



Dear Republican Colleague,

On Tuesday, the 118th Congress of the United States will gavel into session and Republicans will reclaim a majority in the House of Representatives after four years of Democrat rule. As our conference's nominee for Speaker of the House, the question I am asked most is: "how will you be different from past Speakers?"

The simple fact is that Congress is broken and needs to change. Years of increased centralization in the Speaker's office has relegated Members of both parties to the sidelines, with mammoth bills being drafted behind closed doors and rushed to the floor at the last minute for an up-or-down, take it or leave it vote.

While this practice has occurred under both parties, it has become especially egregious the last two years.

Consider that the so-called "American Rescue Plan" and "Inflation Reduction Act" were written almost exclusively in Speaker Pelosi's office—totaling nearly \$3 trillion in new government spending—and approved with no ability for rank-and-file Members to offer amendments. And that's before you take into account the unconstitutional "vote by proxy" scheme, which was most recently abused to allow a \$2 trillion spending bill to pass without a physical quorum present.

My first job as Speaker is to put an end to the Pelosi status quo and empower every Member to have their voices heard on behalf of their constituents.

On day one, we will immediately repeal proxy voting and virtual committee business, two failed experiments that have inflicted untold damage to this institution. Congress was never intended for Zoom, and no longer will Members be able to phone it in while attending lavish international weddings or sailing their boat. We will meet, gather, and debate in-person—just as the founders envisioned.

Committees will once again be the primary drivers of legislation, with Members given more opportunities to influence the final product—including a 20 percent threshold for priority consideration of germane majority party amendments, a firm 72 hour rule so Members have enough time to read bills before voting on them, protections against the airdropping of extraneous provisions into single subject legislation, and a revival of "Calendar Wednesday," whereby any committee chair can take a marked-up bill of their choosing straight to the floor under an open process.

We are also adopting a variety of rules that make it easier to cut spending and harder to increase spending as we work to rein in our national debt—including a return to "Cut-Go" requirements, an enhanced Arney Protocol that can be used to expose unauthorized programs to a point of order on the floor, and prohibitions against amendments that result in a net increase in budget authority.

When it comes to leading the Republican conference, I will strive to rebuild the trust that has become frayed by broken promises and unmet expectations in past majorities.

I will use my selections on key panels to ensure they more closely reflect the ideological makeup of our conference, and will advocate for the same when it comes to the membership of standing committees. This will facilitate greater scrutiny of bills from the start so they stand a greater chance of passing in the end.

In short, I will work with everyone in our party to build conservative consensus and translate that consensus into action.

That means leveraging our Article I authorities—including the power of the purse and the “Holman Rule”—to get America back on track. Just as we used this year’s annual defense bill to repeal the vaccine mandate on our servicemembers, we will pinpoint “must pass” legislation to advance shared conservative policy aims—chief among them: securing our border, restoring our energy independence, and balancing our budget.

That also means wielding the power of the subpoena to hold an increasingly out-of-control government accountable. Our new rules will facilitate increased oversight of the Executive branch and the establishment of a new Church-style Select Committee focused exclusively on exposing the weaponization of government against our citizenry, writ large.

Finally, just as the Speaker is elected by the whole body, we will restore the ability for any 5 members of the majority party to initiate a vote to remove the Speaker if so warranted. This procedure was first created in 1910 during a period when Members of the House were equally frustrated by a bottled-up, top-down process controlled by then-Speaker Joseph Cannon. Cannon prevailed in that vote, but agreed to implement a series of reforms that reduced the Speaker’s power in exchange.

In like manner, it’s time for our new Republican majority to embrace these bold reforms and move forward as one. I truly believe these transformative changes we are making will restore the People’s House and end business as usual in Washington. That’s why on January 3—and every day thereafter—I stand ready to be judged not by my words, but by my actions as Speaker.

I would like to thank every member for their feedback and input over the recent weeks and months on the enclosed House rules package. It’s clear that when we row together and work towards a common aim, we can make a real difference for this nation we love.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kevin McCarthy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kevin McCarthy
Speaker-Designate