

July 16, 2020

The Honorable Maxine Waters
Chairwoman
Committee on Financial Services
2129 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Waters:

I write to express my disappointment with your decision to hold a full committee hearing on H.R. 6800, the so-called HEROES Act. Using the Committee's limited time to showcase this bill serves no purpose other than to demonstrate the partisanship that Americans have come to expect from Congress. Highlighting bills that have no chance of becoming law only exacerbates the anguish experienced by the nearly 18 million Americans who are officially unemployed and the 33 million who are currently receiving unemployment benefits. Americans are relying on us to find bipartisan solutions that will get them back to work, not play electoral politics to placate progressives.

I would remind you H.R. 6800 did not even have unanimous support among House Democrats. Fourteen Democrats voted against the bill, including several Democrats on our Committee, when Democrat leadership pushed it through the House on May 15, 2020. Rep. Cindy Axne (D-IA) called the bill "Washington gamesmanship."¹ Rep. Ben McAdams (D-UT) called it a partisan "wish-list" and added that the bill strayed from the actual goal of helping the country.² Rep. Joe Cunningham (D-SC) said the bill represented "Washington politics at its worst."³

Our colleagues are right.

H.R. 6800 was never drafted to provide real solutions. We both know it never stood a chance of passing the Senate, and it has no chance of becoming law. The Committee's time and resources are better spent identifying areas of common ground to chart the country's economic recovery.

¹ Marty Johnson, *The 14 Democrats who broke with their party on coronavirus relief vote*, THE HILL, May 16, 2020, <https://thehill.com/homenews/house/498126-the-14-democrats-who-broke-with-their-party-on-coronavirus-relief-vote>.

² *Id.*

³ *Id.*

Showcasing this partisan bill at a full Committee hearing is part of an alarming pattern. Since June 3, 2020, the Committee has focused on pursuing a purely partisan agenda. There have been no bipartisan policy discussions. No overtures to reach across the aisle. No willingness to entertain, let alone find bipartisan solutions.

For instance, last week's hearing before the Subcommittee on National Security, International Development, and Monetary Policy focused solely on H.R. 6918 at the expense of viable, bipartisan proposals to protect and support employees during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. Congresswoman Jayapal's bill replaces private sector decision-making with that of the government. Cash-strapped businesses will be forced to agree to partisan demands rather than having the flexibility to make decisions for them and their employees. H.R. 6918, like the HEROES Act, has no chance of passing the Senate and will not become law. But this is the policy proposal Democrats chose to use our limited hearing time to discuss. Meanwhile, the clock continues to tick toward the expiration of several CARES Act programs that have supported workers and buoyed the economy throughout the pandemic.

Additionally, this week's hearing before the Subcommittee on Investor Protection, Entrepreneurship, and Capital Markets—billed as a hearing on promoting economic recovery—was more of the same. The hearing focused solely on a grab bag of partisan policy proposals, including H.R. 6339 and H.R. 6778. These bills do nothing to support and strengthen our economic recovery, but instead impose additional costs on businesses at a time when they can least afford it.

The CARES Act demonstrated that we can reach bipartisan agreement when we are given the opportunity to consider policies that allow for regulatory rightsizing, protect consumers, lower costs on businesses, keep employees tied to their employer, and increase access to capital. The CARES Act, like other bipartisan legislation before it, shows that we have the capacity to develop policies that help the American people. I urge you to reconsider the decision to hold a hearing on the HEROES Act and instead use that time to hear from witnesses who can inform our effort to develop a bill that will return the economy to full strength. Committee Republicans stand ready to work with you toward that goal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patrick T. McHenry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Patrick" being the most prominent.

Patrick McHenry
Ranking Member