

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 26th, 2014

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Your meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi next week provides an opportunity to discuss religious inclusion and the protection of religious minorities in India. As you know, reports indicate that there has been an increase in violence against Muslims and Christians in the first hundred days of Prime Minister Modi's term. This increased violence against Muslims and Christians in India echoes the deadly 2002 riots in Gujarat, which happened while Prime Minister Modi was chief minister of the region. Prime Minister Modi's visit could open a dialogue about the positive steps his government can take in preventing oppression and encouraging religious inclusion.

After winning the election Prime Minister Modi said "I have to run the government. A government runs according to the Constitution. I believe that a government has only one religion -- India first. A government has only one holy book -- our Constitution. A government has only one kind of devotion -- towards nation." This statement is promising. However, given the reported increase in violence against Christians and Muslims, the reality on the ground in India's communities indicates that this promise must be followed by action.

Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent approach to civil disobedience is an example of our shared belief in democratic values. First among them is tolerance of minority groups. I hope the issue of tolerance will be discussed during your meetings this week and in the future. Prime Minister Modi can play a constructive role by criticizing extremists and opening a dialogue in the country about violence aimed at religious minorities.

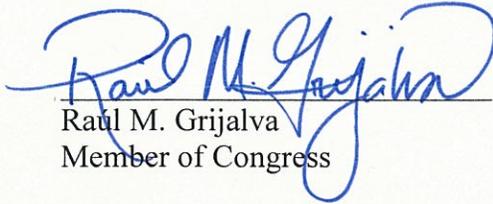
Sincerely,

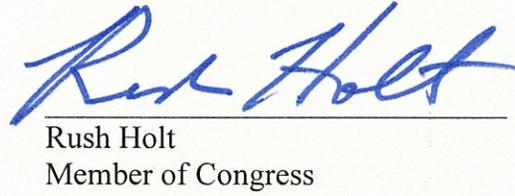

Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

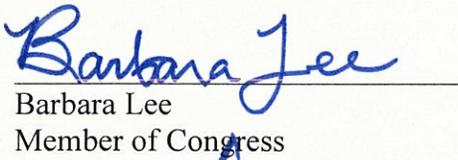

Joseph Pitts
Member of Congress

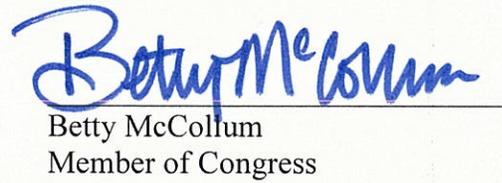

John Conyers
Member of Congress

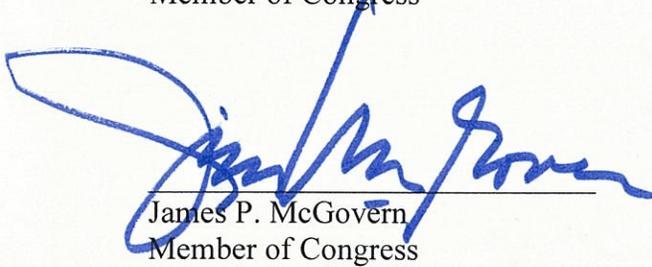

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

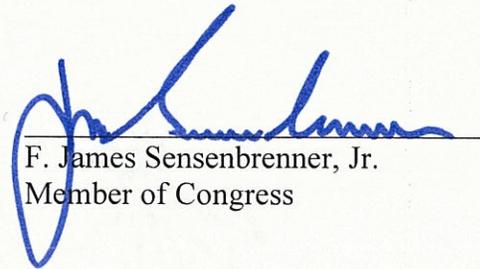

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress

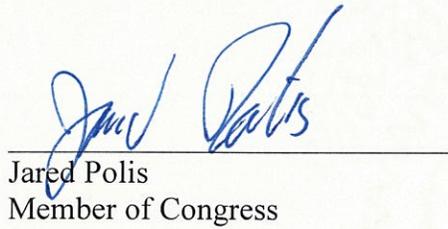

Rush Holt
Member of Congress


Barbara Lee
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Betty McCollum
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James P. McGovern
Member of Congress


F. James Sensenbrenner, Jr.
Member of Congress


Jared Polis
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