

United States Senate

October 3, 2020

The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Graham:

We learned yesterday that President Trump and Senators Lee and Tillis have tested positive for COVID-19. We sincerely hope that the President and our Senate colleagues recover fully and quickly.

As United States Senators and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, we have the responsibility to protect this nation and the American people. That includes our fellow Senators, Judge Barrett and her family, our staffs, and the men and women who keep the Senate complex safe, clean, and operational. At least two members of this Committee have already contracted COVID-19, and several other members were in close proximity. As you are aware, the CDC has advised that individuals “[s]tay home for 14 days after [] last contact with a person who has COVID-19,” even if those individuals “test negative for COVID-19 or feel healthy.”

To proceed at this juncture with a hearing to consider Judge Barrett’s nomination to the Supreme Court threatens the health and safety of all those who are called upon to do the work of this body.

Further, holding a remote hearing for a Supreme Court nomination is not an adequate substitute. As Republican members of this Committee have recognized, questioning nominees by video is ineffective and ignores the gravity of our constitutional duty to provide advice and consent on lifetime appointments, particularly those to the nation’s highest court.

More importantly, though, moving forward with Judge Barrett’s hearing is a disservice to the American public. Nearly 210,000 Americans have died from COVID-19 and more than 7 million Americans have been infected — every one of them a COVID survivor who could be denied health coverage if the Affordable Care Act is struck down. Millions of Americans have lost their jobs and millions of children cannot attend school in-person.

The American people are looking to us. Now is the time to provide much-needed COVID relief, not to rush through a Supreme Court nomination and further endanger health and safety.

Sincerely,



DIANNE FEINSTEIN
Ranking Member



RICHARD J. DURBIN
United States Senator



AMY KLOBUCHAR
United States Senator



RICHARD BLUMENTHAL
United States Senator



CORY A. BOOKER
United States Senator



PATRICK LEAHY
United States Senator



SHELDON WHITEHOUSE
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