

State of Connecticut

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

STATE CAPITOL
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

April 30, 2010

Ambassador Namik Tan
Embassy of Turkey
2525 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20008

Dear Ambassador Tan:

We write to you to express our profound concern that the policies of the Turkish government pose a grave threat to the future of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the spiritual home of the world's second largest Christian Church.

The Ecumenical Patriarch in Istanbul is the spiritual head of approximately 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide and the 269th direct descendant of the Apostle Andrew. Nearly ninety-four percent of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's properties have already been confiscated by the Turkish government.

In 2008, the European Court of Human Rights, in a unanimous 7-0 decision, condemned the Turkish government's illegal taking of the Patriarchal Orphanage. The Turkish government, which is a signatory to the treaty creating this Court, has so far not complied with the Court's ruling.

The Ecumenical Patriarchate's extinction in the coming years is essentially inevitable if Turkey continues its policy of prohibiting any of the 300 million non-Turkish Orthodox Christians from becoming the Ecumenical Patriarch. Turkey itself has only about 2,500 remaining eligible Orthodox Christians, and they are a mostly elderly community.

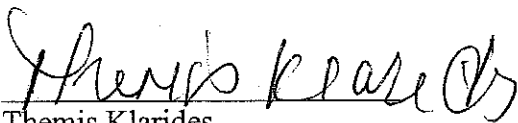
Millions of Orthodox Christian Americans — including those of us in Connecticut — stand to lose their spiritual head, and all Christians will give up a crucial link to their history and forefathers. Within the 2,000 year old Sacred See, the text of the New Testament was codified, the canonical structure of the Christian Church was established, and the Nicene Creed was created.

Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew's individual importance to America is reflected in the record number of Congressional cosponsors who bestowed on him our country's highest honor, the Congressional Gold Medal, an award also given to George Washington, Winston Churchill, Nelson Mandela and Pope John Paul II. His importance on the world stage in connection with spiritual and environmental issues was also highlighted in a recent segment of *60 Minutes*.

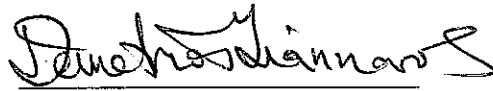
During the past several years, numerous representatives of the United States government have urged Turkey to discontinue its policies which threaten the continued existence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Among other things, Presidents George H.W. Bush, William J. Clinton, George W. Bush and the current President, Barack Obama, have all called on Turkey to re-open the Halki Theological School, which the government closed in 1971. This was the only Orthodox Christian theological school in the country for the training of its clergy. Twenty-eight religious freedom resolutions in support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate have been adopted in twenty-four state legislatures in the United States, urging the Turkish government to, among other things, (i) cease its discrimination of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, (ii) grant the Ecumenical Patriarchate international recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to train its clergy, (iii) respect the Ecumenical Patriarchate's property rights and (iv) re-open the Halki Theological School.

We, the undersigned support, these resolutions and share their concern for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and respectfully request that you communicate these concerns to the leaders of the Turkish government urging them to discontinue those policies which threaten the future existence of the Patriarchate.

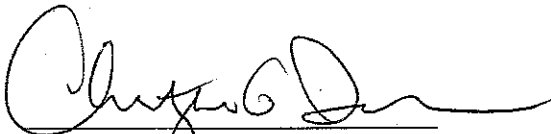
Sincerely,



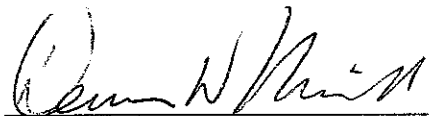
Themis Klarides
Deputy House Republican Leader



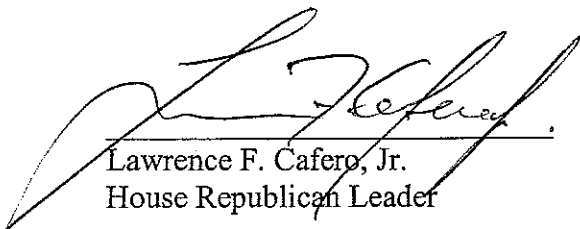
Demetrios S. Giannaros
Assistant Deputy Speaker for
Economic Affairs



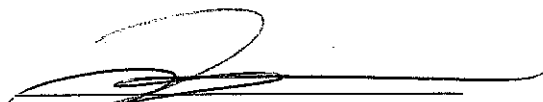
Christopher G. Donovan
Speaker of the House



