

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

As you know, the motion to recommit (MTR), also referred to as “the minority’s motion,” is one of the few tools the minority party possesses to influence activity on the House floor. When you were Democratic Leader from 2011-2018, Republicans held with longstanding House practice dating back more than a hundred years by allowing the Democratic minority to introduce, debate and force a vote on 384 of these MTRs. In almost every case, Democratic MTRs represented an effort to achieve progressive policy goals on Republican-authored bills, and the text of these minority’s motions was not released to the full membership of the House or the public until moments before the vote.

Although your 384 efforts to use this tool resulted in 384 defeats, Republicans have had greater success writing and introducing substantive, commonsense minority motions and forcing us to choose a side. Already this Congress, Republicans have prevailed twice due to mass Democratic defections. Additionally, mixed messages from Leadership have led to mass confusion about which of us are allowed to break with you and vote in line with our own values and those of our districts.

To continue our present course of taking these tough votes will allow the public to see the divide between those of us in Congress masquerading as moderates and our increasingly radical Democratic base. The transparency that minority’s motions bring will further fracture our caucus, contribute to the loss of our majority, lead to four more years of Donald J. Trump and, most importantly, threaten my own political career. Further, Members like me should not be required to take difficult votes simply because Republicans want to force the House to debate issues their constituents care about. Simply put, I am sick and tired of having to choose between the image I want to project to my constituents at home as an independent voice who puts their interests first and the image I want to project to you and others in Washington that I am a team player looking to advance up the political ladder.

Making these tough calls every week isn’t what I thought I was signing up for when I ran for Congress. It’s just too hard and I can’t take it anymore. Accordingly, I must ask that you eliminate or substantially weaken the minority’s motion so we can suppress the Republican ability to bring up or down votes to the House floor. If you will not take this step within two weeks of your receipt of this letter, please accept my resignation from Congress.

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Member of Congress (D)