

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 24, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
266 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you begin work on the Fiscal Year 2024 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill, we write to express our strong support for including \$10 million in funding for the Holocaust Survivor Assistance Program (HSAP) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This is a timely and necessary program that, since its creation, has established a track record of success beyond its initial expectations, all the while in a cost-effective manner. In addition, it responds to an immediate bipartisan public policy priority to assist Holocaust survivors as well as address the emerging needs of other diverse aging populations impacted by trauma.

There are approximately 60,000 Holocaust survivors living in the United States today - with an estimated one-third living in poverty. After witnessing the darkest period of the last century and demonstrating the resiliency of the human spirit, survivors built a new life in the United States, raised families, and enriched our country. Many are age 85 or older. As a group, Holocaust survivors are subject to increased risk of depression, social isolation, and extremely poor outcomes associated with institutionalization, which can trigger the traumas of the forced institutionalizations and relocations experienced during the Holocaust.

HSAP established a Center for Advancing Holocaust Survivor Care (Center), which leverages public-private partnership opportunities with nonprofits, foundations, and the private sector to address the urgent needs of the survivor population and the nonprofit organizations and family caregivers that support them. The work of the Center has led to the development of innovative Person-Centered, Trauma-Informed (PCTI) approaches that can ameliorate increased risks.

PCTI care is a holistic approach that promotes the dignity, strength, and empowerment of trauma victims by incorporating knowledge about the role of trauma in victims' lives into agency programs, policies and procedures. It combines the core principles of person-centered care (e.g., self-determination, choice, empowerment, and individual preference) with the core activities of trauma-informed systems espoused by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

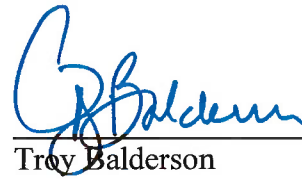
Over 400 different PCTI based programs have been implemented through the Holocaust Survivor Assistance Program. These programs are designed to assist survivors' physical, mental, and cognitive health, as well as reduce isolation. Several programs train professionals (e.g., physicians, dentists, lawyers, social workers, nurses, and home health care workers), volunteers, and family caregivers on how to provide PCTI care. In its first four years, the program served more than 28,000 unique Holocaust survivors, more than 5,000 of their family caregivers, and nearly 15,000 individuals who work at social service agencies that provide services to Holocaust survivors.

HSAP remains a critical lifeline for survivors, their families, and providers. The program's broad success has stretched beyond its initial scope of aiding Holocaust survivors; it has led to the development of innovative PCTI approaches that can ameliorate increased risks, a crucial benchmark that can serve to help the nearly 90 percent of adults in the United States have been exposed to traumatic events in their lifetimes. As a result, the program is now assisting other aging adults who have been exposed to traumatic events, including aging military veterans, first responders, victims of childhood and domestic violence, refugees, survivors of man-made or natural disasters, and survivors of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the nation ages, the need to prioritize a focus on trauma to the nation's healthcare delivery system has never been more urgent. It is critical as a matter of public health that PCTI approaches are advanced to understand and treat the long-term impact of trauma on older adults. We urge you to prioritize in FY 2024 this cost-effective, innovative initiative to support Holocaust survivors and advance broader PCTI approaches to serve diverse populations impacted by trauma.