Denise W. Merrill
House Majority Leader



Lawrence F. Cafero, Jr.
House Republican Leader



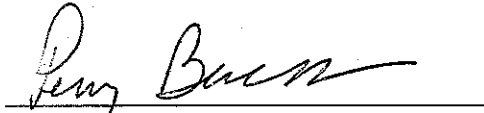
John C. Geragosian
Appropriations Committee Chairman



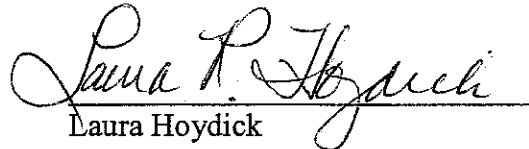
Mike Alberts
State Representative



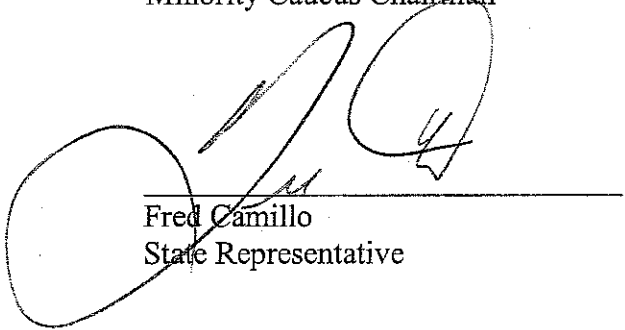
Bill Aman
State Representative



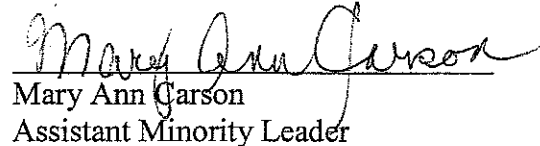
Penny Bacchiochi
Minority Caucus Chairman



Laura Hoydick
State Representative



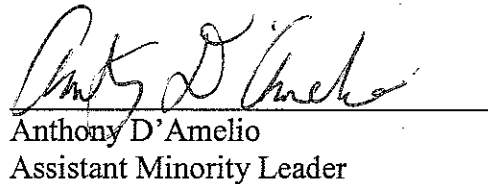
Fred Camillo
State Representative



Mary Ann Carson
Assistant Minority Leader



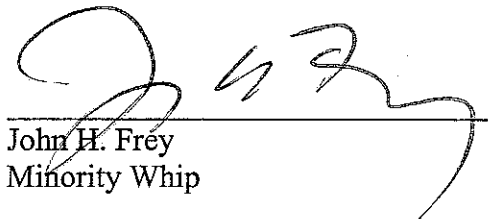
Clark Chapin
Assistant Minority Leader



Anthony D'Amelio
Assistant Minority Leader



Livvy Floren
Assistant Minority Leader



John H. Frey
Minority Whip



Lile Gibbons
Assistant Minority Leader



Janice R. Giegler
State Representative



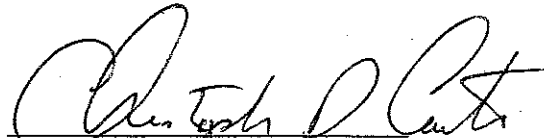
Marilyn Giuliano
State Representative



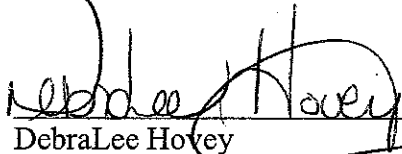
William Hamzy
Deputy Minority Leader




Vincent J. Candelora
State Representative



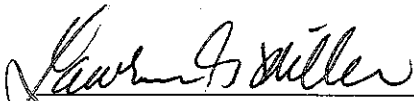
Christopher D. Coutu
State Representative



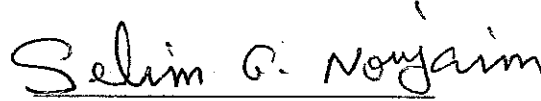
DebraLee Hovey
Assistant House Minority Leader




David K. Labriola
Assistant House Minority Leader



Lawrence G. Miller
State Representative



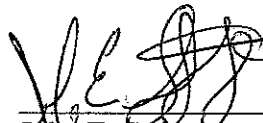
Selim G. Noujaim
Assistant House Minority Leader



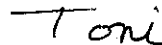
T.R. Rowe
State Representative




David A. Scribner
Assistant House Minority Leader



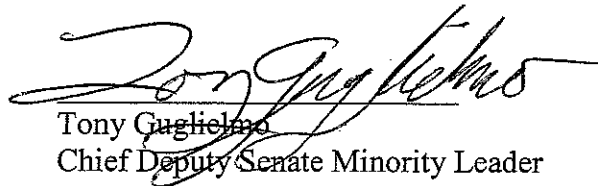
John E. Stripp
Assistant House Minority Leader



