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Dear Colleague:

This week's election was not only historic but deeply meaningful in terms of the direction the American people would like for our country. Americans are concerned about the state of our country, particularly their economic security, and they have given Democrats a mandate to support their call for change. The current administration has been content to ignore, water down, or repeal the financial protections that have kept our constituents safe from another financial crisis. I believe that we must provide strong leadership when it comes to ensuring the financial well-being of all Americans. I am fully prepared to provide this leadership and request your support in serving as the first Chairwoman of the Committee on Financial Services.

At its core, the Committee on Financial Services is about creating opportunities, ensuring fairness, and protecting the economic well-being of all Americans. These are values that I intend to fight for as Chairwoman.

I will prioritize protecting consumers and investors from abusive financial practices, making sure that there are strong safeguards in place to prevent another financial crisis, expanding and supporting affordable housing opportunities, tackling the homelessness crisis, encouraging responsible innovation in financial technology, promoting diversity and inclusion in the financial services sector, working to strengthen our housing finance system, and ensuring that hardworking Americans and small businesses have fair access to the financial system and opportunities to thrive.

During the past six years, I have been on the front lines of pushing back against a rigid Republican ideology set on rolling back Wall Street reform and pursuing an anti-consumer, anti-investor, and anti-low and moderate-income family agenda. Despite the efforts of House Republicans and the Trump administration, I have been able to lead Committee Democrats in fighting back and in achieving legislative success.

I welcome the opportunity to continue the fight for consumers, investors, renters, homeowners, and the homeless into the 116th Congress as Chairwoman of the Committee.

For your consideration, I've included below a summary of the Committee's accomplishments during my tenure. I look forward to your support.

Sincerely,



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

Promoting a Democratic Agenda

As you know, in the Minority, we spend most of our time on the defensive. However, in my six years as Ranking Member, I have led Democrats in playing offense on several issues important to our nation.

Protecting America's Consumers

Since its creation as part of the Dodd-Frank Act, I have fought to protect and defend the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) from Republican efforts to weaken, delegitimize, and disrupt the CFPB and its rules. Republicans have passed numerous bills and amendments designed to change the leadership structure of the CFPB or to eliminate its independent funding.

I've led the fight in Congress against these attempts to take America's consumers back to the days of exploding mortgages, confusing credit cards, and predatory payday loans. As the CFPB prepared to take on the payday lending industry, I commissioned my staff to look at why state regulation of payday lenders has been insufficient. The report we produced found five examples of how payday lenders skirt state consumer laws and made the case for a strong federal standard.¹ I followed up on this report by leading over 100 Democrats in a letter to CFPB Director Richard Cordray asking for the Bureau to issue a strong rule on payday lending.

Following news that Wells Fargo Bank had illegally opened millions of consumer accounts without their customers' permission, I pressed Chairman Jeb Hensarling to hold a hearing on this important issue. At that hearing, it became clear not only that Wells Fargo was in need of new leadership—its CEO would resign several weeks later—but also that this fraud would have continued unabated if not for the CFPB.

When President Donald Trump illegally installed Mick Mulvaney, Director of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), at the CFPB following Cordray's departure, I led Democrats in filing friend of the court briefs in support of the congressional intent of Dodd-Frank. Mulvaney's very presence at the CFPB and his role at OMB compromises the critical independence of the agency.

In his time at the CFPB, Mulvaney has taken a series of actions that weaken the agency's ability to carry out its important mission, but benefit the predatory actors that the agency is designed to police, such as stripping the Office of Fair Lending of its enforcement and supervisory powers, helping payday lenders, grinding enforcement actions to a halt, and even disbanding the Consumer Advisory Boards. I and other leaders on the Committee introduced the Consumers First Act, H.R. 6972, to undo Mulvaney's anti-consumer changes that have undermined the CFPB. I am committed to putting consumers first by engaging in robust oversight of Mulvaney's actions at the CFPB and righting the many wrongs he has committed.

