DISTRICT WORK PERIOD PACKET
H.R. 1, THE FOR THE PEOPLE ACT

This November, the American people went to the polls and resoundingly rejected the culture of corruption in Washington. They elected an historic Democratic House majority built on candidates who promised to restore our broken democracy, and restore openness, transparency and unity to Congress. House Democrats are ready to deliver that promise and show Americans that we are For the People on Day One, with H.R. 1: a bold, transformative set of reforms to strengthen our democracy and return political power to the people. With this legislation, Democrats will make it easier, not harder, to vote; end the dominance of big money in our politics; and ensure public officials work for the public interest.
# Table of Contents

- **Main H.R. 1 Talking Points** ........................................................................................................ 3
- **Key H.R. 1 Policies** ..................................................................................................................... 4
- **The Case for Reform: Fixing Money in Politics** ................................................................. 6
- **The Case for Reform: Voting Rights and Election Integrity** ...................................... 8
- **The Case for Reform: Ethics and Accountability** ............................................................. 10
- **H.R. 1 Social Media Guidance** .............................................................................................. 12
- **Sample Video Script** .................................................................................................................. 15
- **Sample Op-Ed: H.R. 1 At a Glance** ....................................................................................... 17
- **Sample Op-Ed & Talking Points: H.R. 1 and the Environment** ...................................... 19
- **Sample Op-Ed & Talking Points: H.R. 1 and Prescription Drugs** .................................... 23
- **Sample Op-Ed & Talking Points: H.R. 1 and Working Families** ....................................... 27
- **Sample Op-Ed & Talking Points: H.R. 1 and Civil Rights** ................................................. 31
- **Town Hall in a Box** .................................................................................................................. 35

★★★★
MAIN H.R. 1 TALKING POINTS

- H.R. 1 is a once-in-a-generation reform package that will restore the promise of American democracy and repair our democratic institutions.

- This comprehensive set of democracy and anti-corruption reforms will achieve three key, urgently-needed reforms:
  1) Make it easier, not harder, to vote;
  2) End the dominance of big money in our politics; and
  3) Enact tougher standards to fight corruption in politics and ensure that our nation’s public officials work for the people.

- Democrats will build a democracy that actually works for the people, because when we do, government can deliver results in Americans’ lives.

- Democrats will end the special-interest agenda in Washington, and give regular Americans a seat at the table, so we can drive progress for every family, in every community:
  - Raising wages and creating millions of well-paying jobs.
  - Lowering prescription drug prices and giving people better, more affordable options for health care.
  - Making bold, job-creating investments in green, sustainable infrastructure.
  - Providing a pathway to good-paying jobs with lifetime learning, on-the-job training initiatives and better access to high-quality education.
  - Taking strong, visionary action against the climate crisis.
  - Bringing universal high-speed internet to every corner of the country, including rural America
  - Cracking down on corporate monopolies and truly protecting American consumers from fraud and abuse at the hands of big banks, Big Pharma and big corporations.
KEY H.R. 1 POLICIES

Make it easier, not harder, to vote.

• **Improve Access** – H.R. 1 expands access to the ballot box by taking aim at institutional barriers to voting, such as patchwork and cumbersome registration systems, disenfranchisement and limited voting hours, which create major roadblocks to a more participatory democracy. H.R. 1 will create automatic voter registration across the country; ensure that individuals who have completed felony sentences have their full rights restored; expand early voting and simplify absentee voting; and modernize the U.S. voting system.

• **Promote Integrity** – H.R. 1 commits Congress to build the record necessary to restore the Voting Rights Act; prohibits voter roll purges like those seen in Ohio, Georgia and elsewhere; and ends partisan gerrymandering to prevent politicians from picking their voters.

• **Ensure Security** – H.R. 1 ensures that American elections are decided by American voters without interference by enhancing federal support for voting system security, particularly paper ballots, increasing oversight over election vendors, and requiring the development of a national strategy to protect U.S. democratic institutions.

End the dominance of big money in our politics.

• **Guarantee Disclosure** – H.R. 1 shines a light on dark money in politics by upgrading online political ad disclosure and requiring all organizations involved in political activity to disclose their large donors. H.R. 1 also breaks the so-called ‘nesting-doll’ sham that allows big-money contributors and special interests to hide the true funding source of their political spending.

• **Empower Citizens** – H.R. 1 gives political power to everyday Americans, creating a multiple matching system for small donations, thereby allowing the American people to exercise their due influence in our politics. This new 21st century system of citizen-
owned elections will break special interests’ stranglehold on Congress and lay the groundwork for an agenda that serves the American people. H.R. 1 also reaffirms that Congress should have the authority to regulate money in politics, pushing back on the wrong-headed Citizens United and Buckley decisions by the Supreme Court.