Toni Boucher
Assistant Senate Minority Leader



Scott Frantz
State Senator



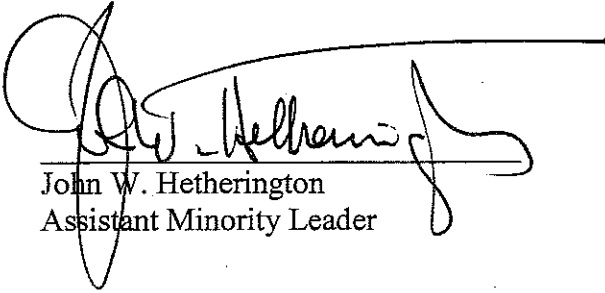
Tony Guglielmo
Chief Deputy Senate Minority Leader



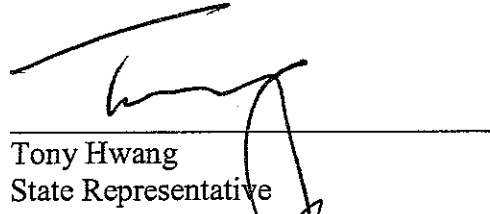
Rob Kane
Deputy Senate Minority Leader



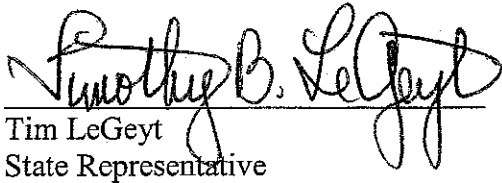
Michael A. McLachlan
Senate Minority Whip



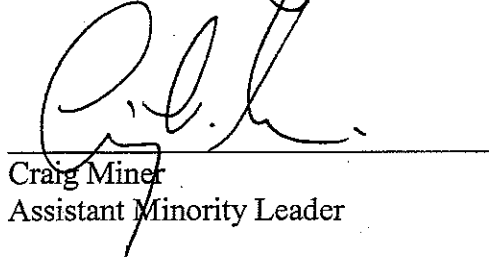
John W. Hetherington
Assistant Minority Leader



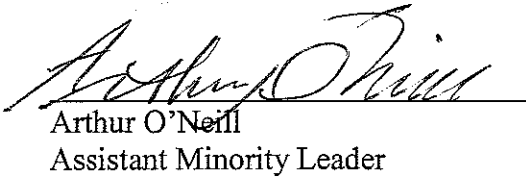
Tony Hwang
State Representative



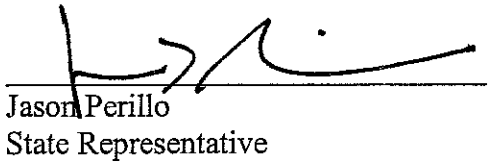
Tim LeGeyt
State Representative



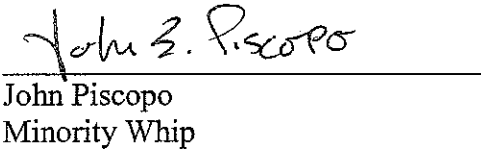
Craig Miner
Assistant Minority Leader



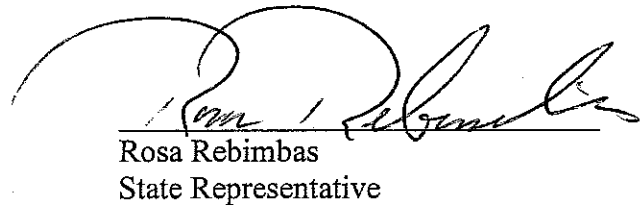
Arthur O'Neill
Assistant Minority Leader



