

Thank you, Chairman McConnell. I look forward to working with you and all the Members of the Rules Committee in this new role as Ranking Member.

I also want to thank Senators Klobuchar and Fischer for their leadership last Congress — including making key security improvements here at the Capitol following the January 6th insurrection.

This Committee has a long history of working across party lines in support of the Senate and the legislative branch. Today I am committed to continuing that tradition with Chairman McConnell.

While the Capitol and Senate buildings may be our workplaces, ultimately, they belong to the American people. Americans spend their time and money — some traveling thousands of miles — to visit and exercise their First Amendment rights. For Americans from states red, blue, and purple, this Capitol means more than politics: it's the embodiment of our democracy. It is our responsibility to maintain and secure the Capitol for them.

Today's action on the committee funding resolution for the 119th Congress gives us an early opportunity to come together. And while I wish we were able to provide more funding in certain instances, I am pleased that we worked in a bipartisan fashion on this effort.

But in addition to our responsibilities to the administration of both the buildings and rules that allow this body to run, our Committee also plays a central role in our democracy — overseeing federal elections and campaign finance.

### **Election Administration**

As California's former Secretary of State, I know the importance of defending free and fair elections. I will always work to preserve voter access, protect election workers, ensure election security, and provide critical funding to the states.

Over the years, Congress has invested resources to help states start to modernize their election systems, but we have failed to provide the reliable funding that is needed. I hope we can find bipartisan consensus to help states and local governments manage the growing challenges of running elections.

Unfortunately, just a few weeks in, the current Administration is taking a blowtorch to election security. Already, the Department of Justice has disbanded the Federal Bureau of Investigation's foreign election interference task force while the Department of Homeland Security is removing election security specialists at the Cybersecurity & Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA).

And now, President Trump and Elon Musk have sent DOGE's inexperienced, unqualified staff — with a history of leaking security information and cybercrime — to CISA. Despite our inquiries and DOGE's claims of transparency, this Committee and the public have no real information about the goals of this interference. And state and local election officials are losing the critical election security support that Congress has directed CISA to provide.

It is my hope that moving forward, members on this committee from both parties will join me in strengthening election security — not weakening it.

### **Campaign Finance**

At the same time, Americans overwhelmingly support efforts to roll back the tide of unregulated and secret money in politics. They are tired of their voices being drowned out by unlimited spending from corporations and billionaires. Yet today, an unelected billionaire who spent over 270 million dollars on the 2024 election sits in the Oval Office, issuing policy directives and accessing federal contracts and regulatory favors.

The Citizens United decision was a complete disaster that continues to damage our democracy and must be repealed. Until then, Congress and the Federal Election Commission (FEC) should uphold the law and improve what we can.

Unfortunately, President Trump is trying to destroy what few guardrails we have left. He illegally fired the Chair of the FEC and issued an Executive Order that gives White House operatives control over the FEC and other independent agencies. Congress created agencies like the FEC to follow the law independent of political pressure — not to be tools for handing out political favors or retribution on behalf of the White House.

The FEC was created over 50 years ago following Watergate. Now, President Trump is opening the floodgates for a new golden age of corruption. As a committee, we must work to stop these power grabs before more damage is done.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

###