- **Strengthen Oversight** – H.R. 1 ensures that there are cops on the campaign finance beat that will enforce the laws on the books. H.R. 1 tightens rules on super PACs and restructures the Federal Election Commission to break the gridlock and enhance its enforcement mechanisms. It also repeals Mitch McConnell’s riders that prevent government agencies from requiring commonsense disclosure of political spending.

**Ensure public officials work for the public interest.**

- **Fortify Ethics Law** – H.R. 1 breaks the influence economy in Washington and increases accountability by expanding conflict of interest law and divestment requirements, slowing the revolving door, preventing Members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and requiring presidents to disclose their tax returns.

- **Impose Greater Ethics Enforcement** – H.R. 1 gives teeth to federal ethics oversight by overhauling the Office of Government Ethics, closing loopholes for lobbyists and foreign agents, ensuring watchdogs have sufficient resources to enforce the law and creating a code of ethics for the Supreme Court.
THE CASE FOR REFORM
FIXING MONEY IN POLITICS

The Need for Reform

- In a recent poll, respondents were asked to identify the cause for the dysfunction in Washington. Americans overwhelmingly named two main culprits: money in politics (96%) and wealthy political donors (94%).¹

- Political scientists Benjamin I. Page and Martin Gilens found after extensive quantitative study measuring public sentiment and federal policy outcomes that “Economic elites and interest groups can shape U.S. government policy — but Americans who are less well-off have essentially no influence over what their government does.”²

- From 1986-2016, the average cost of a winning campaign for the House of Representatives nearly doubled from $787,418 to $1,516,021 in inflation-adjusted dollars.

- Outside campaign spending increased to $1.4 billion in the 2016 elections, a ten-fold increase over the 2008 elections, while the 2018 midterms saw $1.1 billion in outside spending, more than double the 2014 midterms.³

- Each of the last four election cycles has seen at least $140M in outside spending by groups that don’t disclose their donors.⁴

- The Federal Election Commission deadlocked on 30% of substantive votes in 2016; in 2006, that number was 2.9 percent.⁵

⁴ Open Secrets. “Political Nonprofits (Dark Money),” Center for Responsive Politics.
How H.R. 1 Delivers

- H.R. 1’s campaign finance reforms rest on three pillars: shining a light on dark money, empowering everyday Americans to exercise their political power and giving campaign finance watchdogs the tools to enforce the laws on the books.

- H.R. 1 requires all organizations spending money in our political system to disclose major donors, preventing big-money contributors from hiding their political spending in webs of so-called “social welfare” organizations.

- H.R. 1 extends “stand by your ad” disclosures to more organizations and corporations.

- H.R. 1 creates a 6-1 matching system for small contributions to House candidates who refuse big donations and traditional PAC contributions. This will empower everyday Americans and allows candidates to run for office without depending on the usual set of wealthy and well-connected donors to finance their campaigns.

- H.R. 1 overhauls the Federal Election Commission, the impotence of which has allowed for flagrant violations of the campaign finance laws on the books.
THE CASE FOR REFORM
VOTING RIGHTS AND ELECTION INTEGRITY

The Need for Reform

• The United States ranks 26th out of 32 OECD countries in voter turnout.6

• Since 2010, 25 states have enacted new, significant restrictions on voting, including 14 with restrictive voter ID laws, 12 with new restrictions on registration and seven with shortened or eliminated early voting.7

• In the first post-Shelby election cycle, 16 million voters were removed from rolls across the country, a 33 percent increase over the previous election cycle – and states formerly subject to the Voting Rights Act’s preclearance provisions purged at significantly higher rates than others.6

• A federal government analysis found that voter ID laws cause a 2-3 percent reduction in election participation,9 while the premier study of voter impersonation fraud found only 31 instances of fraud among more than one billion cast ballots.10

• Between 2012 and 2016, majority-minority urban counties saw an average loss of seven polling stations and 200 poll workers, while counties that are at least 90% white lost an average of two polling places and two workers.11

• 43 states have vulnerable voting systems, while 33 will need to replace voting systems before 2020 – most of which do not currently have the funding to do so.12

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7 New Voting Restrictions in America,” Brennan Center for Justice.
How H.R. 1 Delivers

- H.R. 1 dismantles systemic, discriminatory barriers to voting by ending the indiscriminate purging of eligible voters from the rolls; restoring voting rights to individuals who have completed prison sentences; and allowing voters discriminated against by strict ID laws to cast ballots with an affidavit.

- H.R. 1 makes it easier to participate in our democracy by establishing automatic voter registration, expanding no-excuse absentee voting, requiring 15 consecutive days of early voting and treating Election Day like a national holiday.
THE CASE FOR REFORM
ETHICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Need for Reform

- 75 percent of Americans have little to no confidence in elected officials to act in the best interest of the public.\(^\text{13}\)

- The U.S. government is falling short of the public’s expectations for transparency—96 percent of Americans believe open and transparent government is important to the country, but only 30 percent believe government is actually transparent.\(^\text{14}\)

- 83 percent of Americans feel that it is very important that elected officials face consequences for misconduct, but only 30 percent believe they actually do.\(^\text{15}\)

- More than 160 former lobbyists have worked for the current Administration, while nearly 20 former Administration officials have become lobbyists after leaving public service.\(^\text{16}\)

- While subject to cooling-off periods before they can lobby directly, former members of Congress are increasingly joining lobbying firms as “consultants” or “strategic advisors” – 52.6 percent and 46.2 percent of departing members of the 113th and 114th Congresses, respectively, joined lobbying firms after leaving office.\(^\text{17}\)

- 63 percent of voters support the release of President Trump’s tax returns.\(^\text{18}\)

How H.R. 1 Delivers

- Revamps the Office of Government Ethics to ensure strong enforcement of federal ethics laws.

- Closes registration loopholes for lobbyists and former members of Congress.

- Cracks down on the revolving door by ending incentive payments for private sector employees to join the regulators overseeing their employers.

- Creates a cooling-off period during which federal employees cannot award contracts to former employees.

- Requires Presidents and Vice Presidents to divest from business holdings and release their tax returns to guard against conflicts of interest.

- Increases disclosure requirements for political appointees and requires recusal from issues for which they have conflicts of interest.

- Prohibits members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and from members of Congress using public funds to pay harassment or discrimination settlements.
H.R. 1 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE

GRAPHICS

Facebook

• It’s time to rescue our democracy. @HouseDemocrats’ first action in the new Congress was to introduce #HR1 – the most ambitious set of democracy reforms in a generation. We will clean up Washington and return power to the people!

• This past election, voters resoundingly rejected the GOP’s special interest agenda and elected a new wave of Democrats to end the #CultureOfCorruption in Washington. As our first order of business, @HouseDemocrats introduced and will quickly pass #HR1 – a bold reform package that will save and strengthen our democracy #ForThePeople.

• I joined @HouseDemocrats in introducing #HR1 – our plan to put an end to unaccountable “dark money,” empower hard-working Americans, multiply the power of small donors, and stop wealthy special interests from buying votes and influence!

• I joined @HouseDemocrats in introducing #HR1 – our plan to make it easier, not harder, to vote. H.R. 1 will end the days of long lines, shoddy voting machines, shady voter suppression schemes, and Republican efforts to purge voter rolls. Our bill will lay the groundwork for restoring the Voting Rights Act, establish automatic national voter registration, and end partisan gerrymandering.

• I joined @HouseDemocrats in introducing #HR1 – our plan to make politicians serve the public interest, not the special interests! We will create new ethical standards across all three branches of government and crack down on corruption in Washington!

• With special interests out of the way, and with a government that actually works #ForThePeople, we can deliver the change that people want to see.

We can: [INSERT ANY ISSUE, EXAMPLES BELOW]
- Raise wages and create millions of good-paying jobs.
- Lowering prescription drug costs and improve access to world-class medical treatment.
- Make real investments in our infrastructure and fix our highways, ports, air travel and bridges.
- Increase pathways to high-quality education.
- End LGBTQ discrimination and pass the Equality Act.
- Reforming our nation’s broken immigration system and pass the Dream Act.
- Establish universal high-speed internet and protect #NetNeutrality.
- Protect the financial interests and well-being of American consumers.

Twitter

- Republicans broke our democracy. Democrats will fix it. #HR1 #ForThePeople
- Americans have had enough of the #CultureOfCorruption in Washington. It’s time to clean this place up and return to government of, by and #ForThePeople! #HR1
- Republicans have spent the last two years rewarding wealthy donors and special interests while leaving American families behind. That ends now. I introduced #HR1 – a once-in-a-generation reform bill to clean up Washington once and for all.
- I joined @HouseDemocrats in introducing #HR1 – our plan to end the dominance of big money in our politics. #ForThePeople
- I joined @HouseDemocrats in introducing #HR1 – our plan to make it easier, not harder to vote. #ForThePeople
• I joined @HouseDemocrats in introducing #HR1 – our plan to make public servants actually serve the public. #ForThePeople

• #HR1 will push special interests out of the way and allow us to take action on a whole host of important issues, like [INSERT ISSUE].
  
  o Raising wages and create millions of good-paying jobs.

  o Lowering prescription drug costs and improve access to world-class medical treatment.

  o Making real investments in our infrastructure and fixing our highways, ports, air travel and bridges.

  o Increasing pathways to high-quality education.

  o Ending LGBTQ discrimination and pass the Equality Act.

  o Reforming our nation’s broken immigration system and passing the Dream Act.

  o Establishing universal high-speed internet and protecting #NetNeutrality.

  o Protecting the financial interests and well-being of American consumers.
Hello.