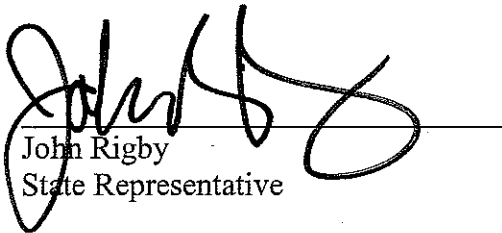
Jason Perillo
State Representative



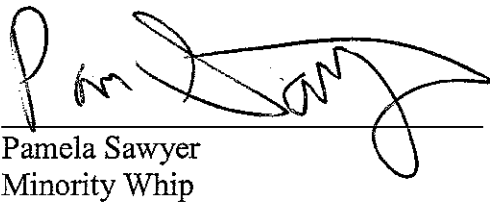
John Piscopo
Minority Whip



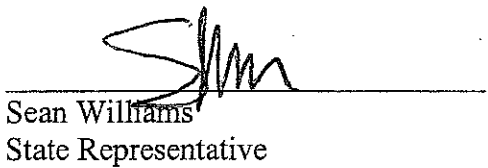
Rosa Rebimbas
State Representative



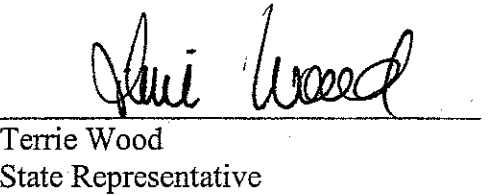
John Rigby
State Representative



Pamela Sawyer
Minority Whip



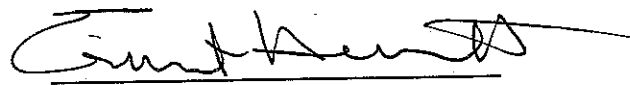
Sean Williams
State Representative



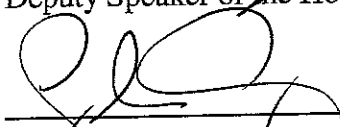
Terrie Wood
State Representative



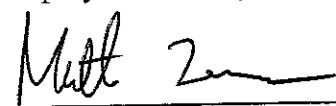
Emil "Buddy" Altobello
Deputy Speaker of the House



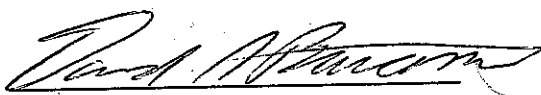
Ernest Hewett
Deputy House Majority Leader



Joe Aresimowicz
Assistant House Majority Leader



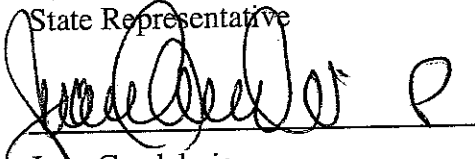
Matthew Lesser
State Representative



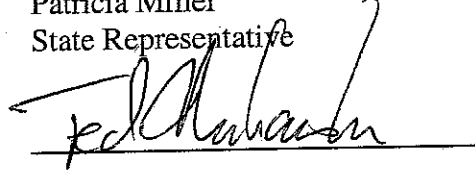
David Baram
State Representative



Patricia Miller
State Representative



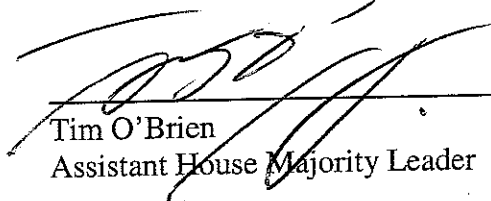
Juan Candelaria
Deputy House Majority Whip



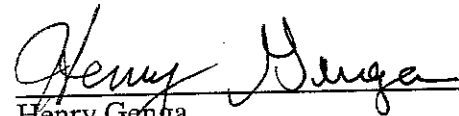
Ted Moukawsher
Assistant House Majority Leader



Charles Clemons
Deputy House Majority Whip at Large



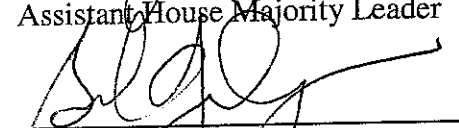
Tim O'Brien
Assistant House Majority Leader



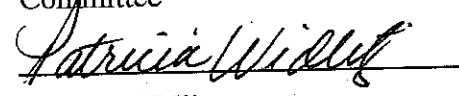
Henry Genga
Assistant House Majority Leader



J. Brendan Sharkey
Chair Planning and Development
Committee



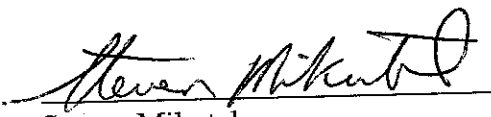
Bob Godfrey
Deputy Speaker of the House



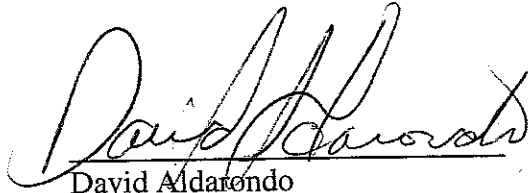
Patricia Widlitz
Deputy House Majority Leader



