

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 19, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Senator Schumer,

We write to express our support for the letter you received dated March 28, 2018, and signed by all 22 of our women colleagues and echo their disappointment that the Senate has failed to enact meaningful reforms to the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995. We join their call for the full Senate to immediately consider legislation that would update and strengthen the policies and procedures available for those who have been impacted by sexual harassment and discrimination in Congress.

If we are to lead by example, the Senate must revise current law to give the victims of sexual harassment and discrimination a more coherent, transparent, and fair process to tell their stories and pursue justice without fear of personal or professional ruin. If we fail to act immediately to address this systemic problem in our own workplace, we will lose all credibility in the eyes of the American public regarding our capacity to protect victims of sexual harassment or discrimination in any setting.

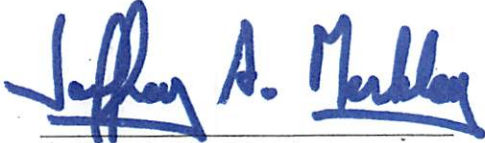
While we commend the Senate for requiring anti-harassment and discrimination training for all Senators and staff at least once each Congress with the passage of S.Res.330, this is only a small first step. Broader changes are necessary to truly end sexual harassment and discrimination in Congressional workplaces. Specifically, we must reform the Congressional Accountability Act. As the women of the Senate wrote last week, "The time has come to rewrite the CAA to provide a more equitable process that supports survivors of harassment and discrimination."

Bringing Congressional Accountability Act reform legislation up for debate would be a good use of the Senate's limited floor time since there is already bipartisan support for several key policy changes, including allowing victims to choose their own path to resolve a complaint instead of mandating secret mediation and counseling. There is also bipartisan support for requiring Members of Congress to be financially liable for harassment or discrimination they personally commit instead of forcing taxpayers to pay the bill on their behalf. Finally, there is a broad

consensus that Members of Congress should not be allowed to hide settlements from the public unless the victim seeks privacy.

Again, echoing our Senate colleagues, "Everyone deserves to work in an environment free from harassment and discrimination." We urge you to bring legislation before the full Senate without delay to ensure that the congressional workplace embodies this ideal.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



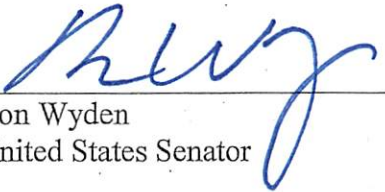
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



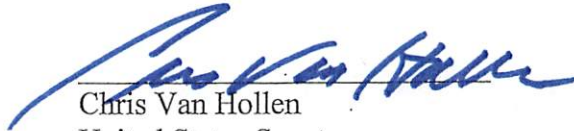
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



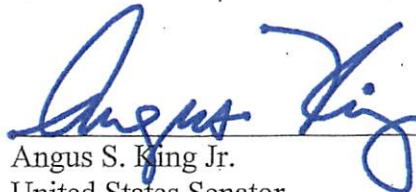
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

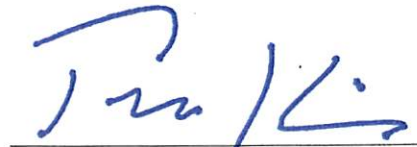


Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Angus S. King Jr.
United States Senator



Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator


Joe Donnelly
United States Senator


Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

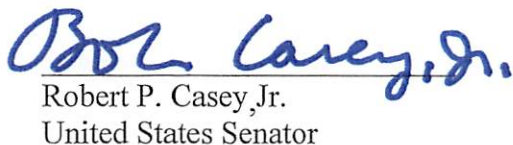

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

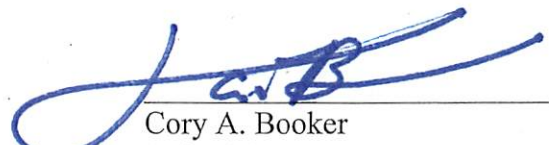

Jon Tester
United States Senator


Doug Jones
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator


Bill Nelson
United States Senator

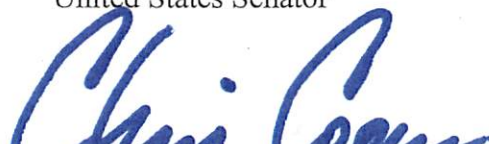

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator


Robert Menendez
United States Senator


Tom Udall
United States Senator


Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator


Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator


Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator


Jack Reed
United States Senator


Brian Schatz
United States Senator


Ted Cruz
United States Senator