



## United States Senate

April 29, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
U.S. Capitol

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate  
U.S. Capitol

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer,

I write to urge you to reconsider your decision to resume the Senate session on Monday, May 4. In the interest of public health and sending the right message to the nation, I ask that you allow the Senate to continue working remotely.

As you know, the House of Representatives has changed its plans and will no longer return to session next week. They reportedly based their decision on the recommendation of the Attending Physician, Dr. Monahan, who said that bringing Members of Congress, staff, and others back to the Capitol would pose a significant risk.

Like you, I track the numbers of new cases of infection and deaths in the world, in the United States, and in my home state. Clearly, we remain in a critical time. In many states, the spread of this disease is continuing at a steady rate, and in others transmission actually accelerating. The only things that have been shown to reduce the rate of infection are sheltering in place and social distancing, neither of which is possible if we return to the Capitol. This is not the time to back off of protective measures when the disease is not yet in check.

Before the Senate recessed in late March, one Senator tested positive for the coronavirus. Since then, at least eight Capitol Police officers and 11 workers with the Architect of the Capitol have tested positive. Clearly the coronavirus is present at the Capitol. Bringing 100 Senators from around the country, including many coronavirus hotspots, along with many more staff, credentialed press, and others, to this environment risks all of us. It also sends the wrong message to the American people, most of whom are being asked or directed to stay at home.

I recognize that the Senate continues to work on essential legislation to provide the authorities and resources necessary to confront the coronavirus and provide much-needed economic relief to states, municipalities, businesses, and Americans across the country. This work is going on and the Senate must pass such bills as soon as possible. Returning to Washington for votes on routine nominees, however, is not essential and comes with significant risk.

I appreciate your consideration of these views and stand ready to work with you as the Senate continues to confront the challenges posed by the coronavirus.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dianne Feinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator