

July 23, 2020

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

Dear Madam Chairwoman:

Madam Chair, on July 16, 2020, I asked you to use the Committee's time and resources to find bipartisan solutions to the ongoing health and economic crisis. This morning, in a letter, you rejected that request. Instead of agreeing to work with Republicans, you are pushing forward with today's hearing on H.R. 6800, which even Democrats have called a partisan wish list.

The time for a legislative hearing on H.R. 6800, of course, was back in May, before it went to the House floor. Not today, just days before key CARES Act programs expire. I understand there may be pressure from your leadership to hold today's hearing as some sort of negotiating tactic. Respectfully, that is not what the American people are looking for from us. They are looking for answers, not tactics.

I also want to clear up some confusion. Your letter rejected the notion that the Committee is holding hearings on partisan topics. You cited a series of briefings we held back in the spring, when we were operating under an agreement whereby Republicans actually had a say in the topics for discussion!


Of course, those bipartisan briefings occurred before May 15, 2020, when Democrats changed the rules of the House and further eroded the rights of the minority. Unfortunately for Republicans on this Committee, our agreement to hold bipartisan briefings was a casualty of that radical change to House rules.

But I do want to highlight something else in your letter that I think is exactly right, and hopefully it provides something of a roadmap for the next several weeks. Your letter cited several cases where Republicans and Democrats worked together and developed bills with bipartisan support, such as the Wagner-Clay bill related to PPP and the Barr-Dean bill on rating organizations. Those are exactly the types of bills we should be working on today—common sense bills with bipartisan support that will provide relief to people and businesses that are struggling.

H.R. 6800 is anything but. In fact, it appears to be the Democrat caucus's response to Whip Clyburn's suggestion to use the ongoing pandemic as a "tremendous opportunity to restructure things to fit our vision."

Madam Chair, I respect and appreciate our work together on important issues like flood insurance, TRIA, and the Export-Import Bank. We have demonstrated that we are strongest when we work together. I wish we were taking the same approach to the next phase of CARES, and I stand ready to do exactly that after we finish today's discussion about a bill that has no chance of becoming law.

Sincerely,



Patrick McHenry
Ranking Member