Strengthening Consumer Credit Reporting

Following the news that Equifax had experienced a cybersecurity breach that affected approximately 143 million consumers or nearly half of the U.S. population, Committee Republicans planned only a single hearing on the matter. In the 115th Congress, I successfully led the effort to secure a "minority day hearing" so

¹ See "Skirting the Law: Five Tactics Payday Lenders Use to Evade State Consumer Protection Laws," Committee on Financial Services, Democratic Staff Report, June 16, 2016.

http://democrats.financialservices.house.gov/uploadedfiles/06.15.2016_committee_report_skirtingthelaw_final.pdf

that Committee Democrats could select a panel of witnesses and consider and discuss ideas for ensuring the integrity of our country's consumer reporting system and safeguarding consumer data.

The last time Congress enacted comprehensive reform of this industry was well over 10 years ago. In that time, Americans' spending habits and the technology that enables them, have significantly changed. That is why I introduced legislation to finally make credit scoring fairer, more transparent, and more accurate. The bill, H.R. 3755, the Comprehensive Consumer Credit Reporting Reform Act, would fix the dispute process, shorten the amount of time bad information remains on a credit report, expand access to free credit reports and scores, restrict the use of credit reports for employment purposes, and impose other reforms. I believe that credit reporting reform and holding Equifax accountable for its massive breach are bipartisan issues that touch nearly every American and will be something my Committee will focus on in the next Congress.

Ending Homelessness and Addressing the Rental Housing Crisis

Affordable housing is a critical resource for family stability and for the reintegration of returning ex-offenders. Unfortunately, this country is experiencing a rental housing crisis and homelessness is on the rise. I have led the fight in the Committee for more targeted resources in addressing this problem. In the 115th Congress, I introduced H.R. 2076, the Ending Homelessness Act, which would provide \$13 billion in funding to end homelessness in America once and for all. I introduced H.R. 3160, the Public Housing Tenant Protection and Reinvestment Act, which would provide one-for-one replacement of public housing units, and fully fund public housing capital and operating funds, among other important reforms. In the 114th Congress, I also introduced legislation, H.R. 5085, the Fair Chance at Housing Act, which would remove barriers for ex-offenders to receive federal housing assistance.

Regulatory Relief for Community Banks and Credit Unions

Contrary to claims made by Republicans, Dodd-Frank was not responsible for the decline in the number of the nation's community banks and credit unions. In fact, since the enactment of Dodd-Frank, community banks are not only earning record profits but are outperforming their larger peers. Nevertheless, Democrats are concerned about preserving small community financial institutions. In the 114th Congress, I led Committee Democrats in introducing legislation, H.R. 2642, the Community Lender Regulatory Relief and Consumer Protection Act, which would provide much-needed regulatory relief to the nation's small banks and credit unions. I'm pleased to say that this bill was co-sponsored by every Committee Democrat; an identical bill was introduced in the Senate and co-sponsored by every Democrat on the Senate Banking Committee. Important provisions of this bill later became law.

Promoting Diversity in Financial Services

I authored the provision in Dodd-Frank that created the Offices of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI). Ensuring that the OMWIs are operating in an effective and transformative manner has been a priority for me and the Committee throughout the 113th, 114th, and 115th Congresses. To that end, I requested an Inspectors General audit of OMWI operations. Following the release of those IG reports, I directed my staff to compare each agency's diversity efforts. That staff report found that all of our financial

regulators are seriously challenged when it comes to diversity in their ranks and must do a better job of being more inclusive in their workforces.²

I also have convened roundtable discussions for Committee Democrats with the Directors of the OMWIs of financial services agencies to discuss their work to increase supplier diversity, workforce diversity, diversity policies and practices, and their success in reaching and influencing agency heads. Despite Republican lip service and false concern for the issues of inclusion and discrimination, Democrats, under my leadership, have maintained a robust interest in and support of these agencies and will continue to do so.

