

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

March 28, 2019

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human  
Services, Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

On behalf of the estimated 8.3 million Americans who have psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis, I write to request that you include \$1 million in funding, as well as corresponding report language, in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act to advance public health initiatives to improve the lives of people who are impacted by these diseases.

Psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis are painful and disfiguring chronic immune-mediated diseases that affect approximately 3 percent of the adult population in the United States. Psoriasis manifests on the skin, often in multiple locations, causing itchy and painful patches or lesions. Up to 30 percent of people with psoriasis may also develop psoriatic arthritis, an inflammatory form of arthritis that can cause irreversible joint damage if left untreated. As the joint American Academy of Dermatology and National Psoriasis Foundation guidelines released in 2019 indicate, individuals with psoriatic disease are at a heightened risk of developing a number of comorbid conditions including cardiovascular disease and stroke, diabetes and hypertension, as well as depression and anxiety. A study on psoriasis published in 2015 found that the disease may cost the nation as much as \$135 billion per year in direct and indirect costs.

As you are aware, in FY 2010, \$1.5 million was appropriated for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop a public health agenda on psoriatic disease. This agenda summarized current knowledge on psoriatic disease as well as knowledge gaps and included a comprehensive blueprint for public health research that could address those gaps and contribute to improved lives for people living with the disease. Unfortunately, without follow-on funding, the agency has not been able to pursue the priorities identified in the public health agenda.

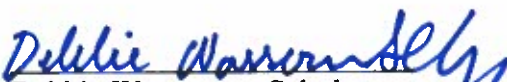
The requested FY 2020 funding will build upon the foundation of the public health agenda to address a key gap and, in so doing, help improve the quality of life for people with psoriatic disease. Specifically, the \$1 million being requested would support research on the connection between psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis and other chronic conditions. This enhanced knowledge could lead to targeted public health interventions to help persons with the disease better manage their care and would help further inform the overall research agenda in this space. In addition,


this research could inform the broader health concern of those suffering from immune-mediated diseases. To help guide the use of these funds, I request that you include the following report language under the Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion subheading within the CDC section of the report.

*Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis*— The Committee recognizes the growing body of evidence linking psoriatic disease, which impacts more than eight million Americans, to other comorbidities such as cardiovascular disease, mental health and substance abuse challenges, kidney disease, and other conditions. The Committee commends the CDC for identifying opportunities for expanded research on psoriatic disease in its Public Health Agenda for Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis and provides no less than \$1 million in funding within Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion to support intramural and grant-based research on the comorbidities of psoriatic disease, including development of self-management education resources and to address other public health challenges identified in the CDC’s Public Health Agenda for Psoriasis and Psoriatic Arthritis.


Increased support for research is critical to improving the lives of the millions of Americans with psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis. I thank you in advance for giving strong consideration to this request and for hopefully including this funding in the FY 2020 Labor, HHS and Education appropriations bill.


Sincerely,

  
Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress

  
Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

  
Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

  
Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress

  
Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress

  
James P. McGovern  
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Cedric L. Richmond  
Member of Congress



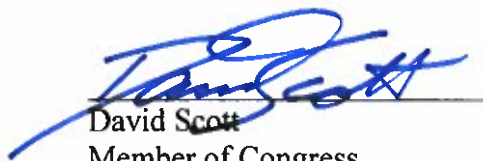
Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress



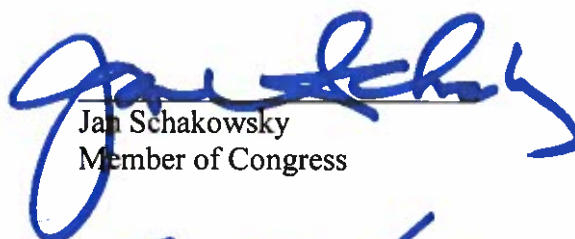
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
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Jackie Speier  
Member of Congress



