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Leading the Conservative Movement since 1972

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

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Minority Whip
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Liz Cheney
Republican Conference Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Gary Palmer
Republican Policy Committee Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
House Committee on Rules Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Republican Leadership,

We are concerned about the upcoming vote to change the House Rules on in-person voting. Democrats are pushing forward a measure to allow proxy voting where one member can cast a vote for another member who may not be present. This is an appalling move that could keep Americans in the dark on future Congressional measures.

For over two hundred years, the House of Representatives has cast their votes in-person as originally drafted near the founding of the United States. This has included times of crisis and unimaginable circumstances. Even during this unprecedented time, both the House and Senate have taken measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 by extending voting times and keeping the recommended six-foot distancing. Members of Congress have self-quarantined after coming in contact or testing positive for the disease. This has proven effective, so further action would be unnecessary.

Although the Constitution does not mandate that Congress be physically present to vote, it does require a quorum of two-thirds to vote on a piece of legislation. Democrats undoubtedly feel threatened about Republican members who want to uphold their civic duties by demanding a roll call vote on bills that will have long-lasting effects on our nation. A quorum by-proxy is a distortion of Congress's Constitutional obligations and is completely unacceptable.

Democrats have publicly assured that this type of voting would only be secured for Coronavirus-related bills. However, placing a provision related to COVID-19 could happen in almost any piece of legislation. We have seen Democrats aggressively insert their own agenda into supplementals that were originally simple and straight-forward without a hearing, adequate time for the public to read the bill, or enough time for debate. Allowing House members to stay home without the responsibilities to discuss these bills transparently would undermine the safeguards put into place by the founders of our country.

Allowing another member to cast your vote for you would be lazy and irresponsible. It could also add another layer of political influence that weakens the weight of your constituents' views. Your constituents voted for you, not another Representative, to represent their voice. We ask that you oppose any effort to allow Congress proxy-voting privileges or any alternative method other than in-person voting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eunie Smith".

Eunie Smith
President
Eagle Forum