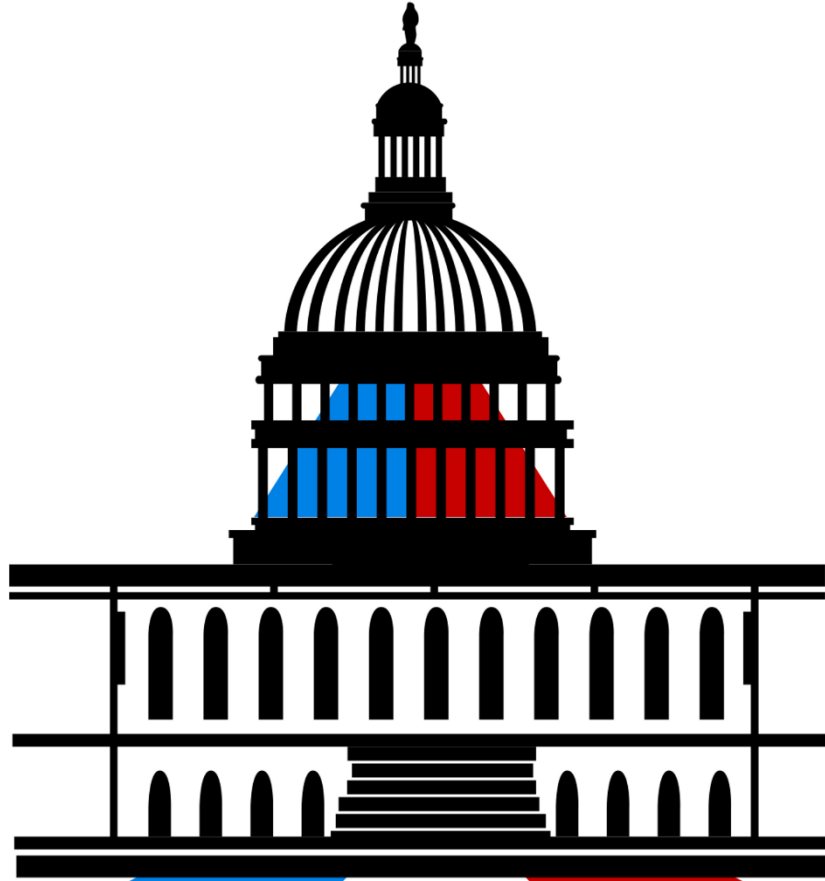


Hon. Tom Reed (NY) and Hon. Josh Gottheimer (NJ)

# Break the Gridlock



**Problem  
Solvers  
Caucus**



# **BREAK THE GRIDLOCK**

## ***A Package of Reforms to Make the House Work Again for the American People***

For nearly two years, the Members of the Problem Solvers Caucus have worked together finding bipartisan agreement on the toughest issues facing Congress: they proposed a health care compromise to stabilize the individual marketplace, an agreement on our nation’s DREAMERS and border security, support for gun and school safety legislation, and recommendations for a bipartisan infrastructure package.

However, their progress and bipartisan cooperation as a whole have been stifled because of House Rules that enable a few Members to hold most of the power.

To make the House work again for the American People, the Problem Solvers Caucus is proposing the “Break the Gridlock” draft proposal, which will be used to help build consensus around rule changes ahead of January.

The following Members have agreed to the goals and proposals within:

- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Rep. Ami Bera CA-7          | Rep. Stephanie Murphy FL-7   |
| Rep. Salud Carbajal CA-24   | Rep. Rick Nolan MN-8         |
| Rep. Jim Costa CA-16        | Rep. Tom O'Halleran AZ-1     |
| Rep. Mike Coffman CO-6      | Rep. Jimmy Panetta CA-20     |
| Rep. Carlos Curbelo FL-26   | Rep. Scott Peters CA-52      |
| Rep. Debbie Dingell MI-12   | Rep. Jared Polis CO-2        |
| Rep. Elizabeth Esty CT-5    | Rep. Tom Reed NY-23          |
| Rep. John Faso NY-19        | Rep. Jacky Rosen NV-3        |
| Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick PA-8 | Rep. Brad Schneider IL-10    |
| Rep. Mike Gallagher WI-8    | Rep. Kurt Schrader OR-5      |
| Rep. Vicente Gonzalez TX-15 | Rep. Kyrsten Sinema AZ-9     |
| Rep. Josh Gottheimer NJ-5   | Rep. Lloyd Smucker PA-16     |
| Rep. James Himes CT-4       | Rep. Darren Soto FL-9        |
| Rep. Derek Kilmer WA-6      | Rep. Thomas Suozzi NY-3      |
| Rep. David Joyce OH-14      | Rep. Dave Trott MI-11        |
| Rep. John Katko NY-24       | Rep. Fred Upton MI-6         |
| Rep. Leonard Lance NJ-7     | Rep. Peter Welch VT-At Large |
| Rep. Daniel Lipinski IL-3   | Rep. Kevin Yoder KS-3        |



## **Goal I:**

Encourage and reward consensus driven governing.

## **Proposals:**

1. To prevent the Speaker from being held hostage by a small fraction of his/her party, replace the rule allowing a "Motion to Vacate the Chair" with a public petition process that must be signed by 1/3 of the House Members to earn privileged consideration on the floor and a majority (218 votes) of the whole House to successfully remove the Speaker from the position.
2. Ensure that the party ratios on all Committees (excluding Ethics which shall remain equally divided, but including Rules, Intelligence, and all Joint and Select Committees) reflect the party ratio of the entire House.
3. Require a 3/5 supermajority, of those present and voting, for passage and consideration of legislation under closed rules. The remaining legislation should be open or structured.
4. Require any structured rule to have at least one germane amendment from each party, if offered, which means that at least one amendment offered by a representative from each party shall not contain in advance any waiver of germane points of order against its consideration.



## Goal II:

Foster passage of member initiatives solving constituent priorities.

## Proposals:

5. To encourage Committee and floor consideration of Member initiatives, establish a fast-track procedure to enable bipartisan legislation and amendments to receive priority consideration as follows:
  - a. Any legislative bill (not resolution) that gains at least 2/3 cosponsors (290 Members) or a majority of Members of each party, must be marked up by its relevant Committees and reported to the Rules Committee within 30 legislative days of receiving its 290th cosponsor. The Rules Committee shall report a rule unless the majority +1 of the entire Committee rejects the rule. This will ensure that legislation with broad support gets appropriate Committee and floor consideration.
  - b. Any germane amendment offered to a bill with a structured rule that has at least 20 Republican and 20 Democrat cosponsors must be allowed floor consideration by the Rules Committee. This will ensure that amendments with wide bipartisan appeal get due consideration on the floor.
  - c. Ensure Committee-passed bills get to the floor by providing for privileged consideration of bills passed out of Committee after a gestation period. The Rules Committee shall report a rule unless the majority +1 of the entire Committee rejects the rule.



6. Once per session, all Members of Congress shall be granted a markup on at least one piece of legislation, as designated by the Member, that has at least one cosponsor from the opposite party and is referred to a Committee on which they serve.
7. Establish a bipartisan annual joint meeting at the U.S. Capitol at the beginning of each Congress to discuss the term's legislative agenda and help encourage bipartisan cooperation.

### **Goal III:**

Increase accountability & transparency.

### **Proposals:**

8. Require a minimum of a three-business-day notice of a Committee markup, unless the Committee Chairman and ranking minority member agree to a different schedule. (This is meant to keep the minority from being unduly surprised with short notice to prepare, and is in reference to House Rule X1, Clause 2(g)(4)).
9. Require a majority vote on all Committees to enable the Chair to waive jurisdiction over legislation that has been assigned to the Committee by the Parliamentarian.

### **Goal IV:**

Elect a Speaker that is representative of the entire body.

### **Proposal:**

10. The election of the Speaker of the House requires an absolute majority of all Members of the House, regardless of whether they are present.