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House of Representatives

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October 5, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
Office of the Speaker
H-232, US Capitol

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to wreak havoc on the country, it is important that we as leaders set an example for the nation. The public cannot be expected to follow guidelines that we ourselves do not follow. The House of Representatives has the potential to become a super spreader situation. In fact, more than a dozen members of Congress have already contracted the virus and many more have been forced to quarantine¹.

Earlier this year, you declined the White House's offer to make COVID rapid tests available to Congress, citing the need to direct the limited number of available tests to healthcare facilities and frontline workers as the reason. Meanwhile, House Minority Leader McCarthy and Senate Minority Leader Schumer have been advocating for the testing of Congress stating since May, stating "The quick response tests, would allow the government to keep functioning amid a potential outbreak on Capitol Hill."²

In the months since those statements were made, the United States has made great strides in procuring and deploying COVID-19 tests. These tests are no longer the scarce commodities they once were. The House of Representatives should implement a testing regimen for all members. Without a testing policy, members could be unknowingly spreading COVID. Members travel to and from their districts regularly, and many fly, putting themselves, their families, and their staff at risk of contracting COVID.

Universities, professional sports teams, and other employers across the nation have instituted COVID testing. The House of Representatives should be no different. In fact, it should be an example for the nation of how to properly implement COVID testing and Members and their staff should feel safe to return to work.

¹ <https://www.npr.org/2020/04/15/833692377/how-the-coronavirus-has-affected-individual-members-of-congress>

² <https://www.rollcall.com/2020/05/04/mcconnell-pelosi-decision-to-decline-rapid-coronavirus-testing-stirs-questions-concerns-on-hill/>

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul Ryan", with a large circular flourish on the left and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

CC: House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy