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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-0514

January 12, 2021

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Minority Leader McCarthy:

On Wednesday, January 6, 2021, an armed mob of insurrectionists breached the Capitol, incited by President Trump's vitriolic remarks that day and for days preceding the siege. As a result, some of us and many of our colleagues from both sides of the aisle were forced to evacuate the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives to a secure location. At that location, numerous Republican Members of Congress jeered, smirked, and openly ridiculed requests and an offer of face masks. They did this in clear violation of the requirement of the House Sergeant at Arms when convened in the Capitol and despite the fact that [hundreds of Members were forced to shelter](#) in close proximity to one another for hours on end in rooms with less than ideal ventilation – setting the stage for a textbook super-spreader event.

We learned on Monday that Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman, a recent cancer survivor, has since tested positive for the COVID-19 virus. We learned today that Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal and Congressman Brad Schneider have also tested positive. My colleagues and I fear that they will not be alone. We also fear for our family members who we returned home to that night, and members of the public who were exposed to Members that had been in that location when they were finally able to leave the complex after hours of sheltering in place and resuming our Constitutional duty to certify the results of the November 4, 2020, election.

The inability or unwillingness of Members of your caucus to follow clear, nonpartisan medical advice has resulted in a life and death matter. Your leadership is necessary to ensure that all comply with basic public health guidelines. We frequently see Republican Members failing to wear a mask properly, if at all, and many Republican staff members follow their lead. According to press reports, many have been bullied into not following the accepted medical advice of the House physician and this Administration's Department of Health and Human Services. Make no mistake, this puts everyone who visits and works at the Capitol complex—not only other Members, but also staff, Capitol Police, maintenance workers, food service workers, journalists, and others—at unnecessary risk.

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ENVIRONMENT
Co-Chair, Democratic Women's Caucus
Senior Whip

We have only a few more months of these challenging conditions. We implore you to do your duty and urge your Members to wear masks properly for the duration of the pandemic and to impose severe consequences on Members who fail to do so.

Sincerely,



Jackie Speier
Member of Congress

Cindy Axne
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Joyce Beatty
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Suzanne Bonamici
Julia Brownley
Cheri Bustos
André Carson
Sean Casten
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Jim Cooper
Jason Crow
Suzan DelBene
Val Demings
Mark DeSaulnier
Ted Deutch
Debbie Dingell
Veronica Escobar
Dwight Evans
Bill Foster
Lois Frankel
Jesus G. "Chuy" Garcia
Jahana Hayes
Sheila Jackson Lee
Pramila Jayapal
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Raja Krishnamoorthi
Ann McLane Kuster
Mike Levin
Alan Lowenthal

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Doris Matsui
James P. McGovern
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Eleanor Holmes Norton
Donald M. Payne, Jr.
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