This is [CONGRESSMAN/CONGRESSWOMAN] [NAME], and I proudly represent [STATE/DISTRICT].

The election results this November give me so much hope that together we can restore America’s future. And now that Members of the new 116th Congress are sworn in and hard at work, that will be our focus – to fight for our children's future, and for the future of working families across our country.

Voters spoke loudly and clearly this past November: they want a government that is responsible, ethical and is truly of and for the people. It is with that message and directive in mind that the Democratic Majority will make restoring our democracy H.R. 1.

First, Democrats will ensure that everyone has the equal opportunity and ability to vote. For too long, we have seen insidious efforts to prevent certain types of voters from being able to participate in our democracy – whether it’s by creating barriers to registration or shutting down polling places. And the consequence is that too many Americans do not have an equal say in their own government. That ends with passage of the HR 1. We will work to not only create national automatic voter registration, but also expand access to early voting and absentee ballots, and bolster in-person voting. Here in Colorado – where we've taken many of these same steps – we've seen record-breaking voter participation. It’s long past time to make the same reforms at the national level too. Voting is one of our most important civil rights, which is why we will also seek to build the case to restore the Voting Rights Act. Put simply, every voter matters, and every vote must count.

Second, Democrats will end the dominance of big money in our politics and stop it from drowning out the voices of regular citizens. Right now, wealthy and well-connected special interests get special access and influence in Washington thanks to head-spinning campaign contributions. H.R. 1 will bring secret money out of the shadows and, critically, it will create a bold 21st-Century campaign finance system that will amplify small donors and allow candidates to run and win without having to rely on big money.
Third, Democrats will clean up the culture of corruption in Trump’s Washington and ensure that public officials actually serve the public. In unprecedented fashion, the past two years, have clearly demonstrated what happens when public servants attempt to enrich themselves at the public’s expense. We’ve seen the weakening of consumer protections, environmental protections, and whole host of other safeguards. H.R. 1 will strengthen ethics laws across all three branches of government and make sure that when voters send someone to Washington, they are serving the public and not themselves.

H.R. 1 will be the bedrock of everything we do over the next two years. It will allow us to get to work for the people and do big things, like lower health costs and prescription drug prices, raise paychecks, rebuild our infrastructure and fight climate change.

But we know that first we must restore trust, faith and transparency in our government, and remind Americans that this government truly belongs to you. The Democratic Majority is going to do just that, and HR 1 is the first step in that process.
SAMPLE OP-ED
(H.R. 1 at a Glance)

Democrats Will Restore the Promise of Our Democracy

Across the political spectrum, hardworking Americans are exasperated with a government that’s out of touch with their needs. They watch from the bleachers as the Republican Administration and Republican-controlled Congress reward wealthy donors and well-connected special interests, while leaving ordinary American families behind. Whether it’s providing massive giveaways to the fossil fuel industry, blocking efforts to lower the costs of prescription drugs, eroding workers’ rights or tearing down critical consumer protections, it’s clear that our political system does not put the public’s interests first.

That’s why Democrats have made an important promise to the American people: we will clean up the chaos and corruption in Washington, fix this rigged system and fight for the people.

Despite Republican-led efforts across the country to draw gerrymandered congressional districts, flood our politics with special-interest money and suppress the vote, the American people elected a wave of Democratic candidates who are committed to unrigging our broken political system and making it more responsive to the public. And in the early days of 2019, the new Democratic majority in the U.S. House of Representatives will deliver on that promise. On Day 1, we will introduce H.R. 1 – a sweeping anti-corruption and democracy reform package that will return us to government of, by and for the people.

First, we will rein in the influence of big money in our politics. That means bringing more transparency to our campaign finance system to prevent billionaires and corporations from hiding their political spending through shadowy organizations and empowering everyday Americans with a powerful new system for citizen-owned elections that amplifies the power of small donors. Importantly, this matching system for small donations allows everyday Americans to compete with the big-money crowd without running afoul of the Supreme Court’s decisions in cases like Citizens United.
Second, we will make sure that public servants serve the public, not themselves. That means strengthening ethics across all three branches of government by extending conflicts of interest rules to Presidents and Vice Presidents and requiring the release of their tax returns; prohibiting Members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and closing loopholes that allow them to evade lobbying restrictions; and establishing a code of ethics for the justices of the Supreme Court. We will also tighten disclosure requirements around lobbyists of foreign interests and end the practice of corporations giving giant bonuses to employees who join the regulatory agencies overseeing them, helping break the revolving door that gives special interests control over our government.

