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November 10, 2010

Dear Illinois Colleague:

I am writing to ask for your support of Jim Clyburn to continue as Democratic Whip. At this critical moment, it is important that we have a leadership team in place that reflects the diversity of the Democratic Caucus and promotes an inclusive and progressive agenda. Like many of you, I have worked closely with Jim both to advance our priorities and to defend against Republican efforts to undermine these priorities. We face many similar battles ahead and we need Jim's continued leadership as Democratic Whip.

As our Majority Whip, Jim has been a staunch ally of the issues of concern to the people of Illinois. Thanks to his leadership, we were able to pass the Recovery Act, health care reform and many other pieces of legislation that are helping to move our country in the right direction. At the same time, Jim has been an essential ally in the trenches with us as we successfully beat back poison pill amendments and motions to recommit that would have severely undermined our legislative goals and victories. As we transition into the minority, it is more important than ever that Jim Clyburn continue his role as Whip.

Jim has not hesitated to lead on issues that present challenges to our diverse Caucus, but that speak to the heart of who we are as Democrats. He has been a champion of comprehensive immigration reform, hosting Member listening sessions and meeting with community leaders and immigration advocates to build consensus for reform within the Democratic Caucus. He has fought to repeal the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy that denies many patriotic Americans the right to openly serve the nation they love because of who they love. As a seasoned civil rights leader, Congressman Clyburn will continue to fight for the civil rights of all those in our state and nation who continue to face discrimination.

I am certain that we can and must regain our majority in two years, but we need a leadership team that will stand up for the principles we cherish and effectively communicate why these principles will create more opportunity for all Americans. I know that we face difficult choices in these times of historic change, and our choice of leadership team moving forward is one of them. However, as we contemplate the future of our Caucus, I am certain about one thing: we need Jim Clyburn's leadership in the 112th Congress and I ask that you support him for Democratic Whip.

Sincerely,



Luis V. Gutierrez
Member of Congress