

July 29, 2021

The Honorable Derek Kilmer
Chair
Select Committee on the Modernization of
Congress
U.S House of Representatives

The Honorable William Timmons
Vice Chair
Select Committee on the Modernization of
Congress
U.S House of Representatives

Dear Chair Kilmer, Vice Chair Timmons, and the Members of the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress:

We write to thank you for your leadership and sustained efforts to strengthen the Legislative branch. As a collection of organizations and individuals, we are committed to realizing a strong and effective Congress. Since its inception, the Select Committee has shared this mission and worked in a bipartisan manner to ensure that Congress has the resources, capabilities, and support systems necessary to serve the American people

The FY 2022 Legislative Branch Appropriations [bill](#) and [accompanying report](#) mark a significant step forward in making Congress more effective, inclusive, efficient, and responsive. Many of the key provisions included in this legislative package can be traced directly back to conversations, hearings, and recommendations generated by the Select Committee and its staff.

In its first 97 recommendations, the Select Committee called for a renewed commitment to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. In this year's appropriations package, this recommendation manifested in a 100% increase in funding for this office and its important work.

A consistent commitment to bipartisanship — both in the Select Committee's recommendations and its operations — resulted in the Appropriations Committee advancing language to institute a biennial bipartisan retreat for Members.

And throughout its tenure, the Select Committee has called for Congress to take steps to ensure that the institution can attract and retain a diverse and capable workforce. This mission can be seen throughout the Legislative Branch Appropriations bill and report: in the 21% increase that will help restore funding levels for the House Members' Representational Allowances (MRA), in increased support for paid internships, and in renewed attention paid to staff benefits.

Taken together, this year's appropriations legislation and report lay the groundwork for meaningful improvements and lasting change. We are heartened to see the efforts of the Select Committee, the advocacy and expertise of outside congressional experts, and the commitment of House appropriators come together to make the House of Representatives a stronger institution.

We will continue to champion these efforts — both on Capitol Hill and across the country — including encouraging the Senate to follow the House’s lead by implementing the full scope of congressional modernization appropriations reforms. We look forward to continuing to work with the Select Committee to build a stronger and more effective Congress.

Sincerely,

Bipartisan Policy Center
Bipartisan Policy Center Action
College to Congress
Congressional Management Foundation
Demand Progress
Democracy Fund Voice
Former Members of Congress Association
Issue One
Lincoln Network
NALEO Educational Fund
Partnership for Public Service
Pay Our Interns
Project On Government Oversight
Protect Democracy
R Street Institute
Unite America

Keenan Austin Reed, Black Women's Congressional Alliance*

Kevin Esterling, University of California, Riverside*

Kevin R. Kosar, American Enterprise Institute*

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Rick Shapiro, Strategic Assets Consulting*

* Affiliations listed for identification purposes only