Holding Bad Actors Accountable

No one is above the law and financial institutions that engage in criminal behavior should be held accountable. When it was revealed that Wells Fargo opened millions of fraudulent bank accounts without their customers' knowledge or permission, and that Wells Fargo employees engaged in a routine practice of ripping off and preying on their customers, Americans were outraged. It became clear that Republicans would not hold Wells Fargo, or any big bank, accountable for its conduct. That is why, in the 115th Congress, I introduced H.R. 3937, the Megabank Accountability and Consequences Act, which would punish recidivist financial institutions, like Wells Fargo, that repeatedly engage in a pattern or practice of violations of federal banking and consumer protection laws and regulations, including by empowering banking regulators to revoke the institution's charter.

In the 114th Congress, I introduced H.R. 4242, the Holding Individuals Accountable and Deterring Money Laundering Act, which would strengthen America's anti-money laundering laws and give regulators enhanced civil powers to hold bank executives accountable for misconduct, including violations of sanctions and instances of money laundering that facilitates the drug trade.

I am committed to strong oversight and following the Trump money trail, starting with Deutsche Bank and suspicious activity reports (SARs) filed with the Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, or FinCEN. To date, I have joined with my subcommittee Ranking Members to write numerous letters to our regulators, Chairman Hensarling, and Deutsche Bank on this matter.

Panel Discussions and Briefings

Our Committee Chairman rarely grants requests for hearings. And when he does grant a request, he only grants us one witness. A creative way I found to circumvent his control of this process was to convene panel discussions and to hold briefings for Members and their staff. At these events, a diverse group of experts provided presentations on an issue, engaged in discussion with one another, and took questions from the audience. For example, I have hosted panel discussions on the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with its Managing Director, Madame Christine Lagarde; on expanding the diversity of asset managers of the nation's retirement assets; and on reducing payday lending with a panel of faith leaders, among other topics. I was also honored to host a panel discussion with actor, activist, and philanthropist Richard Gere on homelessness in America.

² See "The Dodd-Frank Act Five Years Later: Diversity in the Financial Services Agencies," Committee on Financial Services Democratic Staff Report, November 5, 2015. [http://democrats.financialservices.house.gov/uploadedfiles/fsc_dems - staff_report - dodd-frank five years later - diversity in the financial services agencies - final.pdf](http://democrats.financialservices.house.gov/uploadedfiles/fsc_dems_-_staff_report_-_dodd-frank_five_years_later_-_diversity_in_the_financial_services_agencies_-_final.pdf)

Developments in financial technology, or fintech, have the potential to expand access to credit for traditionally underserved or otherwise exploited communities. The possibilities for innovation to reach small businesses and vulnerable families are exciting but also cause for robust congressional scrutiny. That is why, I convened a roundtable with the CEOs of several leading fintech firms from across the country for a Member discussion of their developing technologies and to better understand potential gaps in oversight and regulation. I am committed to fostering innovation in a responsible and regulated way.

Working Across the Aisle

I am proud of the times I have been able to work across the aisle with my Republican colleagues. From national security to reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank, I have embraced opportunities to work in a bipartisan fashion to solve pressing, important issues before the Committee.

CFIUS Reform

The Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, or CFIUS, serves an important function in the national security area. This year, in the 115th Congress, I worked with Chairman Hensarling to pass the Foreign Investment Risk Review Modernization Act of 2018 (FIRRMA) – a bill to modernize and strengthen CFIUS to more effectively guard against the risk to U.S. national security posed by certain types of foreign investments. Working together with my fellow Democrats—especially Rep. Denny Heck—I was able to ensure that as our bipartisan House bill worked its way through the Senate and conference and was ultimately enacted into law, that it appropriately balanced the benefits of our traditionally open investment climate with the need to protect our national security, particularly from growing threats from Russia and China.

JOBS and Investor Confidence

This package of bills from the 115th Congress, often referred to as the third iteration of the Jumpstart Our Business Startups Act of 2012, was carefully crafted with strong bipartisan support. The bill, S. 488, includes 32 broadly bipartisan measures, 11 of which are led by Democrats, comprising more than one-third of the bill. Importantly, with my engagement, the provisions of S. 488 were closely reviewed and improved to ensure they were consistent with our central Democratic principles of supporting small businesses and protecting investors and consumers. I am proud that the bill passed the House with overwhelming bipartisan support.