Antonio Guerrero
Chair Transportation Committee



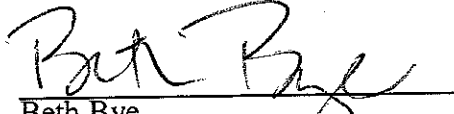
Steven Mikutel
House Majority Whip at Large



David Aldarondo
Assistant House Majority Leader



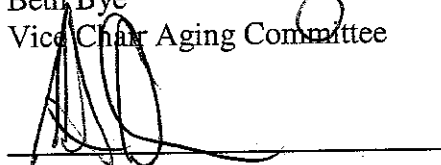
Mike Lawlor
Chair Judiciary Committee



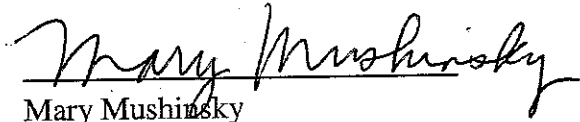
Beth Bye
Vice Chair Aging Committee



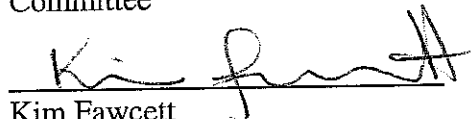
Douglas McCrory
Assistant House Majority Leader



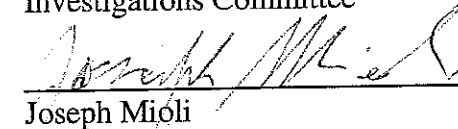
Stephen Dargan
Chair Public Safety and Security
Committee



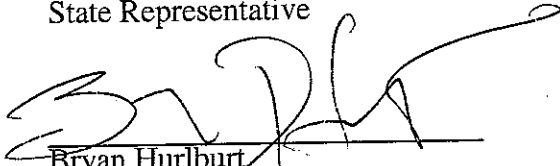
Mary Mushinsky
Chair Program Review and
Investigations Committee



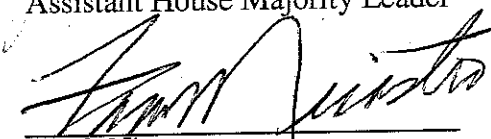
Kim Fawcett
State Representative



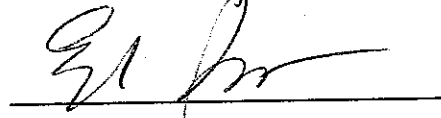
Joseph Mioli
Assistant House Majority Leader




Bryan Hurlburt
Vice-Chair Environment Committee



Frank Nicaastro
Vice-Chair Veterans' Affairs Committee



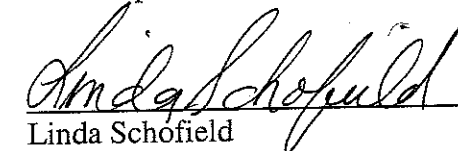
Ed Jutila
Assistant House Majority Leader



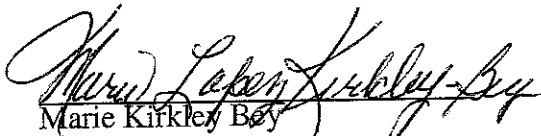
Peggy Reeves
State Representative



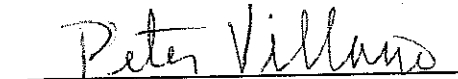
Tom Kehoe
Vice-Chair Transportation Committee



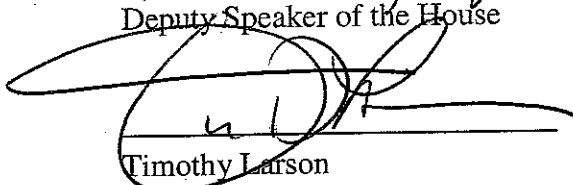
Linda Schofield
Vice-Chair Executive and Legislative
Nominations Committee




Marie Kirkley Bey
Deputy Speaker of the House




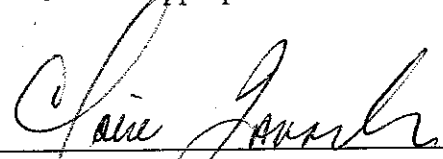
Peter Villano
Deputy House Majority Whip at Large




