

January 3, 2017

Dear Representative:

Our organizations have written today to House Speaker Ryan strongly opposing the Goodlatte proposal that has been incorporated into the proposed House rules and that would eviscerate the Office of Congressional Ethics (OCE).

OCE is the only institution in the House that has successfully enforced the House ethics rules and, through its presence, has served to deter ethics violations by House members. The fact that the irresponsible Goodlatte proposal has been adopted without public notice and by a sneak attack makes it all the more indefensible.

Our organizations, listed on the enclosed letter to Speaker Ryan, strongly urge you to vote to remove the Goodlatte proposal from the House rules. If the proposal is not removed from the House rules we urge you to vote against adopting the rules.

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January 3, 2017

Dear House Speaker Ryan,

The proposal offered by House Judiciary Chairman Bob Goodlatte and adopted by the House Republican conference yesterday will eviscerate the Office of Congressional Ethics. The proposal would gut the only institution in the House that has successfully enforced the House ethics rules and, through its presence, has served to deter ethics violations by House members.

The Goodlatte proposal will serve as an open invitation to members to violate the House ethics rules without concern that they will be held accountable for their improper conduct. The fact that this irresponsible proposal has been adopted by House Republicans without public notice and by a sneak attack makes it all the more indefensible.

This is the worst possible way for you to start your first full term as speaker of the house and for new representatives to begin their service in Congress.

We strongly oppose the Goodlatte proposal and urge that it be removed from the House rules to be considered today. If it is not removed we urge that the House rules be opposed until it is removed.

If you are opposed to the Goodlatte proposal, then we call on you to exercise your powers as speaker to open the House rules today to allow a separate vote on removing the Goodlatte proposal from the rules. Otherwise, you will also be responsible for the destruction of the Office of Ethics and of ethics enforcement in the House.

Signers to this letter include:

Democracy 21  
Anna Manual  
Brennan Center for Justice  
Campaign Legal Center  
Center for American Progress  
Center for Media and Democracy  
Center for Responsive Politics  
Common Cause  
Communication Workers of America  
CREW  
Demand Progress  
Demos  
Free Speech For People  
Gary D. Bass  
Issue One  
Jim Thurber  
Kathleen Clark  
League of Women Voters  
Mayday  
National Legal and Policy Center  
Every Voice  
Norman Eisen  
Norman Orenstein  
OpenTheGovernment.org  
People For the American Way  
Project On Government Oversight (POGO)  
Public Citizen  
Represent.Us  
Richard Painter  
Robert Reich  
Sunlight Foundation  
The Agenda Project  
The Patriotic Millionaires  
Thomas Mann  
Transparency International – USA  
U.S. PIRG