



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

November 21, 2019

Dear Colleague:

As we experience one of the most consequential periods in our democracy, I am increasingly reminded of the very important power that rests solely with the Congress, a co-equal branch of government. Critically important is Article I, Section 9 of our Constitution which provides that “no money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law.” This imperative “power of the purse” must be effectively guarded and executed.

We must ensure that as we move into a new decade, we have strong and strategic leadership to bring about sensible, 21st century reforms that will make the House Appropriations Committee (HAC) process more inclusive, accessible and even more transparent for all Members. As a veteran Appropriator who recognizes the need for reform, I respectfully ask for your consideration and support as I embark on a campaign to serve as Chair of the House Committee on Appropriations for the 117th Congress.

For 11 of my 15 years as a Member of Congress, I have served as an Appropriator. During my entire tenure on the committee, I have served as a subcommittee Chair or Ranking Member. This includes my current role as the first Chairwoman of the combined Military Construction and Veteran Affairs Subcommittee, where I work to ensure our nation’s veterans have the resources and support they have earned. I also have led the fight to protect these vital resources against President Trump’s unconstitutional raid on our military and their families to pay for the border wall boondoggle.

As Chairwoman of the Legislative Branch subcommittee, I guided us through the final stages of construction, completion and opening of the Capitol Visitors Center – the largest project in the Capitol’s more than two-century history. Through my work and experience on other HAC subcommittees, such as Energy & Water, Homeland Security, State and Foreign Operations and Financial Services & General Government, I worked closely with many of you to include, protect and promote important Caucus priorities. I also observed firsthand how Chairmen David Obey and Norm Dicks and Chairwoman Nita Lowey wielded the power of the purse for the common good, and I will build upon their strong legacies and serve as a bridge for continued progress and sensible reform.

I am confident I can work with you to address the needs of your district, as well as advance our Democratic priorities.

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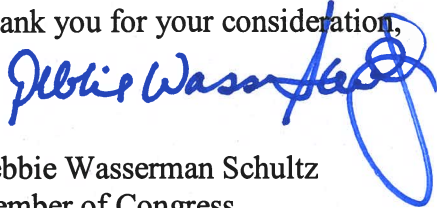
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As both a strategic and knowledgeable Appropriator known for a strong work ethic, I can bring generational diversity to our Caucus' committee leadership and usher in needed reforms to the process. After speaking with the majority of our Caucus over the past month, I learned that so many of you have a strong desire to learn more about the Appropriations process and how you can get results for your district. I am committed to working to increase the transparency and accessibility to the often complex and opaque Appropriations process. Among those improvements: pro-actively reaching out to Members to assist in re-assessing the current regular-order process, including holding to intended timetables; modernizing the Appropriations portal tool, which for many has become time consuming and cumbersome; expanding opportunities for leadership and growth by revisiting the relationship and roles of the full committee and subcommittee chairs.

I will also bring the ability to effectively communicate our Democratic message across increasingly varied and evolving platforms. By utilizing these skills and experiences, not only can I serve as a bridge within our own diverse Caucus, but I will continue to successfully reach across the aisle to diminish America's yawning political divide.

I look forward to spending the next year listening to your thoughts and ideas on how we can make the Appropriations process work even better for Members and their districts. During that time, I will work to earn the privilege of continuing to serve the people of Florida's 23rd District, I will work with colleagues to grow our strong Democratic majority, and I will endeavor to earn your support for a role that manages the only legislation that we must pass every year – Chair of the House Appropriations Committee during the 117th Congress.

Thank you for your consideration,



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress