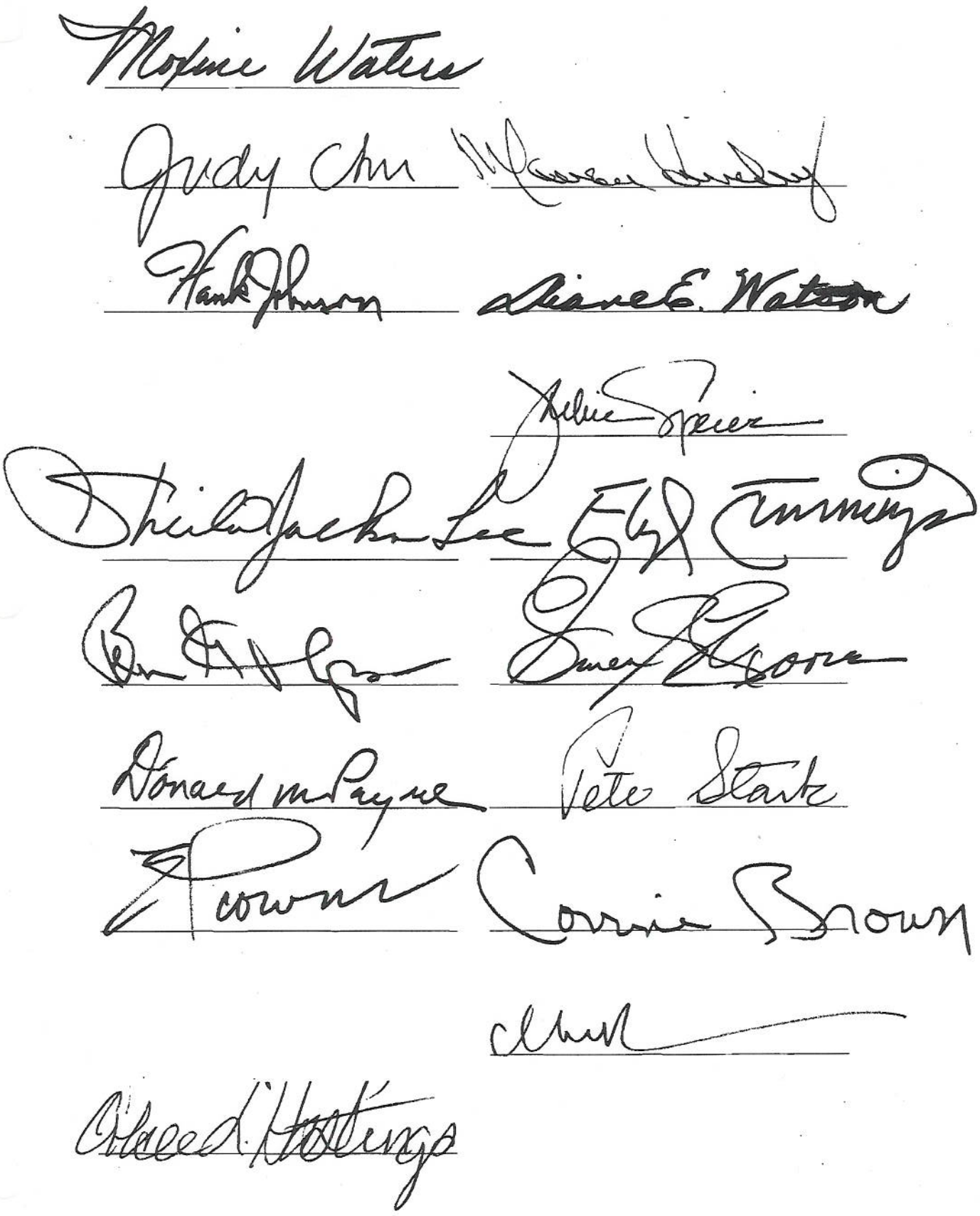

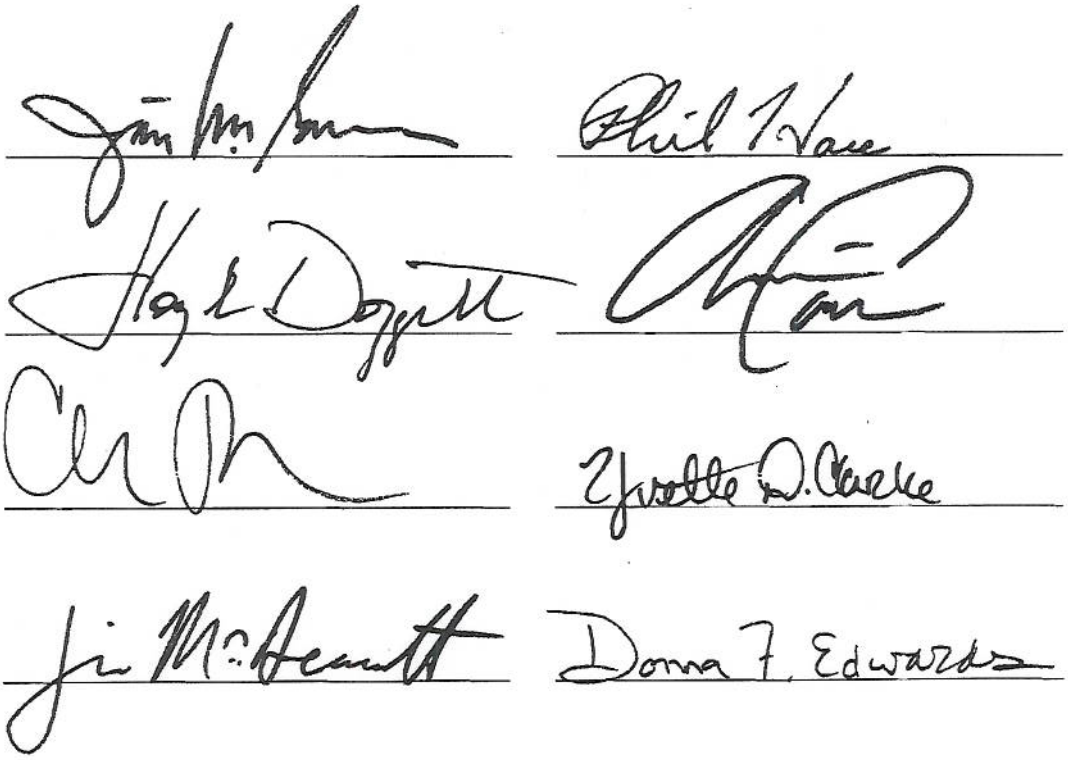

