

THIS LETTER IS NOW CLOSED. THANK YOU FOR THE SUPPORT!

You can add your name to this letter [here](#). A fact sheet is available [here](#). The current list of signers is [here](#).

—

Dear Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader Schumer, Chairman Shelby, and Ranking Member Klobuchar,

As former staff of the U.S. Congress, we urge you to promptly consider legislation to address sexual harassment on Capitol Hill.

On November 13, 2017, many of us signed a letter to you and your House counterparts advocating a variety of reforms to the ways in which Congress prevents, addresses, and adjudicates cases of harassment. We further expressed the need for increased transparency to better understand the scope of the problem and stated that existing policies were “inadequate and need reform.” In the months since our letter, a cascade of troubling news stories has only reinforced the urgent need for reform.

A CNN story from November 14, 2017, described accounts from fifty former staff or political veterans and reported that “with few exceptions, every person said they have personally experienced sexual harassment on the Hill or know of others who have.”¹ Many current and former staff have spoken publicly about their own experiences, often describing a climate of fear, a burdensome and confusing reporting process, and a system designed to protect congressional offices at the expense of victims.

As you know, on March 29, 2018, all twenty-two female Senators sent a letter to Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer stating:²

Survivors who have bravely come forward to share their stories have brought to light just how widespread harassment and discrimination continue to be throughout Capitol Hill. No longer can we allow the perpetrators of these crimes to hide behind a 23-year-old law.

¹Lee, M., Serfaty, S., Ganim, S., Summers, J. (2017, November 14). 'Nothing about it felt right': More than 50 people describe sexual harassment on Capitol Hill. *CNN*. Retrieved from <https://www.cnn.com/2017/11/14/politics/sexual-harassment-congress/index.html>

²Kurtzleben, D. (2018, March 28). All 22 Women Senators Call For Senate To Address Sexual Harassment. *NPR*. Retrieved from <https://www.npr.org/2018/03/28/597624784/all-22-women-senators-call-for-senate-to-address-sexual-harassment>

It's time to rewrite the Congressional Accountability Act and update the process through which survivors seek justice.

We agree. We were disappointed that these issues were not addressed in the recently-passed FY2018 Omnibus Appropriations bill. Now, we believe the Senate must act quickly to reform the Congressional Accountability Act and implement other essential measures to improve transparency, safety, and accountability.

Counseling and mediation should be made voluntary for individuals wishing to file a complaint with the Office of Compliance. Members of Congress and Chiefs of Staff should be made aware of their responsibility for preventing and reporting cases of sexual harassment and the OOC should have the authority to investigate complaints of abuse or harassment. Victims of harassment and abuse should be provided increased support through the adjudication process, and should be told that non disclosure agreements do not bar them from directly seeking relief.

In addition, some form of public disclosure should be required when offices enter into sexual harassment settlements, while ensuring the protection of victims' identities. And Congress should, every two years, survey Congressional staff in order to understand the rates of sexual harassment on Capitol Hill and determine the effectiveness of prevention and reporting programs. There are currently multiple proposals pending in the Senate which address some or all of these issues and have received bipartisan support.

We applaud both House and Senate leadership for taking quick action to require mandatory sexual harassment prevention training of all Members of Congress, Congressional staff, interns and fellows, and we look forward to the implementation of improved training protocols in all Capitol Hill offices. We were also pleased to see the House of Representatives pass a strong, bipartisan reform bill in February that included many of our priorities outlined above. We now urge the Senate to continue this momentum and pass legislation that will bring meaningful reform to the way Congress addresses sexual harassment and abuse in its own workplace.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

(The full list of signers is [here](#). We will use the below format to send the letter.)

Staff Name

Dates of Service in

Staff Name

Dates of Service in

	Congress		Congress
Travis Moore	2009-2015	Kristin Nicholson	1996-2017

Note: if you have been affected, there are resources available for you. You can talk to someone who can help at the National Sexual Assault Hotline, online.rainn.org or 800-656-HOPE.

Below are some additional resources:

- [RAINN / Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Stalking Resource Center](#)
- [Equal Rights Advocates](#)
- [EEOC / Sexual Harassment](#)