

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 17, 2018

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker-Designate
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader-Designate
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker-Designate Pelosi and Majority Leader-Designate Hoyer:

As the newly elected leadership of the Blue Dog Coalition for the 116th Congress, we write on behalf of the Coalition to strongly recommend that H.R. 1 contain significant redistricting reform provisions.

The Blue Dog Coalition has endorsed the John Tanner Fairness in Redistricting Act (H.R. 712), legislation introduced by Congressman Jim Cooper that continues to be a priority for our Coalition. Named for former Congressman John Tanner, a Member who championed the measure for many years before his retirement from the House in 2010, the John Tanner Fairness in Redistricting Act removes politics and partisanship from the congressional redistricting process. Under the bill, each state is required to establish an independent, bipartisan redistricting commission to redraw congressional district lines once every 10 years that reflect contiguous communities. These districts of contiguous communities would replace highly gerrymandered districts.

Today, many states are represented by Congressional delegations that do not reflect the ideological balance of those states. This is the direct result of politicians unfairly drawing maps with their reelections in mind, hand-picking their voters. Our new Democratic Majority must act and end partisan gerrymandering to preserve our democracy. As former Attorney General Eric Holder wrote, "Gerrymandering is destructive to the representative democracy that our founders envisioned." It is the Coalition's strong belief that we cannot meaningfully regain the trust of voters or the American people without tackling gerrymandering and its toxic effects on our democracy.

Our Coalition respectfully urges you to ensure redistricting reform is included in H.R. 1 as the package moves forward. We look forward to continue working with you to advance an agenda that is based on our shared values and guarantees results for the American people.

Sincerely,



Rep. Tom O'Halleran
Co-Chair for Policy



Rep. Stephanie Murphy
Co-Chair for Administration



Rep. J. Luis Correa
Co-Chair for Communications



Rep.-elect Anthony Brindisi
Whip Co-Chair