

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 4, 2018

His Excellency Recep Tayyip Erdogan
President
The Republic of Turkey

Dear Mr. President,

It has now been over a year and a half since Turkish authorities detained Pastor Andrew Brunson, a law-abiding American citizen resident in Turkey since 1993, for alleged involvement in terrorism.

Pastor Brunson's detention and formal arrest followed the Turkish government's imposition of a State of Emergency after a violent coup attempt in July 2016 rightly opposed by Turks across the political spectrum. The United States has condemned the coup and respects the legitimate efforts of the Turkish government to ensure its perpetrators face justice and the Turkish nation is protected from any repetition of the coup attempt. The Congress supports the ongoing efforts to strengthen law enforcement cooperation between U.S. agencies and their Turkish counterparts, including with regard to investigating alleged participants in the coup plot.

However, we are deeply disturbed that the Turkish government has gone beyond legitimate action against the coup plotters to undermine Turkey's own rule of law and democratic traditions. Under the State of Emergency, tens of thousands of Turkey's own citizens as well as some citizens of the United States and other countries have been arrested, dismissed from employment or otherwise seen their lives destroyed on vague charges and dubious evidence. These actions by the government of Turkey are inconsistent with the commitment to law and justice that have historically been hallmarks of Turkish democracy.


That the Turkish government has consistently ignored bipartisan expressions of concern from the Congress has also been cause for concern. Nonetheless, we chose to respect the working of the Turkish judicial system and await a just outcome.

On March 13, 2018, Turkish authorities issued an indictment alleging and purportedly detailing Pastor Brunson's offenses. It is an absurd collection of anonymous accusations, flights of fantasy, and random character assassination. It is an insult not only to an unjustly imprisoned individual, but to the traditions of Turkish jurisprudence. That a Turkish court could accept such a document as the basis for prosecution removes any shred of doubt that Andrew Brunson, as well as other American citizens and Turkish employees of the U.S. Government detained under the State of Emergency, is being used as a political pawn by elements of the Turkish government bent on destroying the longstanding partnership between two great nations. Moreover, the suggestion in the indictment that the actions of Pastor Brunson, to explain his religious

convictions to others, were somehow meant to undermine the Turkish state brings a new and deeply disturbing dimension to the case. It should trouble all Turks justly proud of Turkey's centuries-old tradition of welcoming believers of all faiths.

The United States Government, and millions of Americans deeply concerned by the Brunson case, have been patient, in the hope that justice would be done and Pastor Brunson would be reunited with his family. The signatories of this letter have concluded that other measures will be necessary to ensure that the Government of Turkey respects the right of law-abiding citizens and employees of the United States to travel to, reside in, and work in Turkey without fear of persecution.

Sincerely,



Patrick McHenry
Member of Congress



Mark Walker
Member of Congress




Edward R. Royce
Member of Congress




Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



George Holding
Member of Congress



David E. Price
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



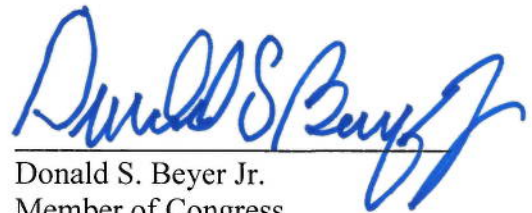
G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



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Member of Congress



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Donald S. Beyer Jr.
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Virginia Foxx
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Earl Blumenauer
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Walter B. Jones
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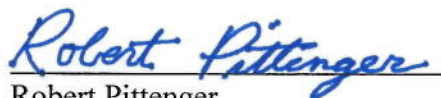
Nanette Diaz Barragan
Member of Congress



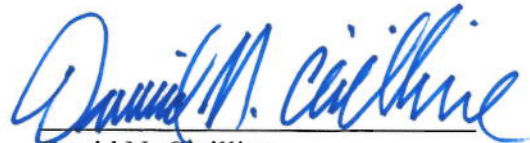
Mark Meadows
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay
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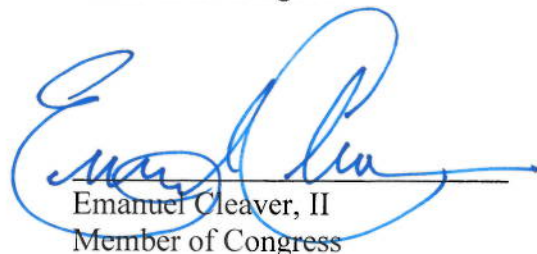
Robert Pittenger
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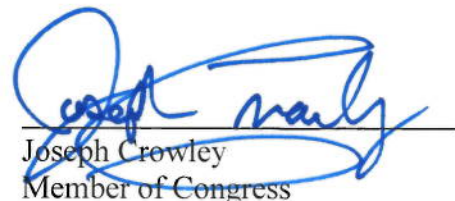
David Rouzer
Member of Congress