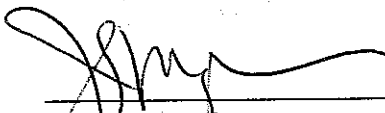
Timothy Larson
State Representative

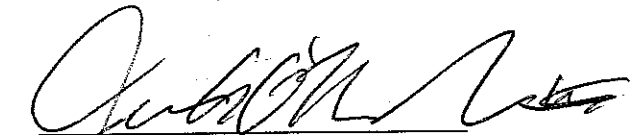

Jason Bartlett
Vice Chair Appropriations Committee



Paul Davis
Assistant House Majority Leader

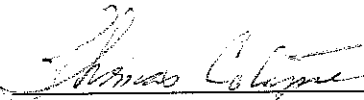

Claire Janowski
Chair Executive and Legislative
Nominations Committee

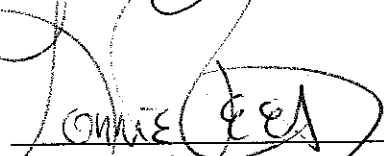

Bruce Morris
Assistant House Majority Leader

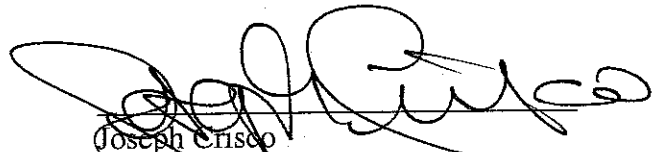

John Mazurek
Assistant House Majority Whip

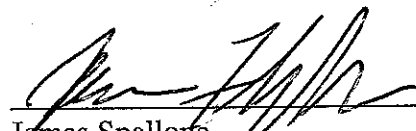

James O'Rourke
Deputy Speaker of the House

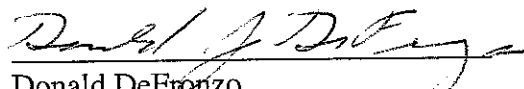

Brian O'Connor
State Representative



Thomas Colapietro
Deputy Senate Majority Leader



Lonnie Reed
State Representative

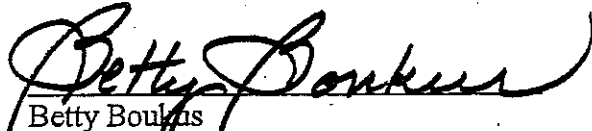

Joseph Crisco
Deputy Senate Caucus Leader



James Spallone
Chair Government Administration and
Elections Committee

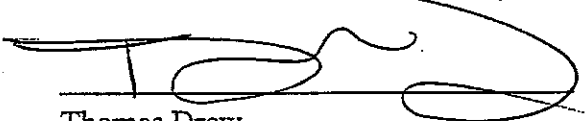

Donald DeFronzo
Assistant President Pro Tempore



Kathleen Tallarita
House Majority Caucus Chair



Bob Duff
Assistant Senate Majority Leader

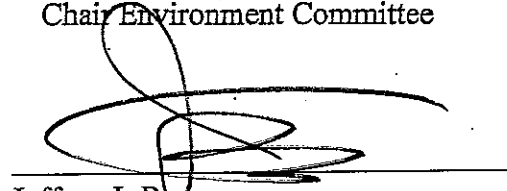

Betty Boukas
Deputy House Majority Whip

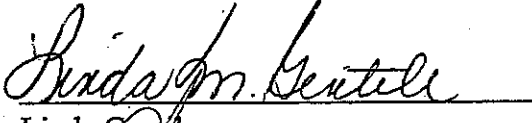

Hector Robles
State Representative

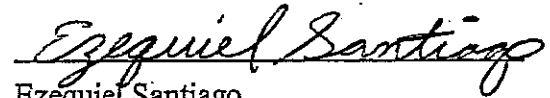

Thomas Drew
Vice-Chair Planning and Development
Committee

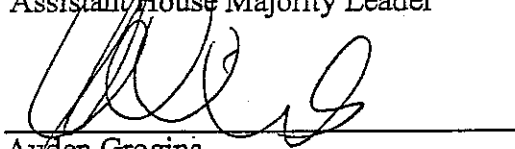

Richard Roy
Chair Environment Committee



Andrew Fleischmann
Chair Education Committee

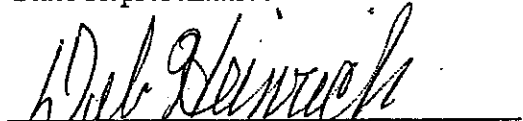

Jeffrey J. Berger
Chair Commerce Committee

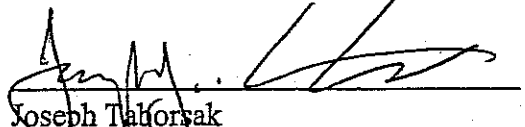

Linda Gentile
Assistant House Majority Leader

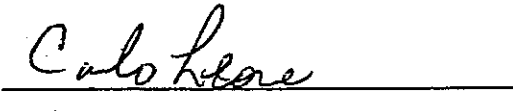

Ezequiel Santiago
State Representative