Third, we will protect every citizen’s right to vote and tear down barriers to the ballot box. That means promoting national automatic voter registration, expanding early and absentee voting, ending voter roll purging and providing relief from discriminatory voter ID laws. We will also ensure the integrity of our elections by committing Congress to build a record of voter suppression that demonstrates the need to restore the Voting Rights Act, ending partisan gerrymandering and safeguarding our election infrastructure from interference.

These are the critical, systemic reforms that will revive our democracy and ensure that it actually works for the people. Because when government works for the many, not the money, we’ll be able to deliver policy outcomes that most American want to see. That includes raising wages and creating millions of good-paying jobs; lowering prescription drug costs and improving access to world-class medical treatment; making real investments in our infrastructure; increasing pathways to high-quality education; ending LGBTQ discrimination and enshrining LGBTQ rights by passing the Equality Act, reforming our nation’s immigration system and passing the Dream Act, giving rise to universal high-speed internet; and protecting American consumers – among a whole host of other issues.

The American people want real change – not talking points, not gimmicks, not false promises. Democrats get it. That’s why we’re determined to do whatever it takes to restore our democracy and give Americans their voice and their power back.
SAMPLE OP-ED
(H.R. 1 and the Environment)

To Clean Up Our Environment,
We Must First Clean Up Our Democracy

Most Americans want clean air, clean water and meaningful action on climate change. But time and time again, Congress fails to act. Instead, it chooses to reward wealthy donors and special-interest polluters by weakling public health protections, handing out subsidies and tax giveaways to the fossil fuel industry and failing to advance positive solutions that will help mitigate the disastrous impacts of climate change. Why? Because Big Oil and Gas have Washington in a stranglehold. The industry injects millions of dollars into our elections and deploys its large army of lobbyists to descend on Capitol Hill. That way, it can ensure that Congress does its bidding.

Americans know all too well that if we want to clean up our environment, we must first clean up our democracy. And that’s why Democrats – as our first order of business in the new Congress – are introducing H.R. 1, a sweeping package of anti-corruption and clean government reforms that will put people’s interests ahead of special interests.

First, H.R. 1 will rein in the influence of big money in our politics so that the deep-pockets and undue influence of Big Oil and Gas stop drowning out the voices of the American people who want action on climate and protections on the air they breathe and water they drink. That means bringing more transparency to our campaign finance system to prevent millionaires, billionaires and Big Oil and Gas interests from hiding their political spending through shadowy organizations and empowering everyday Americans with a powerful new system for citizen-owned elections that amplifies the power small donors. Importantly, this matching system for small donations allows everyday Americans to compete with the big-money crowd without running afoul of the Supreme Court’s decisions in cases like Citizens United.

Second, H.R. 1 will make sure that public servants serve the public, not themselves. We’ve seen – in blatant terms – how ethical blindness can poison good policymaking in Washington. Look no further than former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, who consistently put the interests of Big
Oil and Gas – along with his own financial well-being – ahead of public health and our environment. H.R. 1 will protect the American people and strengthen ethics across all three branches of government by extending conflicts of interest rules to Presidents and Vice Presidents and requiring the release of their tax returns; prohibiting Members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and closing loopholes that allow them to evade lobbying restrictions; and establishing a code of ethics for the justices of the Supreme Court. H.R. 1 will also tighten disclosure requirements around lobbyists of foreign interests and end the practice of corporations giving giant bonuses to employees who join the regulatory agencies overseeing them, helping break the revolving door that gives special interests control over our government.

Third, H.R. 1 will protect every citizen’s right to vote and tear down barriers to the ballot box so that Americans can vote representatives into office who take environmental problems as seriously as the public. That means promoting national automatic voter registration, expanding early and absentee voting, ending voter roll purging and providing relief from discriminatory voter ID laws. H.R. 1 will also ensure the integrity of our elections by committing Congress to build a record of voter suppression that demonstrates the need to restore the Voting Rights Act, ending partisan gerrymandering and safeguarding our election infrastructure from interference.

Cleaning up our democracy is the first step toward cleaning up our environment. When the government works for the public, we will be able to deliver the clean air, clean water and conservation policy outcomes that Americans care about to ensure healthier lives for ourselves and future generations. With H.R. 1, we will create a government that works of, by and for the people.
SUPPLEMENTAL TALKING POINTS
(H.R. 1 and the Environment)

• Most Americans want clean air, clean water and meaningful action on climate change. But time and time again, Congress fails to act. Instead, it chooses to reward wealthy donors and special-interest polluters by weakening public health protections, handing out subsidies and tax giveaways to the fossil fuel industry and failing to advance positive solutions that will help mitigate the disastrous impacts of climate change.

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• Second, H.R. 1 will make sure that public servants serve the public, not themselves. We’ve seen – in blatant terms – how ethical blindness can poison good policymaking in Washington. Look no further than former EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, who consistently put the interests of Big Oil and Gas – along with his own financial well-being – ahead of public health and our environment.
• Third, H.R. 1 will protect every citizen’s right to vote and tear down barriers to the ballot box so that Americans can vote representatives into office who take environmental problems as seriously as the public.