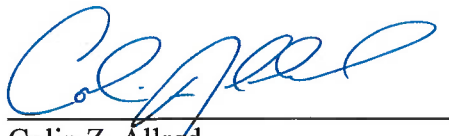
Sincerely,


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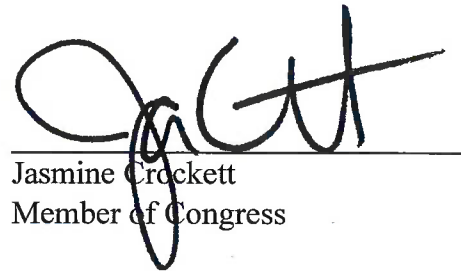
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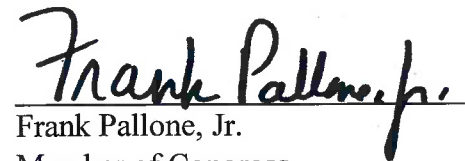
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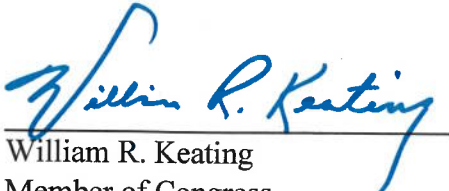
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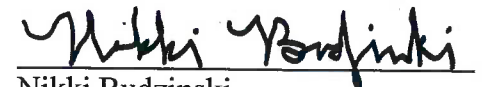
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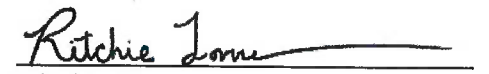
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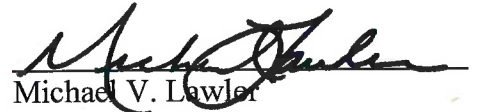
Lloyd Smucker
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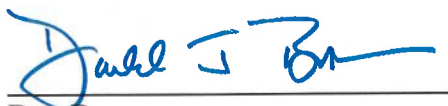
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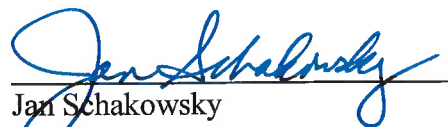
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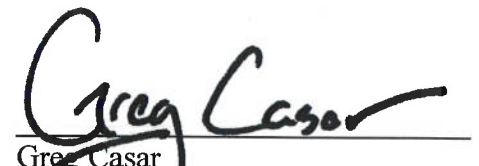


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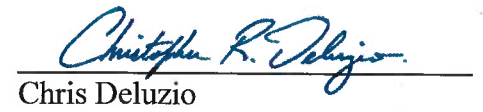

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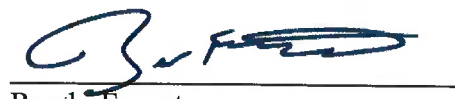

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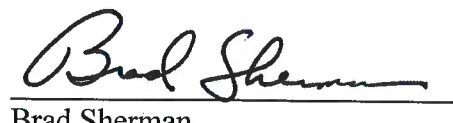

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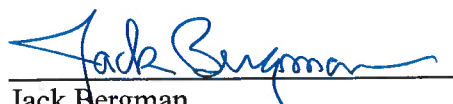
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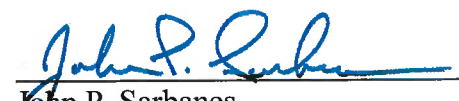
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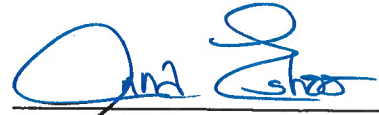
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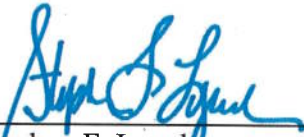
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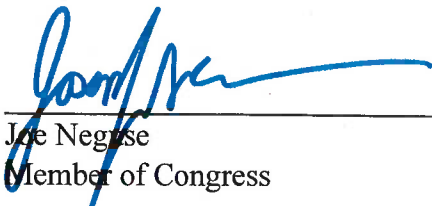
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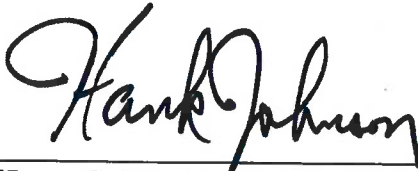
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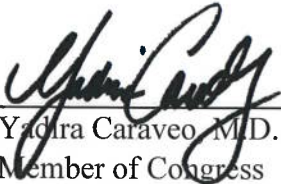
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Darren Soto
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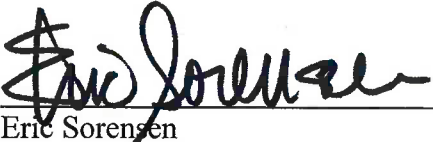
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Robert J. Menendez
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