

**CONGRESSMAN JOSH GOTTHEIMER**  
**REMARKS FOR COMMITTEE ON MODERNIZATION**  
**WASHINGTON, DC**  
**April 15, 2021**

Thank you, Chairman Kilmer and Vice-Chairman Timmons, for allowing me to speak today before the Select Committee on Modernization. We share a common goal of helping Congress work better, so that we can actually solve the problems facing our constituents and our nation.

I co-chair the House Problem Solvers Caucus with my good friend, Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick of Pennsylvania. We're a group of 29 Democrats and 29 Republicans who come together every week to do the unthinkable in this day and age: to find common ground. We get together because we are committed to the fundamental premise that country should always come before party — and that we are far better off when we work together to find a durable, bipartisan solution that moves our America forward. As we often say, that should just be called Congress.

The Problem Solvers Caucus is not perfect, and of course, we have our differences, as proud Democrats and Republicans always do. But, I think we have discovered an old value or ideal that was lost along the way — trust. By working together, day in and day out, we have developed real, trusting relationships and friendships, always treating one another with respect and civility, even when we disagree. We need more of that in Congress.

The Select Committee got it right in its final report last Congress when it recognized the need for Congress to take steps to proactively encourage bipartisanship. Items such as creating a bipartisan Members-only space in the Capitol to encourage more collaboration across party lines, instituting biennial bipartisan retreats for Members and their families at the start of each Congress, and establishing bipartisan committee staff briefings and agenda-setting retreats are some of the steps that we need to take as a body to work together better.

I also want to raise something the Committee also included in its report last year: the need to return to regular order.

With narrow majorities in the House and Senate, we need bipartisan support and solutions to get bills passed in both chambers and ultimately signed into law. The best way to do this is by having a deliberative and open process that promotes transparency and allows members to help shape legislation through committee hearings, markups, and floor amendments.

We should not be afraid to deliberate and debate.

As you know, in recent weeks, most bills have been fast-tracked to the House floor, bypassing committees; closed rules have constrained Members' ability to offer amendments and provide valuable input on issues that impact all our communities. This has created a rushed process with a lack of Member input and transparency, greatly limiting the potential for success in the Senate,

and it is also encouraging dilatory tactics from some in the minority party. A return to regular order will help end that approach, ensure the long-term functionality of the institution, and help prevent damage to the House.

We truly have the greatest country in the world and the American people deserve a Congress that's reflective of our great nation.

Thank you again for allowing me to speak today on these critical issues as we continue to help Congress work better.