Promoting Affordable Flood Insurance and Reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program

The long-term authorization for the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which provides flood insurance coverage for millions of Americans, has been stymied by right wing ideology. Chairman Hensarling doesn't believe in the program and made it clear that reauthorizing it would be an uphill battle for Democrats and those who understand the important role that this program plays in helping Americans to recover from flooding. I understood that the reauthorization of the NFIP was too important to leave until the last minute. That is why, in the 114th Congress, I started the conversation about how to move forward on NFIP early, meeting with Members and hearing their thoughts and concerns about the program beginning in 2016. I also introduced legislation, H.R. 5953, the National Flood Insurance Program Debt Forgiveness Act, which would forgive the \$23 billion in debt that was overburdening the program and the homeowners it serves. Although it was an out-of-the-box idea at the time, Republicans have come around to my advocacy on this front, passing

legislation to reduce the NFIP's debt by half. While this is not enough, this proves that creative thinking and persistence can pay off and this is an approach to policy that I will continue to take as Chairwoman in the Majority.

Reauthorizing the Export-Import Bank

The Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im), a proven job creator in Republican and Democratic districts, had been a non-controversial, yet essential part of our government's support for small businesses and American manufacturers. However, because of tea party intransigence, led by Chairman Hensarling, the charter for the bank became a flashpoint and even expired due to his obstinance. This expiration was simply unacceptable and I led the effort to fight back against it and reopen the Bank for business. Working with Whip Steny Hoyer, Subcommittee Ranking Member Gwen Moore, and Representative Denny Heck and Republican Reps. Frank Lucas and Stephen Fincher, we were able to execute a rarely used and highly complicated legislative maneuver—the discharge petition—to force a vote on an Ex-Im bill on the floor. The historic use of this petition put Democrats in charge of the House for one day. The reauthorization was subsequently included in H.R. 22, the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act and I worked with Republicans to defeat a series of 10 dangerous amendments that would have weakened the bill and further put the Bank at risk. The FAST Act was signed into law by President Barack Obama.

Fighting Back Against Republican Extremism

During these past six years, the Committee on Financial Services was not immune from the extremism of the Republican Party. Under my leadership, Democrats were able to push back against Republican attempts to undermine the Dodd-Frank Act and to weaken our financial markets.

Rejecting the “Wrong” CHOICE Act

In 2016, Chairman Hensarling unveiled a proposal to repeal major parts of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act. The Financial CHOICE Act, which Committee Democrats coined the “Wrong” CHOICE Act would repeal Dodd-Frank's orderly liquidation authority, the mechanism that prevents a financial institution's failure from bringing down the whole system; repeal the Volcker rule, which banned proprietary trading; repeal the Financial Stability Oversight Council's ability to identify risks at non-bank financial institutions; gut the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau; make all financial regulators subject to annual appropriations; impose burdensome cost-benefit analysis requirements on all financial regulations; and jeopardize the independence of the Federal Reserve. The Wrong CHOICE Act was clearly a giveaway to big banks and would have made our financial markets weaker and more susceptible to another crisis.

In the 114th Congress, I led Committee Democrats in opposing this misguided and harmful legislation. During the markup of this terrible bill, each Committee Democrat spoke in opposition to this bill and sounded a warning about how bad it would be for our financial markets, economy, consumers, and investors. After every Democrat had a chance to speak, we wrested control of the markup away from Committee Republicans by “moving the previous question,” thereby cutting off debate and bringing the bill up for an immediate vote. We did this because we all agreed that the Wrong CHOICE Act was so bad that it could not be fixed, amended, or changed in any way to make it better. All Democrats then voted against the bill. I'm proud to say that our messaging on this bill was so effective that one Republican joined us in opposition.

In the 115th Congress, I led Committee Democrats in convening a historic “minority day hearing” on the Wrong CHOICE Act, a parliamentary maneuver that had not been used successfully in our Committee in 20 years. A long list of witnesses, featuring Senator Elizabeth Warren, informed the public on the ways the Wrong CHOICE Act would harm consumers, investors, and the economy, and the ways the Dodd-Frank Act has improved accountability in the financial system and protected Americans from risky and predatory Wall Street practices.

