

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2303

November 12, 2019

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Re: Extension for the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

We are writing to thank you for your leadership in creating the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress, which is currently scheduled to expire at the end of the year. Given the importance of the Select Committee's work, we respectfully urge you to consider supporting its extension to the end of the 116th Congress. As freshman members, we were inspired to begin our congressional careers knowing that we were joining an institution committed to improving itself. The chance to reform the way the House functions is a special event that only occurs every 15 to 20 years and all of us share a common goal of using this opportunity to make Congress more effective, efficient, and responsive to the American people. The Select Committee has actively begun this essential work.

As you know, the 116th Congress has one of the largest freshman classes in recent history. We represent a diversity of views but are united in our desire to better serve the American people. However, our ability to do the jobs we were elected to do is at times challenging because of the systemic inefficiencies we confront on a daily basis. From managing unpredictable schedules, to dealing with ongoing technology issues in our district offices, to coping with outdated systems and equipment in our D.C. offices, there is much to modernize.

Thanks to your guidance and ongoing support, the Select Committee has already accomplished a great deal in a few short months. In addition to reporting out twenty-nine recommendations that address important issues like transparency, House human resources, technology, and accessibility, the Select Committee has invested countless hours listening to what Members and staff have to say about modernizing Congress. We very much appreciate Chair Kilmer and Vice Chair Graves soliciting our input and believe that our experiences as new Members have provided them with a useful perspective. The Select Committee's recommendations to improve the freshman onboarding and orientation processes and to make drastically needed upgrades to

House technology services are evidence that our voices matter in this process. We are grateful to Chair Kilmer and Vice Chair Graves for their careful consideration of our views.

When the Select Committee held a Member Day hearing on March 12th, seven Members of the freshman class testified about some of the inefficiencies we've all encountered. Many of the issues they raised were echoed by our more senior colleagues. Representative Chrissy Houlahan testified about the unpredictable schedule. Representative Katie Porter highlighted the challenges she faced in trying to set up a district office. Representative David Trone discussed the need to modernize technology. Representative Lauren Underwood spoke about workplace misconduct. Representative Cindy Axne spoke in favor of streamlining and updating constituent service systems. Representative Dean Phillips testified how the social, physical, and environmental design of Congress should inspire, rather than inhibit, collaboration.

These are tough topics to tackle. We believe the Select Committee has done an impressive job of addressing the broad range of issues in their mandate. We also believe the issues in their mandate deserve more thorough consideration than they can give in this year's remaining months. Further evaluation of congressional staffing issues, technology, administrative efficiencies, and House procedures is essential if Congress is to uphold its Article One responsibilities and maintain parity with the Executive Branch. An extension through the remainder of the 116th Congress would allow the Select Committee to continue the important work they have only just begun and allow time to present recommendations to the House.

As freshman members, we are also inspired by the bipartisan example the Select Committee has set. They are proving that it's possible for Members from both sides of the aisle to sit down together, engage in tough discussions, and ultimately find bipartisan solutions to the challenges we all face. Their collaborative approach to problem solving motivates us to do the same.

The obstacles Congress faces are many and transforming this institution into one that can competently address 21st century challenges will not happen overnight, nor should it. We thank you for your foresight in recognizing that the time is ripe for transformational change and respectfully request that you consider extending the Select Committee through the end of the 116th Congress.

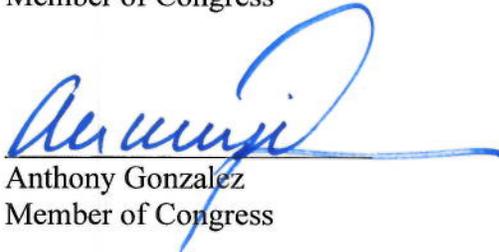
Sincerely,



Dean Phillips
Member of Congress



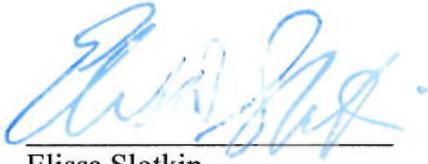
Tim Burchett
Member of Congress



Anthony Gonzalez
Member of Congress



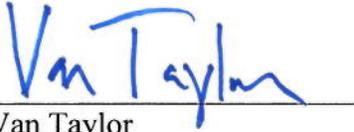
Donna E. Shalala
Member of Congress



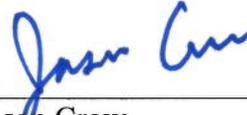
Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress



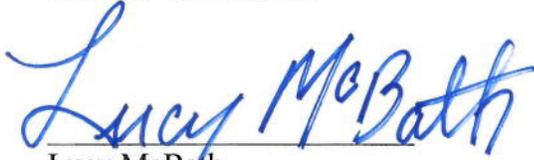
Max Rose
Member of Congress



Van Taylor
Member of Congress



Jason Crow
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



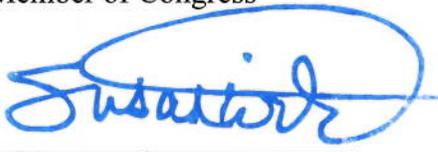
Katie Porter
Member of Congress



Rashida Tlaib
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Susan Wild
Member of Congress



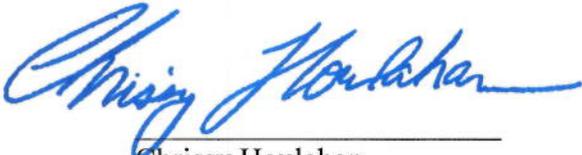
Angie Craig
Member of Congress



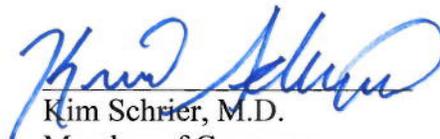
Debra A. Haaland
Member of Congress



David J. Trone
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



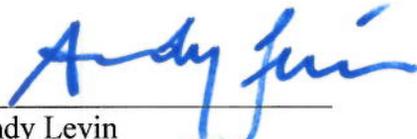
Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



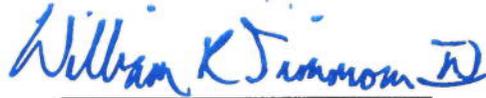
Debbie Mucarsel-Powell
Member of Congress



Haley M. Stevens
Member of Congress



Andy Levin
Member of Congress



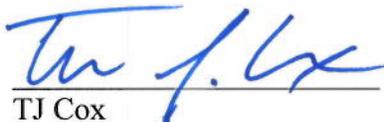
William R. Timmons, IV
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Cindy Axne
Member of Congress



TJ Cox
Member of Congress



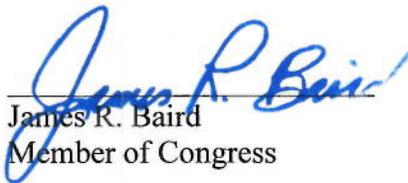
Ron Wright
Member of Congress



Kendra S. Horn
Member of Congress



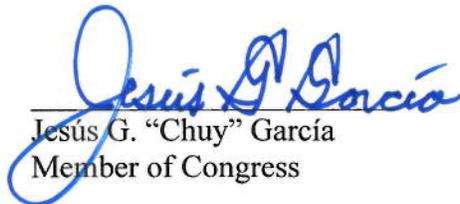
Tom Malinowski
Member of Congress



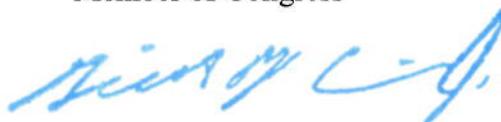
James R. Baird
Member of Congress



Susie Lee
Member of Congress



Jesús G. "Chuy" García
Member of Congress



Gilbert R. Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress

Harley Rouda

Harley Rouda
Member of Congress

Ed Case

Ed Case
Member of Congress

Mary Gay Scanlon

Mary Gay Scanlon
Member of Congress

Veronica Escobar

Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress

Bryan Steil

Bryan Steil
Member of Congress