Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 11, 2012

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on LHHS
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on LHHS
1016 Longworth House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

Thank you for listening to the concerns of our constituents last year by reestablishing a priority on Sexual Risk Avoidance (SRA) Abstinence Education. We appreciate the fact that the House draft for FY 2012 offered parity between the SRA approach and the Sexual Risk Reduction (SRR) contraceptive approach. We were also pleased that you insisted that the SRA program remain in the final FY 2012 bill.

Unfortunately, there still persists more than a 20:1 disparity between the SRR and SRA approaches. We encourage you to continue working to establish parity between the SRA and SRR approaches.

Contrary to claims by anti-abstinence groups, SRA is effective. Twenty-two independent research studies show positive behavioral impact for SRA programs. Students in SRA programs are more likely to delay sexual initiation than their peers and are no less likely to use a condom, if they become sexually active. In addition, according to a recent study by HHS, most parents and teens support the SRA abstinence approach. This support is corroborated in CDC data that shows nearly 75% of 15-17 year olds *have never had sex*. Federal sex education policy should reinforce these healthy decisions made by increasing numbers of teens.

We support parity between the SRA and SRR approaches in the final FY 2013 spending bill. Further, this is an issue that impacts the public health interests of our nation, and the individual health of America's teens. SRA abstinence programs were first widely funded under former President Clinton and have since received bipartisan support. We believe Congress should continue to support programs that focus exclusively on sexual risk avoidance abstinence education.

Sincerely,

Rep. Bill Flores
Member of Congress

Rep. Dan Boren
Member of Congress

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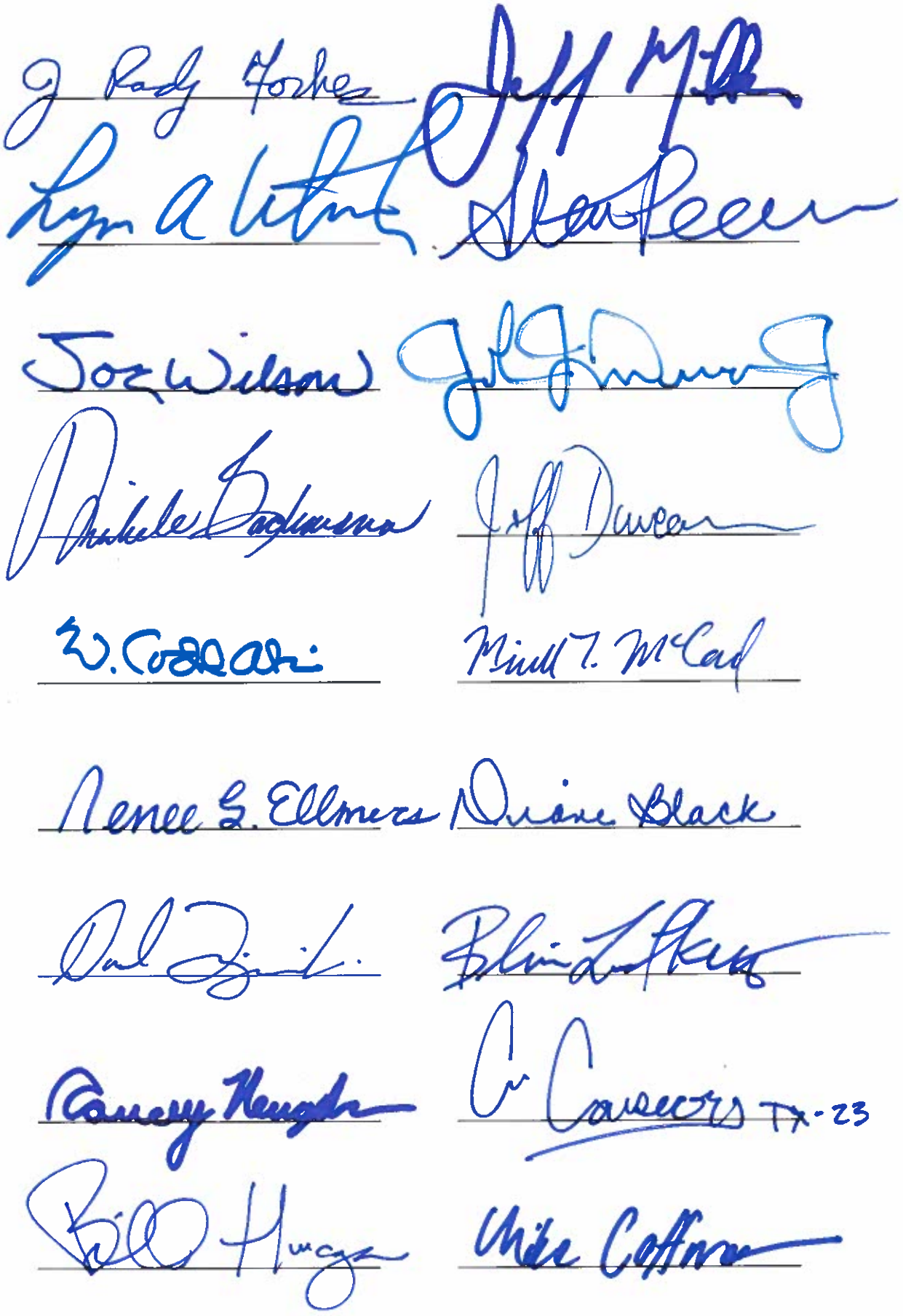

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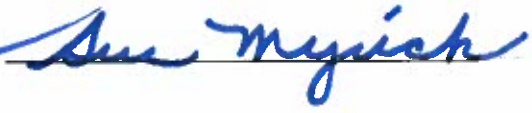

Scott Garrett