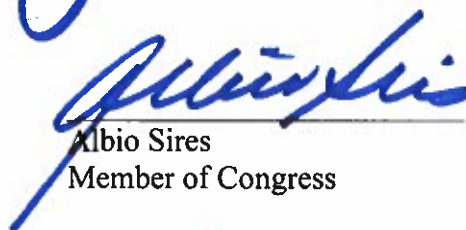
David Scott  
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Jan Schakowsky  
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Albio Sires  
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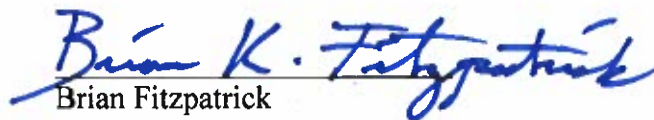
Earl Blumenauer  
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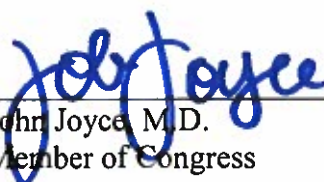
Tony Cardenas  
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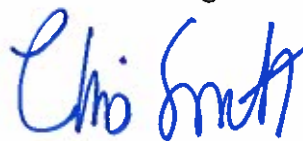
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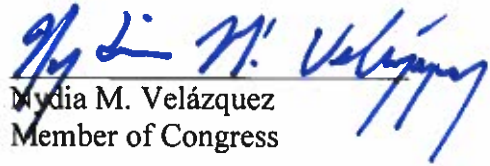
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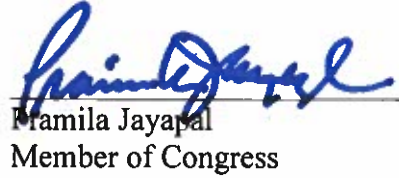
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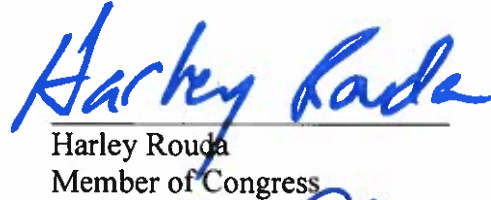
Jamie Raskin  
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Pramila Jayapal  
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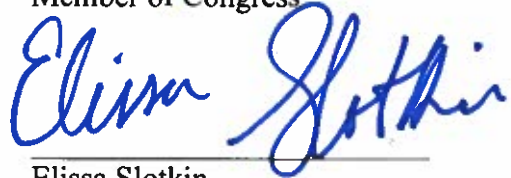
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Raja Krishnamoorthi  
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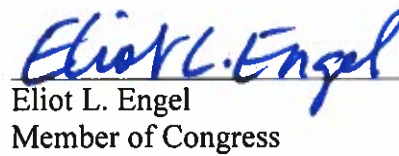
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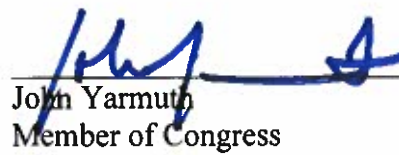
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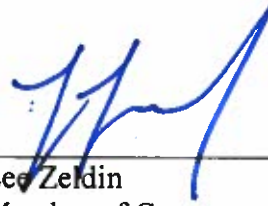


John Yarmuth  
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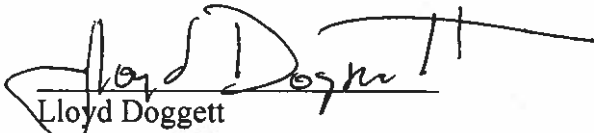




Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress



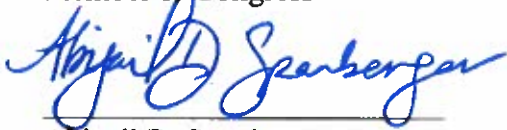
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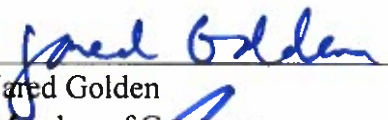
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.  
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Sharice Davids  
Member of Congress



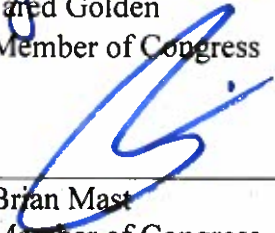
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Debbie Dingell  
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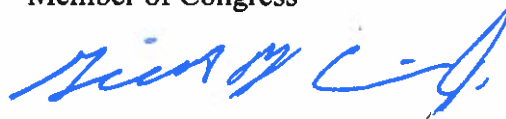
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