

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 16, 2010

The Honorable Jorge Dezcallar
Ambassador of Spain
2375 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Ambassador Dezcallar:

We write to extend our warmest congratulations on Spain's well-deserved victory in the 2010 World Cup. We know this is the first time your *fútbol*-proud nation has been crowned world champions, and we can only imagine the joy and pride the Spanish people must be feeling at this moment.

Spain earned the respect of soccer fans everywhere with its elegant and electric performance in South Africa. Showing remarkable character after a loss to Switzerland in its opening game, *La Furia Roja*—the Red Fury—rebounded with convincing victories over Honduras and Chile to finish atop the standings of Group H.

Next, led by star striker David Villa, who scored his fourth goal of the tournament, Spain defeated Cristiano Ronaldo and a strong Portugal side in the first game of the knockout round, earning bragging rights as the best team on the Iberian Peninsula. Then, in the round of eight, Spain beat the always-tenacious Paraguayans, 1-0, with Villa again showcasing his seemingly preternatural goal-scoring abilities.

In the semifinals, *La Furia Roja* overcame a supremely talented German team that many believed would hoist the World Cup trophy this year. The hero this time was not Villa, but the shaggy-haired defender Carles Puyol, who headed in the game winner late in the second half and delivered the Spanish team to its first-ever World Cup championship game.

Sunday's final was a bruising affair, as Spanish midfielder Xabi Alonso—who was on the receiving end of a cleat to the stomach—can certainly attest to. Spanish captain Iker Casillas was, as usual, a fortress in net, frustrating the Dutch stars Arjen Robben and Wesley Sneijder all evening, and cementing his reputation as the world's top goalkeeper. When Andrés Iniesta won the game for the Spaniards as overtime was drawing to a close, we know that millions of your fellow citizens—watching in every city, suburb and country town throughout Spain, and in expatriate bars around the world—joined Casillas in shedding tears of pure bliss.

Our admiration for your accomplishment is, naturally, tinged with a little envy. We are very proud of the U.S. team, which fought back from behind to tie England and Slovenia, defeated Algeria on a thrilling last-minute goal by Landon Donovan, but had its dreams dashed (again) by a terrific Ghana squad in the round of 16. This year was your year—*muchisimas felicidades* on Spain's remarkable achievement. But, we must gently warn you that the 2014 World Cup in Brazil will be a different story. Beware—the Americans are coming!

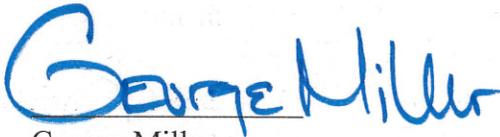
Sincerely,



Pedro R. Pierluisi
Member of Congress



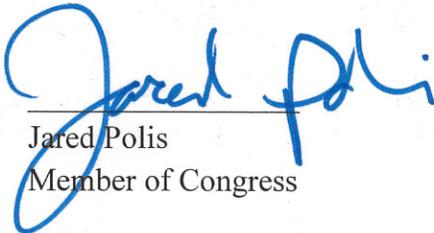
Mario Diaz-Balart
Member of Congress



George Miller
Member of Congress



Chris Van Hollen
Member of Congress



Jared Polis
Member of Congress



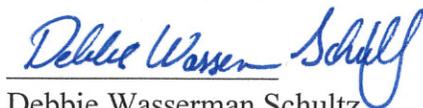
Joe Baca
Member of Congress



Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



Madeleine Z. Bordallo
Member of Congress



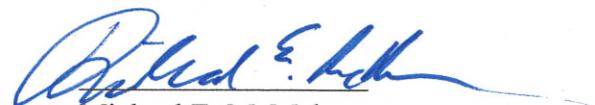
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



Charles W. Dent
Member of Congress



Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress



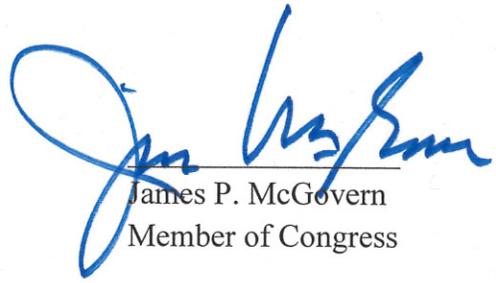
Michael E. McMahon
Member of Congress



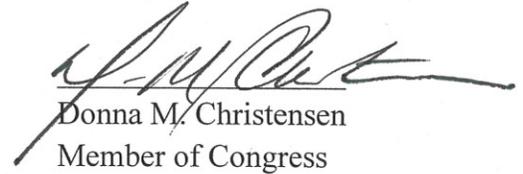
Em F.H. Faleomavaega
Member of Congress



Daniel Lipinski
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Donna M. Christensen
Member of Congress