

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 9, 2021

The Honorable James Brett Blanton
Architect of the Capitol
Architect of the Capitol
U.S. Capitol, Room SB-16
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jennifer Hemingway
Acting Sergeant at Arms
Senate Sergeant at Arms
U.S. Capitol, Room S-151
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Dr. Carla Hayden
Librarian of Congress
Library of Congress
101 Independence Avenue S.E.
Washington, D.C. 205400

The Honorable Yogananda Pittman
Acting Chief of Police
United States Capitol Police
119 D Street N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Blanton, Ms. Hemingway, Dr. Hayden, and Chief Pittman:

We write to thank you for the work you have done following the attack on the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021, and strongly urge you to provide additional support and resources to the Senate Employee Assistance Program (EAP), the House of Representatives Office of Employee Assistance (OEA), and other efforts to help the broader Capitol community cope with the attack. We additionally express our concerns regarding the procedures and policies in place to protect and support Members of Congress, their staff, and other essential workers, like contract staff, members of the press corps, and the U.S. Capitol Police (USCP) in the United States Capitol both during and after the traumatic event.

On January 6, 2021, the Capitol was overwhelmed by violent insurrectionists while the Senate and House were in session. We are grateful for the heroic actions taken by U.S. Capitol staff, including the USCP, congressional and non-congressional staff, and other supporting entities like the Secret Service, D.C. Metropolitan Police, and the soldiers of the National Guard. Many put themselves in harm's way to protect us, our colleagues, and our staff. Following the attacks, non-congressional workers like contract janitorial staff had to return to work to clean up the disturbing aftermath of the incident. As we work toward accountability and governing after the attack, Congress must ensure that support services, including emotional and behavioral health services, and resources are available to and appropriate for all who work in the Capitol to help promote healing.

The United States Senate and the House of Representatives, through the EAP and OEA, respectively, assist Members, congressional staff, USCP, and their family members for personal and work-related problems, including emotional and behavioral support services. We thank EAP and OEA for responding to this crisis by rapidly scaling up their services and working relentlessly to ensure that Senate and House staff is aware of and understands the resources available to them. Nonetheless, needs are increasing, especially among Black, Indigenous, and People of Color, and we should expand these services to include all Capitol personnel, including

contract workers and their families, who may be affected and need help. This would warrant further investment in the services and resources these offices provide.

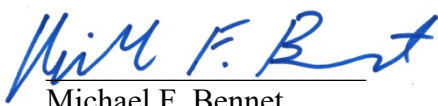
Many of the Capitol’s essential workers and support staff are contract employees and many do not currently have access to support services through EAP. In some cases, access to these vital programs is tied to Title V, Sec. 2107, which does not classify contract workers as “congressional employees”. This stipulation is not mandatory and we would ask you to ensure that all workers in the U.S. Capitol, regardless of class or classification, and their families have access to these services, especially trauma counseling.

As Members of Congress, we strongly urge you to work with us, the Senate Rules Committee, the House Administration Committee, and the Senate and House Appropriations Committees to expand the services and resources you provide. This should include ensuring the following:

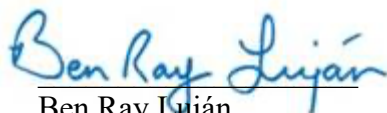
- Better information and protection for all U.S. Capitol workers in the event of future emergencies, including training, emergency planning, and coordination procedures;
- Sufficient staff and funding to respond to current and projected needs;
- Resources necessary to help non-congressional employees who may be affected such as members of the press-corps, food service contractors, military liaisons, and other contractors;
- Enhanced mental, emotional, and behavioral health resources, including crisis services, for USCP officers to address and cope with trauma;
- Availability of culturally competent services and resources for all employees, including those for whom English is a second language; and
- Additional reforms to make the OEA and EAP more accessible and available to all employees, contractors, support staff and their families.

Capitol workers and journalists investigate and ensure the health of the U.S. Capitol, the very heart of our democracy. Everyone must feel safe, supported and protected while fulfilling their duty within the halls of the United States Congress.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Ben Ray Luján
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

/s/

Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

/s/

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

/s/

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

/s/

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

/s/

Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

/s/

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

/s/

Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

/s/

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

/s/

Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator

/s/

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

/s/

Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

/s/

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

/s/

Tina Smith
United States Senator

/s/

Ron Wyden
United States Senator

/s/

Cory Booker
United States Senator

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Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

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Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

/s/

Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

/s/

Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator

/s/

Tim Kaine
United States Senator

/s/

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

/s/

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

/s/

Robert Menendez
United States Senator

/s/

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

/s/

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

/s/

Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator

/s/

Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator