June 8, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

We are a group of non-partisan organizations working together to protect our democracy. We are writing to thank you for your steadfast support for the Protecting Our Democracy Act, which would create guardrails to prevent the abuse of executive power, and restore Congress's ability to serve as the Constitution's framers intended: as a check and balance against executive overreach. This legislation would ensure that the President is not above the law.

The fight between Congress and the executive branch is a fight that is older than the partisan squabbles between Republican and Democratic Members. It is the same fight that the founders of our country waged against King George -- to prevent a government that was not accountable to the people of this country from making decisions about their lives, their businesses, and their freedoms.

When our Framers came together to form a country, they put in place protections against another, future king from rising up in his place: a system of checks and balances to prevent a single person from acting like a king and running the country all by themselves.

That system of checks and balances is over 230 years old. It has weaknesses that have grown more serious over time such that Congress cannot, under current law, serve as an effective check and balance against the President -- regardless of which party controls the Congress or which party controls the White House.

Over the last two centuries, Congress has yielded too much of its power in ways that are large and small. As a result, our democracy is vulnerable. We need Congress to pass the Protecting Our Democracy Act to put in place essential safeguards that prevent any President -- regardless of their party -- from abusing the power that has been entrusted to them.

No President, no matter how upstanding, should be able to evade the law, to bribe people with pardons, or to accept gifts from foreign governments without Congress's consent.

No President, no matter how principled, should be able to interfere in law enforcement without transparency or accountability.

No President, no matter how good their intentions, should be able to decide alone to declare an emergency and move millions of dollars from the program that Congress directed funds to, to another purpose entirely.

No President, no matter how competent at managing money, should be able to spend federal funds without providing Congress and the American people with basic information about when and how much of those funds are being allocated.

And no President should be able to punish those who keep them accountable, be they whistleblowers inside the executive branch or inspectors general who work with Congress to ensure compliance with the law.

Passing this essential legislation will ensure that no President will be above the law. We are encouraged at the recent hearings in the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, House Budget Committee, and House Judiciary Committee that provided advocates and experts with opportunities to talk about various pieces of the Protecting Our Democracy Act. We look forward to working with you, the Chairs of those Committees and the sponsors and supporters of legislation included in the Protecting Our Democracy Act in moving these important reforms forward this summer.

With sincere gratitude,

African American Ministers In Action
American Oversight
Blue Wave Postcard Movement
Brennan Center for Justice
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)
Clean Elections Texas
Common Cause
Demand Progress
DemCast USA
Democracy Fund Voice
Digital Democracy Project
End Citizens United/Let America Vote Action Fund
Equal Justice Society
Government Accountability Project
Greenpeace USA
Indivisible
MoveOn Civic Action
Open The Government
People For the American Way
Protect Democracy

Project On Government Oversight (POGO)
Public Citizen
RepresentUs New Mexico
Secure Elections Network
Stand Up America
The Workers Circle
Voices for Progress