



October 1, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Implementing recommendations by the House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Leader McCarthy:

Issue One writes to express our support for the House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress' final package of recommendations. These 40 new proposals will significantly improve the House of Representatives so it can better serve the American people. We urge bipartisan leadership to implement any recommendations it can immediately, and to commit to implementing in the next Congress those that require further action.

At a moment of great national uncertainty, a functioning legislative body is more crucial than ever. Americans are looking for signs that their elected representatives can actually represent them and be responsive to their needs, concerns, and aspirations. Over the past two years, the Modernization Committee has held 16 hearings, six virtual discussions, and has unanimously voted to approve 97 total recommendations to fix the dysfunction in Washington. It is now up to the House to ensure that this hard work does not fall by the wayside when the Modernization Committee adjourns at the end of this year.

Among the Committee's new recommendations, we are especially pleased to see proposals to improve congressional staff retention and boost policy capacity. Congress has suffered a "brain drain" in recent decades, with diverse, talented, and experienced staff leaving Capitol Hill for K Street, largely due to low pay and poor management. The Modernization Committee's recommendations to create a voluntary pay band system for congressional staff, to provide more flexibility for staff health benefits, and to reevaluate the Members' Representational Allowance will help Congress retain much-needed staff expertise.

The Modernization Committee has also put forward several proposals dedicated to improving bipartisan legislating and Congress' ability to fulfill its Article One constitutional responsibilities. By adopting the recommendations to hold bipartisan member retreats and pre-hearing committee meetings, experiment with alternative hearing formats, hire bipartisan committee staff, and reduce scheduling conflicts between committee meetings, members of Congress will be able to engage in more collaborative, thoughtful policymaking.



We thank you for your leadership in creating the Modernization Committee in 2019, which has continued to enjoy support from a vast number of Members of Congress from both parties. Together with the Committees on Rules, House Administration, and Appropriations, the Modernization Committee has made significant strides toward a more functional, accessible, transparent, representative, and technologically adept institution. Not only has the Modernization Committee studied and recommended solutions to some of the most pressing issues concerning the House, but it has served as a groundbreaking model for how committees can function effectively. Committee Chair Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Vice Chair Tom Graves (R-GA) have demonstrated that a strong bipartisan approach works.

While a new issue or crisis seemingly dominates the headlines every day, this is precisely why Congress must invest in the future of the institution and of our democracy. Implementing the Modernization Committee's recommendations is a concrete step that you can take quickly to begin restoring Americans' faith in their legislative body. We urge you to commit to implementing these recommendations that will help shape Congress into the 21st century institution that Americans deserve.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'M McGehee'.

Meredith McGehee
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CC:

Hon. Steny Hoyer, House Majority Leader
Hon. Steve Scalise, House Minority Whip
Hon. Collin Peterson, Chairman, House Agriculture Committee
Hon. Mike Conaway, Ranking Member, House Agriculture Committee
Hon. Nita Lowey, Chairwoman, House Committee on Appropriations
Hon. Kay Granger, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
Hon. Adam Smith, Chairman, House Armed Services Committee
Hon. Mac Thornberry, Ranking Member, House Armed Services Committee
Hon. John Yarmuth, Chairman, House Committee on the Budget
Hon. Steve Womack, Ranking Member, House Committee on the Budget

Hon. Bobby Scott, Chairman, House Education and Labor Committee
Hon. Virginia Foxx, Ranking Member, House Education and Labor Committee
Hon. Frank Pallone, Chairman, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Hon. Greg Walden, Ranking Member, House Committee on Energy and Commerce
Hon. Ted Deutch, Chairman, House Committee on Ethics
Hon. Kenny Marchant, Ranking Member, House Committee on Ethics
Hon. Maxine Waters, Chairwoman, House Committee on Financial Services
Hon. Patrick McHenry, Ranking Member, House Committee on Financial Services
Hon. Eliot Engel, Chairman, House Committee on Foreign Affairs
Hon. Michael McCaul, Ranking Member, House Committee on Foreign Affairs
Hon. Bennie Thompson, Chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security
Hon. Mike Rogers, Ranking Member, House Committee on Homeland Security
Hon. Zoe Lofgren, Chairperson, Committee on House Administration
Hon. Rodney Davis, Ranking Member, Committee on House Administration
Hon. Jerrold Nadler, Chair, House Committee on the Judiciary
Hon. Jim Jordan, Ranking Member, House Committee on the Judiciary
Hon. Raúl M. Grijalva, Chairman, House Committee on Natural Resources
Hon. Rob Bishop, Ranking Member, House Committee on Natural Resources
Hon. Carolyn Maloney, Chairwoman, House Committee on Oversight and Reform
Hon. James Comer, Ranking Member, House Committee on Oversight and Reform
Hon. Jim McGovern, Chairman, House Committee on Rules
Hon. Tom Cole, Ranking Member, House Committee on Rules
Hon. Eddie Bernice Johnson, Chairwoman, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Hon. Frank Lucas, Ranking Member, House Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
Hon. Nydia Velázquez, Chairwoman, House Committee on Small Business
Hon. Steve Chabot, Ranking Member, House Committee on Small Business
Hon. Peter A. DeFazio, Chairman, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Hon. Sam Graves, Ranking Member, House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
Hon. Mark Takano, Chairman, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Hon. Dr. Phil Roe, Ranking Member, House Committee on Veterans' Affairs
Hon. Richard Neal, Chair, Committee on Ways and Means
Hon. Kevin Brady, Ranking Member, Committee on Ways and Means
Hon. Kathy Castor, Chairwoman, House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
Hon. Garret Graves, Ranking Member, House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis
Hon. Adam Schiff, Chairman, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
Hon. Devin Nunes, Ranking Member, House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence
Hon. Derek Kilmer, Chair, House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress
Hon. Tom Graves, Vice Chair, House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress
Hon. Don Beyer, Vice-Chair, Joint Economic Committee
Hon. Richard Neal, Vice Chairman, Joint Committee on Taxation