

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 21, 2009

Senator Dianne Feinstein
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Bob Bennett
431 Dirksen Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein and Senator Bennett,

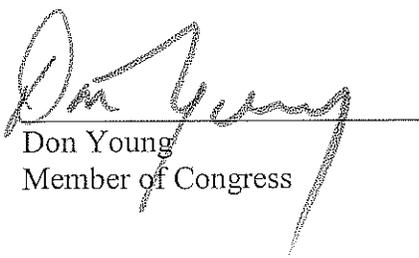
Thousands of Americans with tickets to the Inauguration, despite waiting in the cold for hours on end, were not allowed in to see the ceremony yesterday due to a complete lack of crowd control by those tasked with organizing the event. Many traveled to D.C. from every corner of our country and spent thousands of dollars after being informed that they had a ticket to the event and would be able to see President Obama sworn in. The promise made by these tickets was not kept.

Numerous reports from the staging area describe a complete lack of any form of crowd control—no police, no volunteers to direct people and no organization or information on what was going on. We are lucky that the thousands who were eventually denied entry, despite having valid tickets, remained calm and that no one was hurt.

This was a failure in planning and organization and one that must be explained. Why was there no form of crowd control in the ticketed screening areas? Why didn't the planners better mark the areas, provide staff to help direct people or include a way to pass along information? Why was the screening process so unprepared for the event and why were thousands of people unable to attend the Inauguration despite having tickets to the event? We do not want to assign blame. We only want to know what went wrong and how it can be prevented from happening again in the future.

Finally, those Americans who were shut out deserve an apology. They were promised admission to the historic Inauguration of President Obama and they were denied the opportunity. No matter how far they traveled, how much money they spent or how long they waited, every person who was issued a ticket and was unable to get in should receive an apology from those responsible for organizing the Inauguration. Yesterday was a proud moment for America and it is a shame that it was marred by something as simple as the inability to take people's tickets.

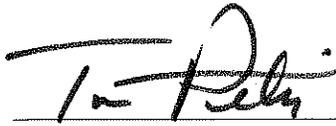
Sincerely,



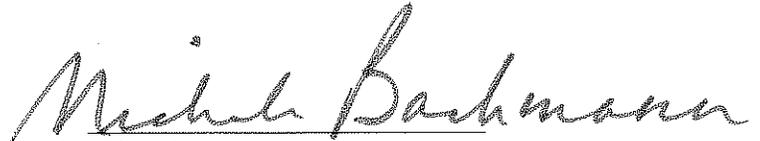
Don Young
Member of Congress



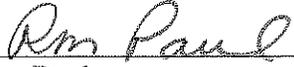
Gwen Moore
Member of Congress



Thomas Petri
Member of Congress



Michelle Bachmann
Member of Congress



Ron Paul
Member of Congress



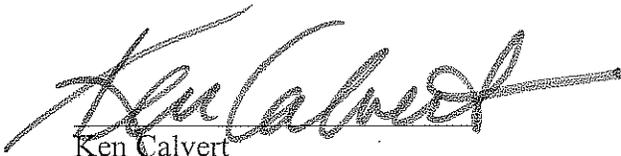
Vernon Ehlers
Member of Congress



Pete Sessions
Member of Congress



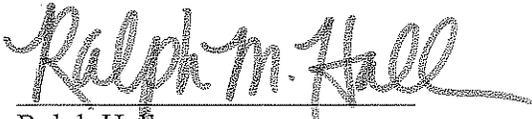
Donald Manzullo
Member of Congress



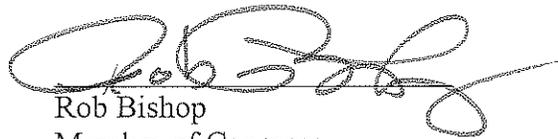
Ken Calvert
Member of Congress



Michael Burgess
Member of Congress



Ralph Hall
Member of Congress



Rob Bishop
Member of Congress



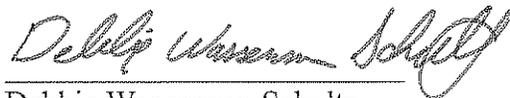
Lamar Smith
Member of Congress



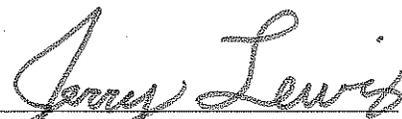
Judy Biggert
Member of Congress



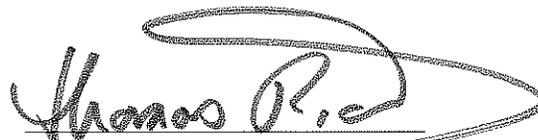
Howard Coble
Member of Congress



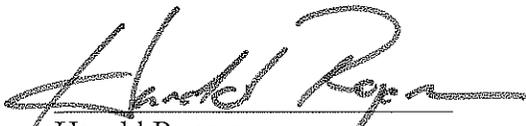
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Jerry Lewis
Member of Congress



Tom Price
Member of Congress



Harold Rogers
Member of Congress



Fred Upton
Member of Congress



Yvette Clarke
Member of Congress

cc: Emmett S. Beliveau
Executive Director
Presidential Inaugural Committee 2009

cc: Phillip Morse
Chief of Capitol Police