Auden Grogins
State Representative

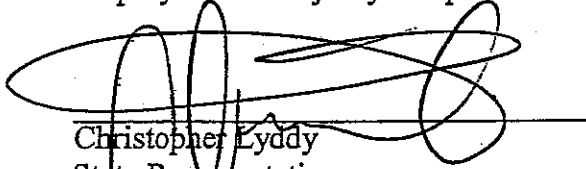

Jim Shapiro
Chair General Law Committee

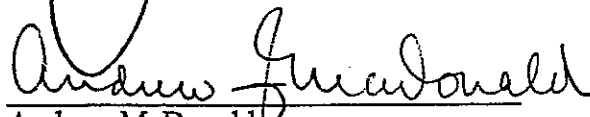

Deborah Heinrich
Vice-Chair Appropriations Committee



Joseph Takorsak
State Representative



Carlo Leone
Deputy House Majority Whip

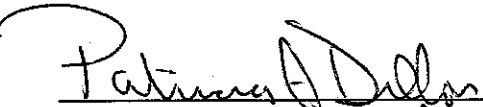

William Tong
Vice-Chair Energy and Technology
Committee

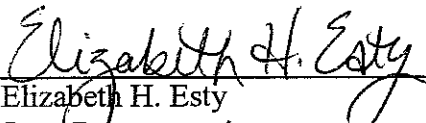

Christopher Lyddy
State Representative

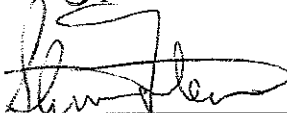

Andrew McDonald
Chair Judiciary Committee

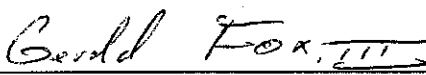

Larry Butler
Assistant House Majority Leader

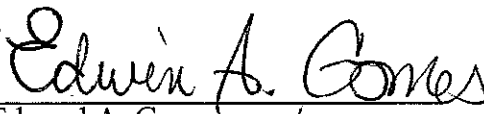

Christopher Caruso
Deputy House Majority Caucus Chair

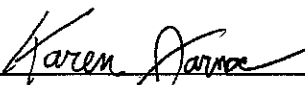

Patricia Dillon
Assistant House Majority Whip



Elizabeth H. Esty
State Representative


Steve Fontana
Chair Insurance and Real Estate
Committee

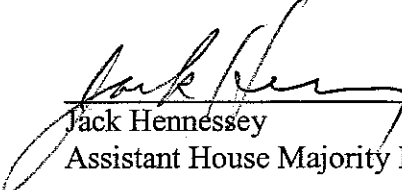

Gerald Fox
Assistant House Majority Leader

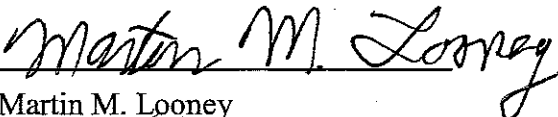

Edward A. Gomes
Assistant Senate Majority Leader

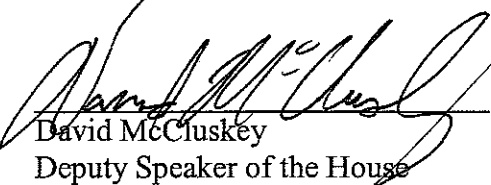

Karen Jarmoc
Vice- Chair Children Committee

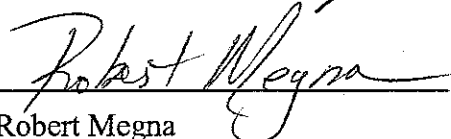

Gary LeBeau
Deputy President Pro Tempore

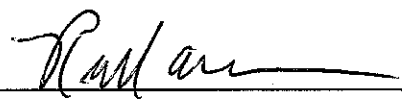

Joan Lewis
Assistant House Majority Whip



Jack Hennessey
Assistant House Majority Leader

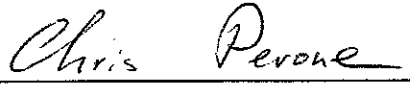

Martin M. Looney
Senate Majority Leader



David McCluskey
Deputy Speaker of the House



Robert Megna
Assistant House Majority Whip


Russell Morin
Assistant House Majority Leader

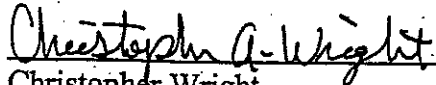

Anthony Musto
Assistant Senate Majority Whip


Chris Perone