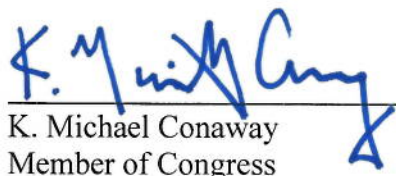
Emanuel Cleaver, II
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Steve Scalise, Majority Whip
Member of Congress

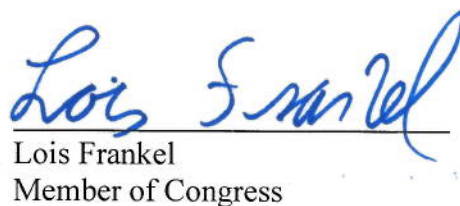


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K. Michael Conaway
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Josh Gottheimer
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Robert B. Aderholt
Member of Congress

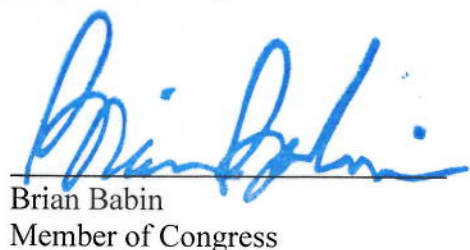

Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

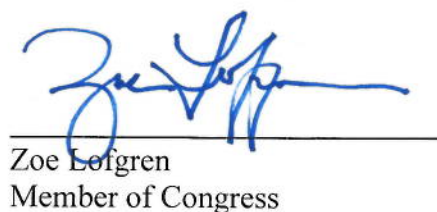

Rick W. Allen
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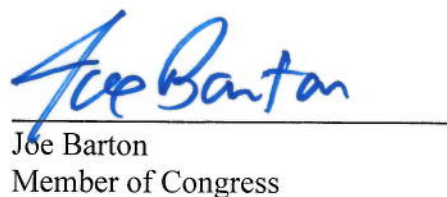

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Brian Babin
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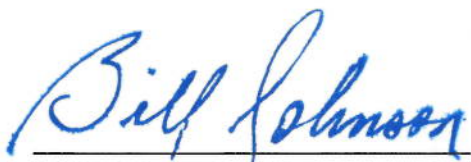

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Daniel W. Lipinski
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Bill Johnson
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Marcy Kaptur
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Mike Bishop
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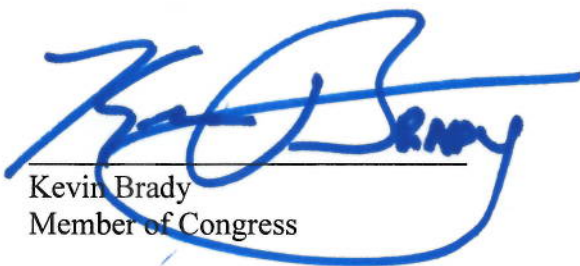


Mike Bost
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M.C.

Ro Khanna
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Kevin Brady
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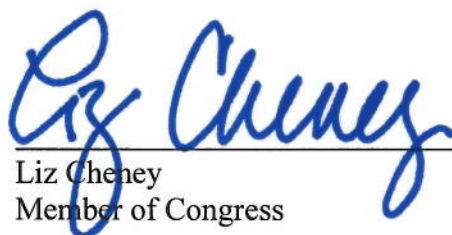
Ted W. Lieu
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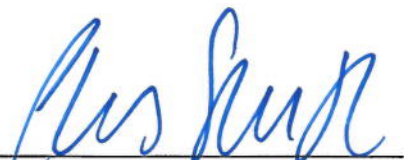
Doris Matsui
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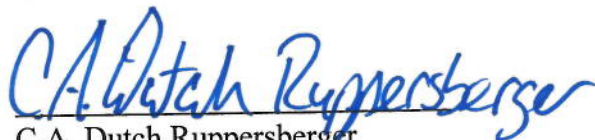
Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