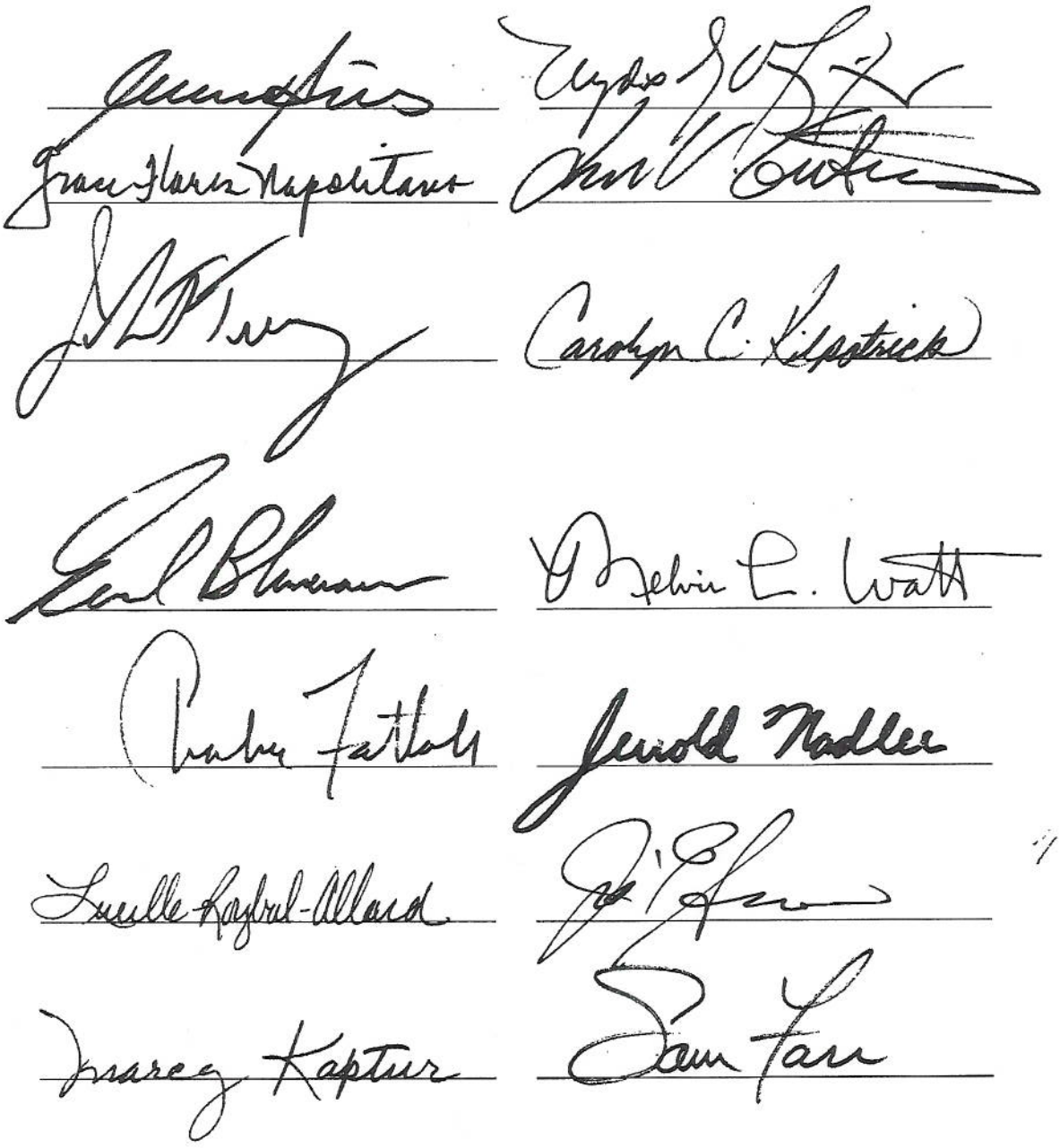

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