Dear President Obama:

We want to thank you for standing strong in the American Taxpayer Relief Act to protect Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid from benefit cuts that would jeopardize the well-being of millions of Americans.

We write to affirm our vigorous opposition to cutting Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid benefits in any final bill to replace sequestration. Earned Social Security and Medicare benefits provide the financial and health protections necessary to keep individuals and families out of poverty. Medicaid is not only a lifeline for low-income children, pregnant women, people with disabilities and families, it is the primary source of long-term care services and supports for 3.6 million individuals. We cannot overstate their importance for our constituents and our country.

That is why we remain deeply opposed to proposals to reduce Social Security benefits through use of the chained CPI to calculate cost-of-living adjustments. We remain committed to making the changes that will extend solvency for 75 years, but Social Security has not contributed to our current fiscal problems and it should not be on the bargaining table.

Similarly, we oppose proposals to increase Medicare cost-sharing requirements or to raise the age of eligibility. Half of all Medicare recipients live on less than $22,000 a year – yet they spend, on average, three times as much of those limited incomes on health care as other Americans. Raising their already heavy cost-sharing burden or increasing the age of eligibility doesn’t lower health care costs, it just shifts them to those who can least afford more financial burdens – seniors, people with disabilities and their families.

A commitment to keeping the middle-class strong and reducing poverty requires a commitment to keeping Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid strong. We urge you to reject any proposals to cut benefits, and we look forward to working with you to enact approaches that instead rely on economic growth and more fair revenue-raising policies to solve our fiscal problems.

Sincerely,

Rep. Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress

Rep. Keith Ellison
Member of Congress

Rep. Raúl Grijalva
Member of Congress

John Conyers
Member of Congress

Donna Edwards
Member of Congress
Karen Bass  
Member of Congress

Robert Brady  
Member of Congress

Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress

Cheri Bustos  
Member of Congress

Lois Capps  
Member of Congress

Matt Cartwright  
Member of Congress

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress

Wm. Lacy Clay  
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress

Bruce Braley  
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress

G.K. Butterfield  
Member of Congress

Tony Cardenas  
Member of Congress

Donna Christensen  
Member of Congress

David Cicilline  
Member of Congress

Yvette Clarke  
Member of Congress
Bennie Thompson  
Member of Congress

Dina Titus  
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress

Nydia Velázquez  
Member of Congress

Mel Watt  
Member of Congress

Peter Welch  
Member of Congress

Ron Barber  
Member of Congress

Tammy Duckworth  
Member of Congress

John Tierney  
Member of Congress

Paul Tonko  
Member of Congress

Marc Veasey  
Member of Congress

Maxine Waters  
Member of Congress

Henry Waxman  
Member of Congress

Frederica Wilson  
Member of Congress

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress

Eni Faleomavaega  
Member of Congress
cc: Speaker John Boehner  
House Minority Leader Pelosi  
Senate Majority Leader Reid  
Senate Minority Leader McConnell