Jacky Rosen
Member of Congress



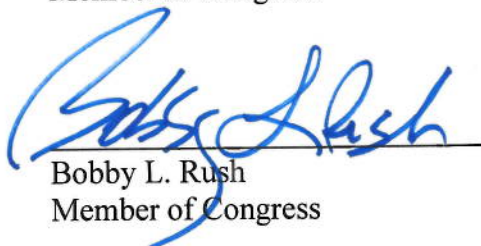
Chris Stewart
Member of Congress



C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
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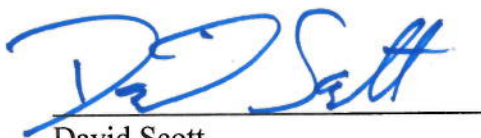
Cathy McMorris Rodgers
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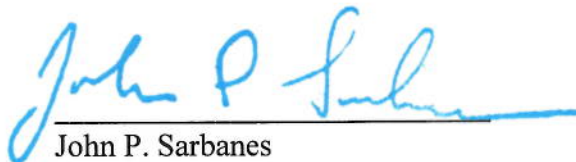
Ralph Abraham, M.D.
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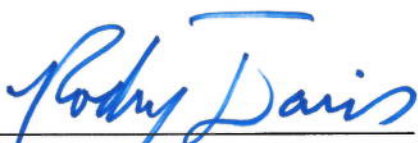
Brad Sherman
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Warren Davidson
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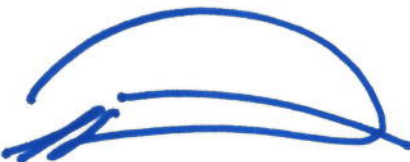
Albio Sires
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Rodney Davis
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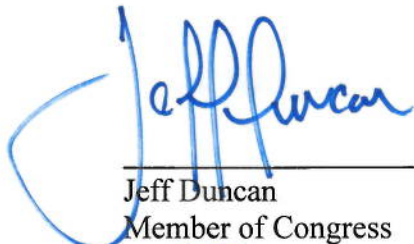

Darren Soto
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Ron DeSantis
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Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress

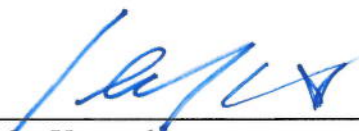

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Peter Welch
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Evan Jenkins
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Chuck Fleischmann
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Bill Flores
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Matt Gaetz
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Garret Graves
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Greg Gianforte
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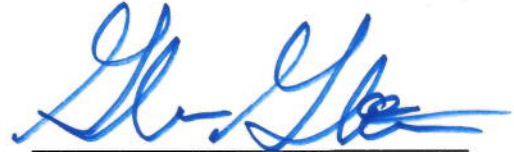
Louie Gohmert
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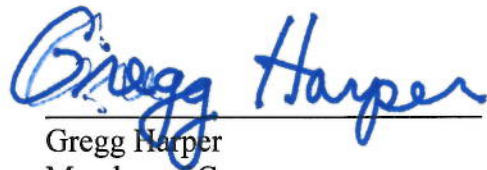
Kay Granger
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Glenn Grothman
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Gregg Harper
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Andy Harris, M.D.
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Vicky Hartzler
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Jeb Hensarling
Member of Congress



Jody Hice
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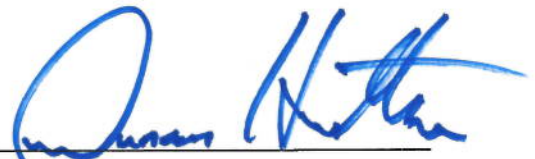
French Hill
Member of Congress



