



February 26, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20514

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20514

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Majority Leader of the U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader of the U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senate and House Leaders,

Last month, the U.S. Capitol came under direct attack for the first time since the War of 1812. Many factors that led to insurrectionists storming the House and Senate Chambers are symptomatic of the growing divisions, dysfunction, and distrust in our political system. That is why members of the Fix the System Coalition support the creation of a bipartisan commission to investigate the events of January 6, 2021.

The guiding purpose of the commission should be to reassure the American people that Congress is taking every sensible measure to ensure we do not have a repeat of this tragic aggression. Restoring the American public's faith in our political system and institutions will require an honest assessment of the facts and circumstances that led to this event, how it could have been prevented, and recommendations on what should be done to prevent any future such domestic terrorist attacks.

To create trust in the process and findings, we believe this commission should be comprised of an equal number of members from both political parties, and bipartisan co-chairs. This is necessary to reassure all Americans, no matter their political affiliation, that the process was fair, representative, and the results were not driven by politics. Accountability for those responsible, and a national consensus on the vital lessons learned, can only be widely accepted through a process that is not perceived as controlled by one political party.

Further, to depoliticize the nature of the commission, we recommend that the members of the Commission be chosen with the concurrence of each party's leadership. The composition of this commission should not be an occasion to value partisan politics over cooperation. Building a commission of members who are able to work cooperatively, even during this highly partisan moment, is necessary for the success of the commission and the healing of the country.

We also encourage lawmakers to ensure the work and possible recommendations of the January 6th commission serve as a catalyst to more deeply understand and bring attention to the root causes leading to this explosive moment in our nation's history. It is only by understanding the driving forces behind the growing anger, resentment, and distrust in our country, and the system

of incentives that encourages the promotion of the most extreme points of view, that will we be able to start healing those divides.

What our nation, and the world, witnessed earlier this year revealed the fragility of our democracy and a long-needed effort to bring the country back together. We hope a less partisan and balanced investigation of the January 6th riots will serve as a first step.

Sincerely,

American Promise
Center for the Study of the Presidency and Congress
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Issue One
Leadership Now
Lugar Center
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Unite America