

December 20, 2018

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker-Designate of the House
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker-Designate Pelosi:

We, the undersigned organizations representing millions of people, write to urge you, as the incoming Speaker of the House, to limit the membership on key committees — Appropriations, Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Intelligence, and Ways and Means — of the “Problem Solvers Caucus” and other members of Congress who have records of working in the service of the corporations and industries these committees are meant to regulate. We also ask you to limit the extent to which such members serve as Subcommittee chairs on these and other committees.

Recent media reports have underlined and made public that the agenda of the Problem Solvers Caucus is to thwart the will of the Democratic voters who elected the new Majority to enact a strong progressive agenda centered on the needs of regular Americans rather than the wealthy and powerful. Inclusion on key committees or subcommittee leadership positions for Problem Solvers Caucus members and other corporate-aligned members would jeopardize the progress the new Democratic Majority in the 116th Congress can make on behalf of the American people and we believe it is of the utmost importance that you act to prevent this outcome.

Much has been learned about the funders, intent, and agenda of the Problem Solvers Caucus and their non-profit backers, No Labels. From the ill-conceived demands of your incoming Speakership -- which would have hampered your ability to be an effective Speaker -- it is obvious that their intent is to impede the will of Democratic voters as no such demands were made when Democrats were in the Minority. Advancing the interests of powerful corporations and the extremely wealthy at the expense of the public interest is the *raison d'être* for the Problem Solvers Caucus and they should not be allowed to use key committee membership or Subcommittee chairmanships to advance this agenda.

As you know, these key committees — Appropriations, Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Intelligence, and Ways and Means — have jurisdiction over a broad set of matters of great import to our organizations and the American public.

Appropriations and Ways & Means are the committees that write must-pass legislation, so members of these committees have great power to force policy change that the Caucus will have to accept in order to fund the government. The Energy and Commerce Committee and Financial Services with jurisdiction over many of our economy's most important sectors and functions, require members who will stand up to the lobbyists from the banking, healthcare, pharmaceutical, energy, and communications industries to ensure those marketplaces work for Americans and not the lobbyists' employers. The Intelligence Committee's work will entail investigations into important questions about the Trump campaign, the administration's foreign policy priorities and activities and relationships with foreign governments like Saudi Arabia that the American people demand answer to.

These key committees control much of government policy which affects working people and their families all across the country. We commend your agreement with the Congressional Progressive Caucus to seat 40 percent of these committees with CPC members as we believe these progressive champions are eager to make progress for the American people. But this is not enough, as each member of a committee has a vote and the ability to derail debate. If Democrats are to deliver on the promises made to voters during the 2016 elections, the Caucus must effectively advance agenda that will make a difference for regular Americans, and forcefully oppose proposals that would undermine this goal.

Our organizations regularly advocate for matters in the purview of all of these committees, and we know that an influx of like-minded members will facilitate all of our efforts to make our government truly responsive to the needs of its citizens. From experience, we also know that seating Problem Solvers Caucus members, and others members of Congress with records in service of corporate interests, on these committees or as subcommittee chairs will stymie the good work these progressive champions could do on behalf of the American people. For this reason, we urge you to limit the seats on the key committees — Appropriations, Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Intelligence, and Ways and Means — as well as subcommittee chairmanships from members of the Problems Solvers Caucus, and other corporate-aligned members of Congress, in order to ensure that the 116th Congress delivers for working people and their families and not Wall Street, monopolistic mega businesses, corporate polluters or self interested billionaires.

Sincerely,

Allied Progress

American Family Voices
Communication Workers of America
Consumer Action
Courage Campaign
CREDO
Daily Kos
Demand Progress Education Fund/Rootstrikers
Freedom to Prosper
Grassroots Collaborative
Next Door Project
Patriotic Millionaires
People's Action Institute
Progress America
Progressive Democrats of America
Revolving Door Project
Take On Wall Street
Social Security Works
Working Families Party