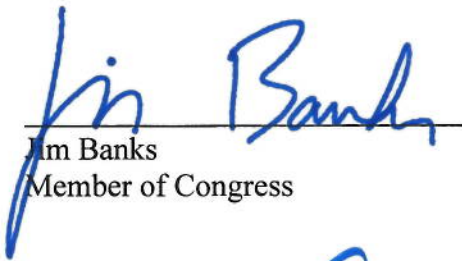
Bill Huizenga
Member of Congress



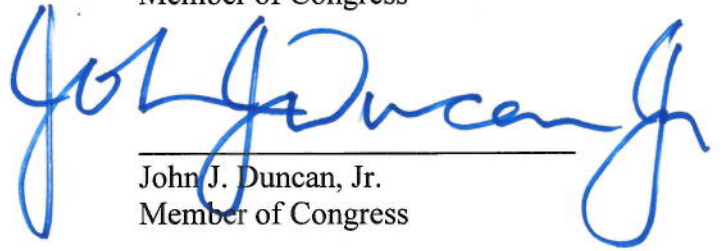
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Duncan Hunter
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Joe Wilson
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Jim Jordan
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Trent Kelly
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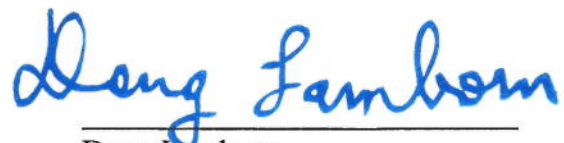
Adam Kinzinger
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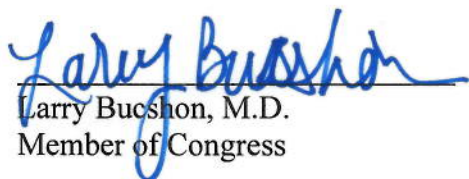
Doug LaMalfa
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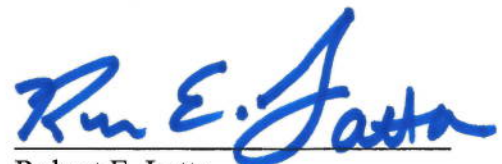
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Roger Marshall
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Kristi Noem
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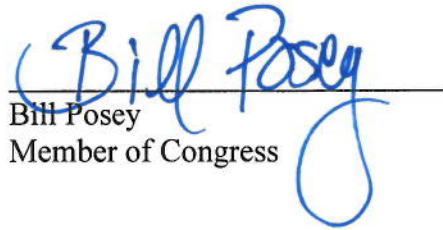

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Bill Posey
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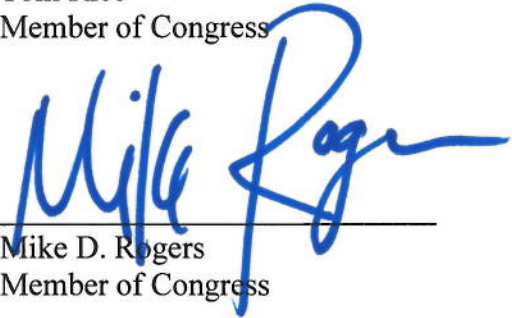
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Tom Rice
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Mike D. Rogers
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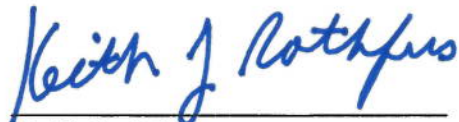
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Keith Rothfus
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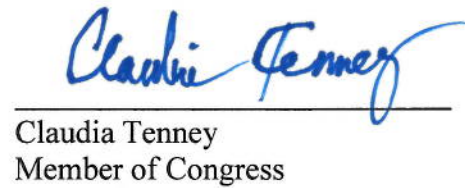


Pete Sessions
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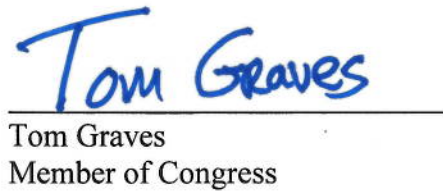
Lloyd Smucker
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Steve King
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Claudia Tenney
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Glenn "GT" Thompson
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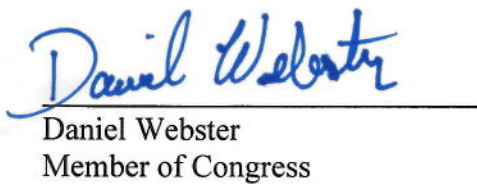

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Tom Graves
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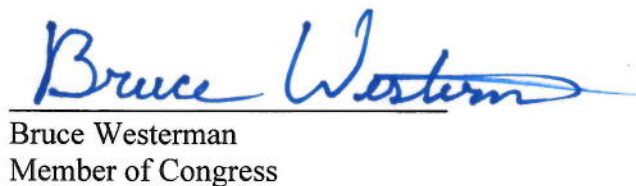

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Tim Walberg
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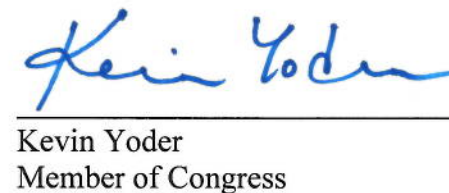

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