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ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

JEN DAULBY, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

December 14, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Speaker Pelosi,

This week our nation celebrated the first vaccinations of American healthcare workers to promote immunity against the novel coronavirus, COVID-19. With nearly 3 million vaccine doses being distributed this week and an additional 25 million predicted by the end of 2020, we are entering a new chapter in America's fight against this pandemic.

The Center for Disease Control has established a nationwide distribution plan and states, communities, and businesses are approving independent vaccination programs in anticipation of when doses become more widely available. It only makes sense that when the times comes, the House has a plan as well. As an essential branch of government, it is vital that our institution returns to full functionality and that our Members and essential staff are provided a transparent vaccination plan to not only ensure the continuity of operations, but the health and safety of our committed workforce.

Nine months have passed since the novel coronavirus first shutdown the nation's capitol and nearly a year since it first hit our shores. At every stage of its spread, the House has underperformed in its adaptability and resiliency. To this day, the House remains closed to the American people and is failing to fully perform its duties, even as universities, public institutions, private businesses and communities across the country have embraced technologies and processes to mitigate the spread of COVID-19. Available testing for the House community was only recently made available, months beyond a reasonable timeline for implementation, and only after the Washington DC Mayor's requirement that all individuals traveling to the city must obtain a test.

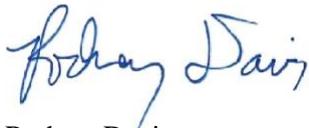
Throughout this year, I and my colleagues on the Committee on House Administration encouraged your implementation of a transparent, effective plan to reopen the House of Representatives including the need for guidance on social distancing, room occupancy, health monitoring including testing, and actionable reopening procedures for House support facilities including daycares, fitness centers, cafeterias, and more. Today, 6 months later, our institution and its Members continue to struggle interpreting the Office of Attending Physician (OAP) guidance sent at your direction, its inconsistencies, and the unpredictability of how the House will operate in the 117th Congress. Despite the House's track record on COVID-19 response, we now have the opportunity to lead by example in combating COVID-19, I encourage you to take strong, decisive action in working with our institutional partners to create, communicate, and implement a vaccination distribution plan for the House's essential workers and Members.

One of the hallmarks of the People's House is the in-person collaboration amongst elected representatives from every corner of this Country. Since early May, we have seen thousands of committee and House Floor votes occur remotely via proxy voting, members of the Democratic party being absent from the nation's capital for over eight months, and no signs of motivation to return the House to working order. All while set in the backdrop of millions of Americans that have been asked to show up and do their jobs in-person in order to maintain our supply chains, healthcare systems, economy, election integrity, and law and order.

Offering immunity vaccinations to the House's high-risk and frontline essential workers is not only fundamental to the institution's continuity of operations but is its duty to care for the health and safety of its staff and Members. Additionally, implementing a clear plan will signal to both the private and public sector that the House has confidence in the vaccine. I have every confidence in our ability to rollout a successful program by the end of January based off the House's existing flu vaccination model – a tried and trusted program that many House Members and staff are familiar with and benefited from.

My office stands ready to assist your team, the OAP, and the House support offices in developing, implementing, and supporting a fully integrated, voluntary vaccination program, in addition to the continuation of the COVID-19 voluntary testing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rodney Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rodney Davis
Ranking Member, Committee on House Administration

CC: Honorable Zoe Lofgren
Chairperson, Committee on House Administration

