



Members of Issue One’s Bipartisan ReFormers Caucus Encourage Congress to Build on the Work the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress:

December 21, 2022

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Caucus Chair
House of Representatives
2433 RHOB, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Minority Whip
House of Representatives
H-148, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Minority Whip Scalise and Caucus Chair Jeffries:

We, the undersigned, as former public officials, many of whom served in Congress, understand the importance of having a government that functions efficiently, effectively, and transparently. We write to express our support for the progress made over the last four years by the work of the House Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress and to encourage the House of Representatives to create a permanent modernization subcommittee on the House Administration Committee in the 118th Congress.

The creation of the Select Committee was a vital step in identifying and addressing areas of improvement in how Congress functions, thus creating a more modern and productive policymaking institution. For that, we applaud the leadership in Congress on both sides of the aisle who put partisanship aside in pursuit of this goal.

“What began as a one-year sprint turned into a four-year mission to make Congress work better for the American people. By consistently prioritizing this mission, the Committee was able to function in a fully bipartisan fashion for the duration of both the 116th and 117th congresses,” the Select Committee’s final [report](#) states. With its evenly bipartisan composition and approach, the Select Committee has effectively identified fundamental modernization concerns while including lawmakers with a diversity of viewpoints.

Since its establishment at the start of the 116th Congress, the Select Committee has fulfilled its mission to make Congress work better on behalf of the American people. Under the leadership of Chair Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Vice Chair William Timmons (R-SC), and previously Tom Graves (R-GA), **the Select Committee has advanced a total of 202 bipartisan recommendations — of which 130 have been fully or partially implemented.**



Below we have listed a few of the Select Committee's recommendations from the 116th and 117th Congresses **that have been fully implemented:**

- Finalized a new system that allows the American people to easily track how amendments change legislation and the impact of proposed legislation to current law.
- Established bipartisan committee staff briefings and agenda-setting retreats to encourage better policy-making and collaboration among Members.
- Offered New Member orientation in a nonpartisan way.
- Made New Member orientation more comprehensive.
- Promoted civility during New Member orientation.
- District Wi-Fi: The Congressional Administration Office provided every district office with access to secure Wi-Fi.
- Increased opportunities for constituents to communicate with their Representatives.
- Updated committee policies to increase bipartisan learning opportunities for staff.

We also urge leadership to develop a path forward for further implementation of the current 130 recommendations already in progress and the remaining 72 recommendations that were raised by the Select Committee. For example, we believe it is important to prioritize the recommendation requiring the Members undergo emergency and cybersecurity preparedness training.

The Select Committee is proof that progress towards a stronger Congress is possible and attainable.

Nevertheless, there is much more to be done so Congress can effectively meet the needs of constituents and fulfill its Article I responsibilities. We urge lawmakers to build on the efforts of the Select Committee and continue working together to strengthen the institution. Many of the issues in the Select Committee's mandate warrant more thorough consideration. For instance, further evaluation of congressional staffing issues, updating systems and technology, tackling administrative deficiencies, and examining House procedures are vital areas for Congress to revisit in order to uphold its constitutional duties and maintain parity with the executive branch.

A permanent subcommittee dedicated to the essential issues of congressional modernization would enormously benefit the institution and, most importantly, the citizens it serves.

An effective legislative branch is essential for a functional republic, and making Congress work well should always be a key job of the people elected to work there. We thank the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress for spearheading this mission and hope the 118th Congress will build on their work for a stronger, more resilient institution.

Sincerely,

Rep. Jason Altmire (D-PA)

Rep. Brian Baird (D-WA)

Rep. Don Bonker (D-WA)

Rep. Michael Capuano (D-MA)

Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-VA)

Gov. John Carlin (D-KS)

Rep. Bob Carr (D-MI)



Rep. John J. Cavanaugh (D-NE)
Rep. Ben Chandler (D-KY)
Rep. Lacy Clay (D-MO)
Rep. Sam Coppersmith (D-AZ)
Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA)
Sen. Byron Dorgan (D-ND)
Rep. Jim Gerlach (R-PA)
Rep. Richard Gephardt (D-MO)
Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-GA)
Rep. Steve Gunderson (R-WI)
Sen. Gary Hart (D-CO)
Rep. Dennis Hertel (D-MI)
Rep. Joseph Hoeffel (D-PA)
Sen. Bennett Johnston (D-LA)
Rep. Rick Lazio (R-NY)
Rep. John LeBoutillier (R-NY)
Rep. Mel Levine (D-CA)
Rep. Andrew Maguire (D-NJ)
Rep. Marjorie Margolies (D-PA)
Rep. Thomas McMillen (D-MD)
Rep. Jim Moran (D-VA)
Amb. Connie Morella (R-MD)
Rep. Patrick E. Murphy (D-FL)
Rep. Reid Ribble (R-WI)
Amb. Tim Roemer (D-IN)
Gov. Roy Romer (D-CO)
Sec. Ed Schafer (R-ND)
Rep. Karen Shepherd (D-UT)
Rep. Claudine Schenider (R-RI)
Rep. David Skaggs (D-CO)
Rep. Peter Smith (R-VT)
Rep. Robin Tallon (D-SC)
Sen. Mark Udall (D-CO)
Rep. Zach Wamp (R-TN)

Cc: Hon. Katherine Clark, Hon. Pete Aguilar, Hon. Tom Emmer, Hon. Derek Kilmer, Hon. William Timmons