

Statement for Rep. William Timmons (SC-04)
House Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on the
Legislative Branch
Member Day, May 18, 2022

Chairman Ryan and Ranking Member Herrera Beutler, thank you for hosting today's Member Day hearing and thank you for your leadership.

I am here today to talk about some of the recommendations the Select Committee on the Modernization of Congress has made to make Congress a more effective and efficient institution. I serve as Vice Chair of the Select Committee, alongside Chair Derek Kilmer. We work as partners to identify problems and develop solutions to make Congress work better for the American people.

I'm proud of what the Select Committee has accomplished since its inception in the 116th Congress. We've proven that it's possible for Members from both sides of the aisle to sit down together, engage in tough but productive discussions, listen and learn from one another, and ultimately find bipartisan solutions to the challenges we all face. The Committee has passed 142 recommendations to improve the way Congress works and has overseen implementation progress on over two-thirds of those recommendations. I want to reiterate the importance of our partners in the House, including this subcommittee, for leading on modernizing the House.

I also want to highlight your subcommittee's leadership in investing in the staff who make this place work. Expert staff ensure the House is able to carry out its Article One and oversight responsibilities. With the amount of money we send to the executive branch every year, it makes sense to make the small investment in staff to assist us in overseeing how that money is spent. Enhancing compensation for committee

interns and the recent increase to the Members' Representational Allowance send the message that we are building out our capacity to represent our constituents.

Today I want to join Chair Kilmer in highlighting some of the Select Committee's recommendations that we think should be supported. A modern Congress is one that's well equipped to serve the American people and we think that's worthy of continued support.

I first want to underscore the importance of the Modernization Initiatives Account. This flexible account is important for implementing initiatives to make the House more transparent and accessible. Enhanced funding may help support the Clerk's office in providing committee staff with modern tools to help deconflict Members' schedules while we're in session.

We can do our best work when we are getting the best information possible from legislative support agencies. Providing the direction and support needed for the Library of Congress to produce nonpartisan summaries of bills before they receive votes would help us as Members be informed when we vote. If support agencies are encountering challenges accessing the data they need to do their work, they should be directed to report regularly on these challenges and on any actions Congress can take to support their efforts. These agencies also need to ensure their products, services, and outreach are designed to meet the needs of an evolving Congress.

This subcommittee can also promote civility and bipartisanship through report language. In particular, directing the Architect of the Capitol to explore bipartisan co-working spaces for staff, along with encouraging the Chief Administrative Officer to build out curricula centered on civility and collaboration as part of the Congressional Leadership and

Staff Academies, can help generate a more productive work environment.

The requests that the Chair and I submitted to you last month advance Select Committee recommendations that will make Congress work better for the American people, and I believe that's a worthy investment. I appreciate your consideration of these requests and am happy to provide additional information to support your work.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before the subcommittee today.