I also led Committee Democrats in forcing a three-day, 28-hour markup including working with Members to offer dozens of amendments and drawing the public’s attention to the bill by using social media with the hashtags #WrongChoiceAct and #DemsTakeOver trending and going viral on Twitter. Ultimately, Democrats stayed united as a caucus with unanimous Democratic opposition in Committee and on the floor.

Protecting Retirees

Former Labor Secretary Tom Perez took bold action to protect America’s retirees and savers from conflicted investment advice that costs Americans \$17 billion a year. When Chairman Hensarling tried to repeal this long overdue rule, I led Democrats in pushing back. Before the Chairman’s markup, I brought Secretary Perez in to meet with Members of the Committee. The Secretary answered all of their questions and made sure their concerns were addressed. During the markup, all but one Democrat voted against the bill. And on the floor, I worked with leadership to make sure that we held our Democrats there as well. Only three Democrats voted in favor of the bill on the floor. And when the Republicans tried again to undo the rule with a resolution of disapproval, I worked with Democrats to make sure that the President’s veto of the resolution was sustained.

Protecting Homeownership

In the 113th Congress, while Chairman Hensarling proposed his radical PATH Act, which all Committee Democrats and even two Republicans opposed because it would have harmed our nation’s housing finance system, I worked with Committee Democrats on core principles that must be protected in any housing finance reform legislation. In keeping with these core principles, in the 114th Congress, I began work on common sense, responsible legislation that would preserve the 30-year-fixed rate mortgage, replace Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac with a new, cooperative-owned securities issuer, maintain the role of small financial institutions, and ensure access to affordable rental housing. Stakeholders ranging from the Center for Responsible Lending to the Independent Community Bankers Association released statements of support, noting that the proposal would enhance our nation’s commitment to affordable, accessible housing and preserve the role of our community financial institutions.

Achieving Legislative Success

I’m proud to have led the Committee these last six years. This Congress alone, the Committee has marked up over 140 bills and I have led Committee Democrats during each markup. In addition to making sure that Members’ concerns are heard during markup, that their amendments are considered, that there is ample opportunity for discussion of the Democratic perspective on legislation, and that parliamentary procedure is conducted in a fair manner, I also provide detailed vote recommendations to Committee Democrats, taking into consideration Member perspectives.

In the 115th Congress, I introduced 17 financial services bills. However, I have also worked with Committee Democrats to draft legislation they could introduce that addressed their key priorities. Some examples of the bills I provided to Members are:

- H.R. 6069, the Fight Illicit Networks and Detect Trafficking Act (Vargas), which passed the House on suspension by a voice vote;
- H.R. 6411, the FinCEN Improvement Act (Perlmutter), which passed the House on suspension by a voice vote;
- H.R. 6323, the National Senior Investor Initiative (Gottheimer), which passed the House as part of S.488;
- H.R. 6324, the Middle Market IPO Underwriting Cost Act (Himes), which passed the House as part of S. 488;
- H.R. 6321, the Investment Adviser Regulatory Flexibility Improvement Act (Moore); which passed the House as part of S. 488; and,
- H.R. 6322, the Enhancing Multi-Class Stock Disclosures Act (Meeks), which passed the House as part of S. 488.

Moreover, I was able to secure the enactment of several key pieces of legislation for Committee Members. Of note, several important pieces of regulatory relief for small financial institutions and capital formation provisions were signed into law as part of the FAST Act and in omnibus spending bills. In addition, we were able to finally reauthorize the Export-Import Bank and enact H.R. 3700, the Housing Opportunity through Modernization Act, which reformed and expanded several critical affordable housing programs serving the nation's low-income families. And, I am also proud of my work with Chairman Hensarling to enact legislation to strengthen CFIUS and more effectively guard against the risks foreign investments pose to U.S. national security.

As you can see, despite the obvious roadblocks, Committee Democrats have been very active and successful during these last six years. With Trump in the White House, I know that our fight for America's consumers and investors will continue to be challenging. But I am more than up to that fight. I look forward to leading this fight for the Committee's Democrats as Chairwoman in the 116th Congress.