

September 9, 2020

Dear Colleague,

Thank you for talking with me about my interest in chairing the Appropriations Committee. I want to thank you for your time and consideration and share some additional thoughts.

During the past four years Donald Trump hasn't just ignored the traditional boundaries that define our government's separation of powers; he has violated both longstanding norms and federal laws. That's one of the reasons the Appropriations Committee is so important. As Richard Fenno wrote in his book *The Power of the Purse*, "The one and recurring procedure for congressional control over government is the annual appropriations review and the provision of funds."

Chairwoman Nita Lowey has done an outstanding job in exercising this responsibility. Nita Lowey is a history making, first woman Chair of Appropriations who tilted government to help children and families at home and abroad.

If I have the privilege of becoming Chair, I am committed to helping every Member participate in the appropriations process to ensure that the needs of his or her constituents are being met.

And, it is a unique time. We are in the middle of a health and economic crisis that is exposing vast racial inequalities that must be addressed. With a real chance for Democratic control of the House, Senate, and Presidency we need a strong, effective, inclusive, proven leader.

I will be a Chair who understands the appropriations process needs to be more transparent to Members who must be able to influence what is important.

January 29, 2009 was one of my proudest moments in Congress. On that day, I joined President Obama on stage as he signed his first bill into law. It was the Miller-DeLauro bill on wage discrimination, which we all know as the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Protection Act. I have been thinking about that day a lot lately, because in a few months all of us will have the chance to make more progress for America. And we have to make the most of that opportunity.

My life's focus has been on helping working people in need and protecting our values at home and abroad. I have been a champion of paid family and medical leave, women's health, and food safety and security and was the architect of the women's economic agenda and bus tour "When Women Succeed, America Succeeds."

For twenty years, I have been leading the fight to expand the child tax credit, lifting millions of children out of poverty, which Speaker Pelosi supported at every point. The expansion we included in the HEROES Act would cut child poverty by 40%, with a disproportionately positive impact for black and Latinx children. As a Co-Chair of the Steering and Policy Committee, I have worked to craft policies that advance our values and unite our caucus.

My work on the Appropriations Committee has given me an invaluable perspective on how the funding process can be used to advance our caucus's priorities. As the former chair of the Appropriations Agriculture, FDA Subcommittee, I developed an expertise on providing for our farmers and ranchers and ensuring our children and families have enough to eat. As the current chair of the Committee's Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee, I have led the House in passing legislation that includes one-third of all non-defense discretionary spending and touches every aspect of people's lives from women's health to early childhood to their education to Social Security.

I am especially pleased that in this year's bill, we were able to include the vast majority of the over 15,000 member requests we received. Thanks to those suggestions, we were able to pass a bill that helps us meet the needs created by the current unemployment crisis and make critical investments in all levels of education, from early childhood education to graduate programs.

Just as importantly, I made sure our bill implemented Majority Whip Clyburn's innovative 10-20-30 plan. As you know, the Clyburn plan allocates at least 10% of funding to counties where 20% of the population has lived below the poverty line for 30 years or more. We did this in the Labor-HHS bill, and I'll make sure it will become standard practice in all our appropriation bills. It will be an important step in finally dealing with entrenched poverty in so many parts of our country.

Because so many jobs in my district are related to the defense industry, I know firsthand the need to fund strategic defense initiatives to meet the complex challenges we face around the world. I have also spent countless hours reviewing trade agreements and have worked with many of our colleagues to ensure that production is shifted to the United States and provisions that raised the price of prescription drugs were eliminated.

The appropriations process touches all these issues and, obviously, everything else the government does. It is why we need to be as effective as we can be in the new Congress and why I am seeking your support for Chair. With Joe Biden in the White House there will be many more moments like the Lilly Ledbetter signing. If I am the Committee Chair, you can be sure I will do everything I can to send your priorities to the President's desk so they can become law.

I will soon be sending you another note with specific ideas I have for improving the appropriations process so that all Members can fully participate. And I would welcome your ideas once you have had a chance to review those reforms.

Thank you for all you do, and I look forward to continue our discussion.

Rosa