• Cleaning up our democracy is the first step toward cleaning up our environment.

• When the government works for the public, we will be able to deliver the clean air, clean water and conservation policy outcomes that Americans care about to ensure healthier lives for ourselves and future generations.

• With H.R. 1, we will create a government that works of, by and for the people.
SAMPLE OP-ED
(H.R. 1 and Prescription Drugs)

To Lower Prescription Drug Prices,
We Must Clean Up Washington First

This past election, voters demanded access to affordable health care and lower prescription drug prices – because for far too long, affordable health care for the American people has taken a back seat to pharmaceutical industry profits.

Americans are deeply frustrated that the cost of prescription drugs and other health care services have soared over the last several years. And they’re even more fed up with a political system in Washington that seems incapable of addressing the problem. That’s because wealthy and well-connected pharmaceutical companies have Congress cornered. With eye-popping campaign contributions and an army of aggressive lobbyists, Big Pharma has muscled through its agenda on Capitol Hill and blocked progress on positive policies that would lower prescription drug prices.

Americans get it. In order to improve our nation’s health care system, we need to clean up Washington first. Democrats get it too. That’s why the new Democratic House Majority just introduced – as its first order of business – H.R. 1, a bold, transformative democracy reform package to combat big money in politics, strengthen our ethics laws and protect the right of all American citizens to vote.

First, H.R. 1 will rein in the influence of big money in our politics and reduce the undue influence that Big Pharma – which funneled nearly $22 million into federal campaigns this past election cycle – has in Washington. H.R. 1 will amplify the power of small donors by bringing more transparency to our campaign finance system to prevent billionaires and corporations from hiding their political spending through shadowy organizations and empowering everyday Americans with a powerful new system for citizen-owned elections that amplifies the power small donors. Importantly, this matching system for small donations allows everyday Americans to compete with the big-money crowd without running afoul of the Supreme Court’s decisions in cases like Citizens United.
Second, H.R. 1 will make sure that public servants actually serve the public. Today, the Trump administration is stocked with pro-industry officials who use their government positions to advance industry interests at the expense – quite literally – of the American people. Look no further than the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar, who joined the Trump Administration straight from Eli Lilly and Company, one of America’s leading drug manufacturers. To make sure that public officials put people’s interests ahead of special interests, H.R. 1 will strengthen ethics across all three branches of government, by extending conflicts of interest rules to Presidents and Vice Presidents and requiring the release of their tax returns; prohibiting Members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and closing loopholes that allow them to evade lobbying restrictions; and establishing a code of ethics for the justices of the Supreme Court. H.R. 1 will also tighten disclosure requirements around lobbyists of foreign interests and end the practice of corporations giving giant bonuses to employees who join the regulatory agencies overseeing them, helping break the revolving door that gives special interests control over our government.

Third, H.R. 1 will protect every citizen’s right to vote and tear down barriers to the ballot box so that Americans can elect representatives who won’t do the bidding of Big Pharma and who will make lowering prescription drug prices a top priority. That means promoting national automatic voter registration, expanding early and absentee voting, ending voter roll purging and providing relief from discriminatory voter ID laws. H.R. 1 will also ensure the integrity of our elections by committing Congress to build a record of voter suppression that demonstrates the need to restore the Voting Rights Act, ending partisan gerrymandering and safeguarding our election infrastructure from interference. Voters overwhelmingly expressed their concern for our healthcare system, and their voices deserve to be heard.

When the American people – not Big Pharma – calls the shots in Washington, Congress can get to work lowering prescription drug prices, reducing the cost of insurance premiums and making health care more affordable and accessible. H.R. 1 is the first step toward achieving this important goal.
SUPPLEMENTAL TALKING POINTS
(H.R. 1 and Prescription Drugs)

• This past election, voters demanded access to affordable health care and lower prescription drug prices – because for far too long, affordable health care for the American people has taken a back seat to pharmaceutical industry profits.

• Americans are deeply frustrated that the cost of prescription drugs and other health care services have soared over the last several years. And they’re even more fed up with a political system in Washington that seems incapable of addressing the problem.

• That’s because wealthy and well-connected pharmaceutical companies have Congress cornered. With eye-popping campaign contributions and an army of aggressive lobbyists, Big Pharma has muscled through its agenda on Capitol Hill and blocked progress on positive policies that would lower prescription drug prices.

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• First, H.R. 1 will rein in the influence of big money in our politics and reduce the undue influence that Big Pharma – which funneled nearly $22 million into federal campaigns this past election cycle – has in Washington.