Assistant House Majority Leader

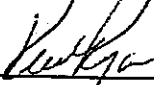

Edith G. Prague
Assistant President Pro Tempore



Peter Tercyak
Deputy House Majority Leader



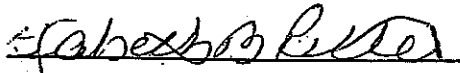
Christopher Wright
State Representative



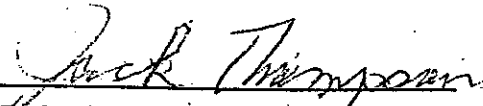
Kevin Ryan
Chair Labor and Public Employees
Committee



Diana Urban
Chair, Children's Committee



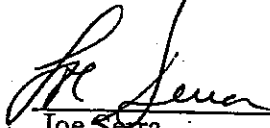
Betsy Ritter
Chair Public Health Committee



Jack Thompson
Assistant House Majority Whip



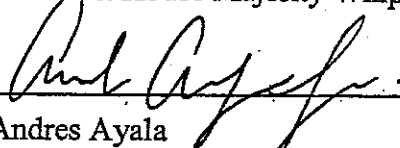
Toni Walker
Chair Human Services Committee



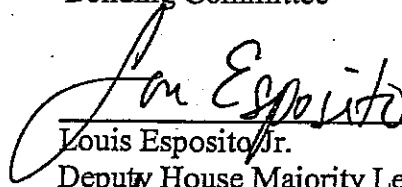
Joe Serra
Chair Aging Committee



Zeke Zalaski
Assistant House Majority Whip



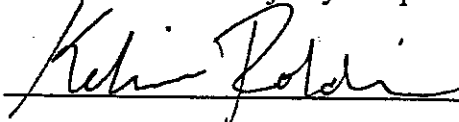
Andres Ayala
Vice Chair Finance, Revenue, and
Bonding Committee



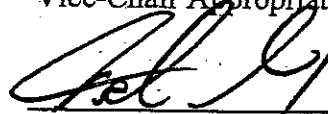
Louis Esposito Jr.
Deputy House Majority Leader



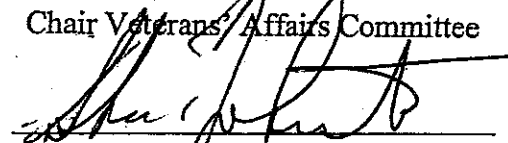
Gail Hamm
Assistant House Majority Whip



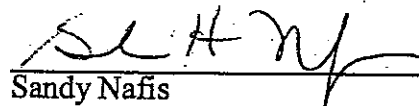
Kelvin Roldán
Vice-Chair Appropriations Committee



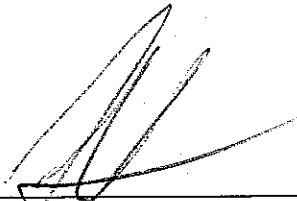
Ted Graziani
Chair Veterans' Affairs Committee



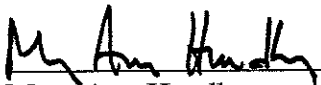
Shawn Johnston
State Representative



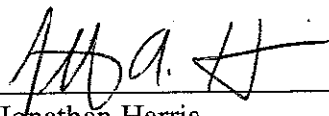
Sandy Nafis
Deputy House Majority Leader



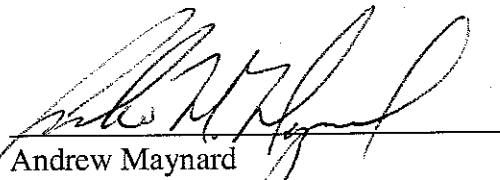
Leonard Fasano
Senate Minority Leader Pro Tempore



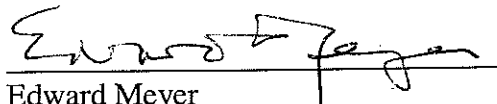
Mary Ann Handley
Chief Deputy Senate Majority Leader




Jonathan Harris
Chief Assistant Senate Majority Leader



Andrew Maynard
Senate Majority Whip



Edward Meyer
Assistant Senate Majority Leader



Andrea Stillman
Deputy Senate Majority Leader