



June 26, 2012

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington, D.C. 20500

Sen. Harry Reid
Senate Majority Leader
522 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. John Boehner
Speaker of the House
H-232, US Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Sen. Mitch McConnell
Senate Republican Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Hon. Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
H-204, US Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. President, Majority Leader Reid, Republican Leader McConnell, Speaker Boehner, and Democratic Leader Pelosi:

As leaders of universities educating the creators of tomorrow's scientific breakthroughs, we call on you to address a critical threat to America's preeminence as a global center of innovation and prosperity: our inability under current United States immigration policy to retain and benefit from many of the top minds educated at our universities.

From the industrial revolution to today's information age, the United States has led the world in creating the inventions and ideas that drive economic prosperity. America's universities are responsible for 36 percent of all research in the country, including 53 percent of all basic research, and they help keep America at the forefront of the 21st century economy. The Federal Government has recognized the importance of university research by providing roughly 60 percent of all academic R&D funding.

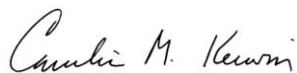
American academic research has benefited from the fact that the US remains a top magnet for the world's best and brightest students and graduates 16 percent of all PhDs worldwide in scientific and technical fields. In 2009, students on temporary visas were 45 percent of all graduate students in engineering, math, computer science and physical sciences – earning 43 percent of all master's degrees and 52 percent of all PhDs. New research shows that in 2011, foreign-born inventors were credited contributors on more than 75 percent of patents issued to the top 10 patent-producing universities in the United States – irrefutable

proof of the important role immigrants play in American innovation. These inventions lead to new companies and new jobs for American workers, and are an enormous boon to our economy.

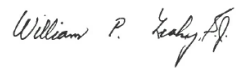
But after we have trained and educated these future job creators, our antiquated immigration laws turn them away to work for our competitors in other countries. Low limits on visas leave immigrants with no way to stay or facing untenable delays for a permanent visa. Top engineers from India and China face wait times of up to 9 years to get a permanent visa, and new applicants from these countries may face considerably longer waits. And while we turn away these American-educated, trained and funded scientists and engineers, there is a growing skill gap across America's industries. One quarter of US science and engineering firms already report difficulty hiring, and the problem will only worsen: the US is projected to face a shortfall of 230,000 qualified advanced-degree workers in scientific and technical fields by 2018.

The US cannot afford to wait to fix our immigration system. Even as we send away highly skilled workers trained at American universities, competing economies are welcoming these scientists and engineers with streamlined visa applications and creating dedicated visas to ensure that the foreign students who graduate from their own universities can stay and contribute to the local economy. We ask you to work together to develop a bipartisan solution that ensures our top international graduates have a clear path to a green card, so they can stay and create new American jobs. Recent polls show that there is broad, bipartisan support for this reform, and that the American people want our leaders in Washington to act. Now is the time to do so and ensure that the US remains the world's leading home for innovators.

Sincerely,



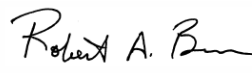
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Boston College



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Arizona State University



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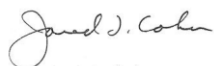
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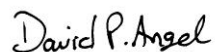
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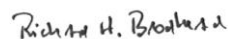
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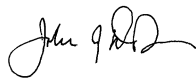
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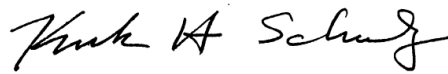
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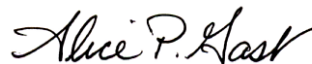
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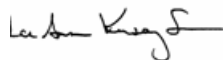
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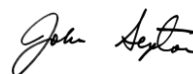
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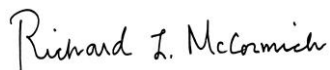
W. Randolph Woodson
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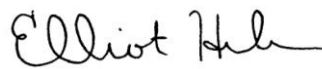


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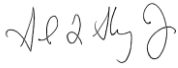
Nancy L. Zimpher
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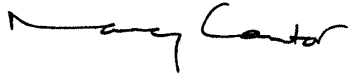
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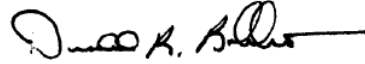
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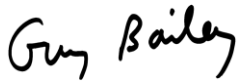
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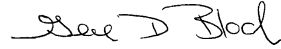
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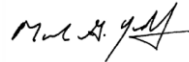
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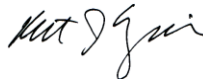
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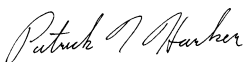
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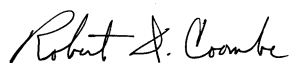
Bernadette Gray-Little
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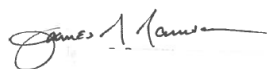
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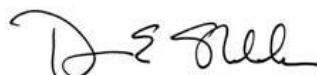
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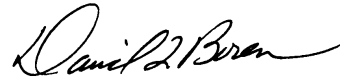
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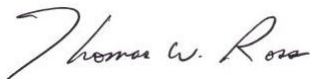
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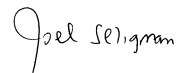
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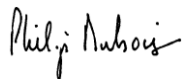
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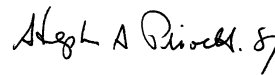
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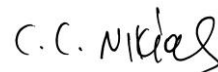
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University of San Francisco



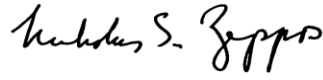
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C. L. Max Nikias
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University of Southern California



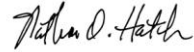
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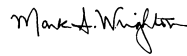
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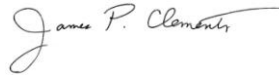
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