• Second, H.R. 1 will make sure that public servants actually serve the public. Today, the Trump administration is stocked with pro-industry officials who use their government positions to advance industry interests at the expense – quite literally – of the American people. Look no further than the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Alex Azar, who joined the Trump Administration straight from Eli Lilly and Company, one of America’s leading drug manufacturers. To make sure that
public officials put people’s interests ahead of special interests, H.R. 1 will strengthen ethics across all three branches of government.

- Third, H.R. 1 will protect every citizen’s right to vote and tear down barriers to the ballot box so that Americans can elect representatives who won’t do the bidding of Big Pharma and who will make lowering prescription drug prices a top priority.

- When the American people – not Big Pharma – calls the shots in Washington, Congress can get to work lowering prescription drug prices, reducing the cost of insurance premiums and making health care more affordable and accessible. H.R. 1 is the first step toward achieving this important goal.
SAMPLE OP-ED
(H.R. 1 and Working Families)

Big Money Has Rigged Our Democracy and Our Economy.
Democrats Will Unrig Both.

Despite the sustained period of economic growth and job creation we have experienced over the last several years, too many Americans are working harder for less. Wage growth continues to stagnate while the costs of childcare, health care, education and housing keep rising. Although we have a range of available policy responses to help working Americans – like guaranteeing paid family leave, raising the minimum wage, increasing student loan forgiveness or expanding financial assistance for childcare – Congress instead continues to reward wealthy donors and special interests, while ignoring the needs of everyday Americans.

Americans know that whether it’s helping the middle class, combating climate change, reducing the cost of prescription drugs or tackling any other important issue, big money is standing in the way of getting things done. In order to build a more fair economy that benefits all Americans, we need to reform our political system so that it places the needs of regular Americans, not well-connected special interests, first. That’s why the new Democratic House Majority is making its first order of business in the new Congress a bold, transformative democracy reform package to combat big money in politics, strengthen our ethics laws and protect the right of all American citizens to vote.

First, H.R. 1 will rein in the influence of big money in our politics. That means bringing more transparency to our campaign finance system to prevent billionaires and corporations from hiding their political spending through shadowy organizations and empowering everyday Americans with a powerful new system for citizen-owned elections that amplifies the power small donors. Importantly, this matching system for small donations allows everyday Americans to compete with the big-money crowd without running afoul of the Supreme Court’s decisions in cases like Citizens United.
Second, H.R. 1 will make sure that public servants serve the public, not themselves. That means strengthening ethics across all three branches of government, by extending conflicts of interest rules to Presidents and Vice Presidents and requiring the release of their tax returns; prohibiting Members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and closing loopholes that allow them to evade lobbying restrictions; and establishing a code of ethics for the justices of the Supreme Court. We will also tighten disclosure requirements around lobbyists of foreign interests and end the practice of corporations giving giant bonuses to employees who join the regulatory agencies overseeing them, helping break the revolving door that gives special interests control over our government.

Third, H.R. 1 will protect every citizen’s right to vote and tear down barriers to the ballot box. That means promoting national automatic voter registration, expanding early and absentee voting, ending voter roll purging and providing relief from discriminatory voter ID laws. H.R. 1 will also ensure the integrity of our elections by committing Congress to build a record of voter suppression that demonstrates the need to restore the Voting Rights Act, ending partisan gerrymandering and safeguarding our election infrastructure from interference.

When empowered Americans, not the special interests, dictate the agenda in Washington, Congress can get to work on behalf of working families. H.R. 1 is the first step toward building a more inclusive economy, in which parents don’t have to choose between health care and childcare or between keeping their jobs or staying with their newborns. An economy that enables someone working a full-time job to put ample food on the table. An economy that offers all Americans the opportunity to work hard and succeed, where the cost of education doesn’t prevent promising young students from achieving their potential.

During this past midterm election, Democrats across the country heard from voters who were working hard and still struggling to get by – and who believed that their government wasn’t capable of responding to their needs. We promised to clean up the culture of corruption in Washington and get our government working again for the people. H.R. 1 is a promise kept. It will open the door to the bold change Washington needs and show that Democrats stand for the people.
SUPPLEMENTAL TALKING POINTS
(H.R. 1 and Working Families)

• Despite the sustained period of economic growth and job creation we have experienced over the last several years, too many Americans are working harder for less. Wage growth continues to stagnate while the costs of childcare, health care, education and housing keep rising.

• Although we have a range of available policy responses to help working Americans – like guaranteeing paid family leave, raising the minimum wage, increasing student loan forgiveness or expanding financial assistance for childcare – Congress instead continues to reward wealthy donors and special interests, while ignoring the needs of everyday Americans.

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SAMPLE OP-ED
(H.R. 1 and Civil Rights)

To Protect Civil Rights for All Americans,
We Must Clean Up Washington

When wealthy and well-connected special interests rig the rules of our democracy – whether it’s preventing Americans from voting or flooding our politics with big money – they’re attacking our civil rights. Because when they drown out the voices of everyday Americans and make Washington focus on the priorities of the privileged and powerful, our broken political system blocks progress on a whole host of civil rights issues – from reforming our criminal justice system to ending legal discrimination against LGBTQ individuals to closing the pay gap and passing the DREAM Act.

By reforming our democratic institutions to empower the American people, we can lay the groundwork for strengthening our civil rights laws. That’s why my colleagues and I in the new House Democratic majority made H.R. 1 our first priority in the new Congress. H.R. 1 is a bold, transformative package of reforms that will break the influence of big money on our politics; make it easier, not harder, to vote; and strengthen ethics laws for public servants.

First, H.R. 1 will rein in the influence of big money in our politics to stop millionaires, billionaires and corporations from using their deep pockets to block critical progress on civil rights. That means bringing more transparency to our campaign finance system to prevent billionaires and corporations from hiding their political spending through shadowy organizations and empowering everyday Americans with a powerful new system for citizen-owned elections that amplifies the power small donors. Importantly, this matching system for small donations allows everyday Americans to compete with the big-money crowd without running afoul of the Supreme Court’s decisions in cases like Citizens United.

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Third, H.R. 1 will protect every citizen’s right to vote and tear down barriers to the ballot box so that Americans can send representatives to Washington who will take meaningful action on civil rights. That means promoting national automatic voter registration, expanding early and absentee voting, ending voter roll purging and providing relief from discriminatory voter ID laws. We will also ensure the integrity of our elections by committing Congress to build a record of voter suppression that demonstrates the need to restore the Voting Rights Act, ending partisan gerrymandering and safeguarding our election infrastructure from interference.

Making Washington listen to and work for the American people is the first step toward ensuring civil rights protections for all Americans. Passing H.R. 1 opens the door to a criminal justice system that doesn’t criminalize being poor or a person of color; an economy where people of all races and genders earn the same pay for the same work and where you can’t be fired because of who you love; an immigration system that recognizes the humanity of all people; and a democracy in which all American citizens have the equal right to vote and have their votes counted.

The American people made clear during the midterm election that they are tired of a government that focuses on corporate tax cuts and deregulation while millions of Americans still struggle without equal rights. Democrats promised to clean up the culture of corruption in Washington and to put the needs of the people first. H.R. 1 is a promise kept, one that puts our constituents first and shows that Democrats stand for the people.
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TOWN HALL IN A BOX

At a Glance

Holding a town hall on H.R. 1 would be a strong opportunity to showcase your leadership on a potent reform agenda that the public craves – the most significant effort to clean up Washington since Watergate.

By hosting a frank and candid discussion with your constituents about the problem of money in politics, ethics in government and voting rights – and about the practical and powerful solutions that Democrats are putting forward in H.R. 1 – you can burnish your credentials as a reformer.

Event Ideas

- Member roundtable with local environmental organizations to discuss why fixing our democracy will result in meaningful climate action.

- Outdoor rally with working families groups to rail against the corrosive influence of wealthy and well-connected corporations, and highlight how cleaning up Washington will deliver higher wages and better jobs for hardworking Americans.

- Townhall focused on the importance of making it easier, not harder to vote.

- Roundtable with local civil rights organizations about the importance of cleaning up our democracy and building a more just and equitable society.

- Citizen forum on Democrats’ solutions to fight big money in politics with a 21st-century campaign finance system that puts small donors at the center of our political system.
Coalition Contacts
Inviting local chapters of national grassroots and advocacy organizations would be a great way to build key relationships, encourage a diverse array of perspectives and drive substantial turnout at your in-district event.

A very large coalition has formed to advance reforms which will strengthen our democracy and return political power to the people. These groups are well versed in the issues and would welcome the opportunity to be of assistance. To invite one of these organizations to participate in your town hall, or to think through potential event partners, contact:

- Aquene Freechild, Public Citizen – afreechild@citizen.org
- Elizabeth Beavers, Indivisible – elizabeth@indivisible.org
- Suzy Smith, Let America Vote – suzy@letamericavote.org
- Nathan Williams, Town Hall Project – nwilliams@townhallproject.com
- Reva Price, Speaker Pelosi – reva.price@mail.house.gov
- Raymond O’Mara, Congressman Sarbanes – raymond.omara@mail.house.gov

Coalition Members Include

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| Brennan Center for Justice | Communications Workers |
| Leadership Conference | Democracy Initiative |
| Democracy 21 | NARAL |
| League of Women Voters | Friends of the Earth |
| Center for American Progress | Indivisible |
| Common Cause | End Citizens United |
| National LGBTQ Task Force | People for the American Way |
| Coalition to Stop Gun Violence | National Partnership for Women & Families |