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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2215

August 19, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House of Representatives
H-232 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader
H-204 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

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Dear Speaker Boehner and Leader Pelosi:

I write with concern about the recent decision to terminate the House Page Program. As a former page who has seen the benefits of this program first hand, this decision raises questions about the future operation of Congress and the information on which this decision was based.

Pages have a long history that coincides with the creation of our great nation. Although the term "page" was not used until the 20th Congress, the First Continental Congress in 1774 employed messengers to help their operations, and these young folks were precursors to modern-day pages. Since then, countless numbers of young people have had the enriching experience of viewing firsthand how their government operates while giving them an early opportunity to engage in public service. The Page Program is a great way to get young people of all backgrounds involved in our democracy and excited about public service, which is certainly valuable to society as a whole.

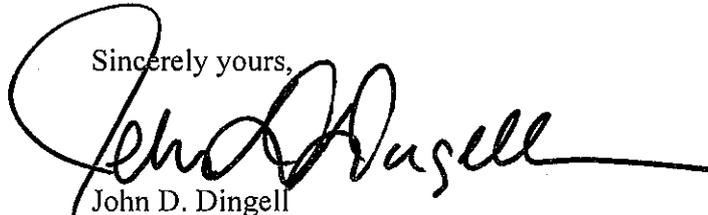
I appreciate the fiscal constraints currently facing our nation and understand that difficult decisions must be made. However, we must not forget the value this program brings to young people and the House of Representatives as a whole. It is also prudent to consider how the termination of this program will affect future operations of the Congress. I believe that stakeholders, including current and former pages, members of the page board, and other interested parties, deserve the opportunity to review the information on which your decision was based on. Therefore, I respectfully request that your offices release the results of the commissioned review of the Page Program, in addition to answering the following questions.

- 1) How much money will be saved by terminating the Page Program?
- 2) What additional costs will be incurred by the Congress due to this program being eliminated? For example, will other employees have to be hired to perform some of the duties pages currently perform?
- 3) Did your offices consider any reforms to the program to make it more cost-effective, such as reducing the size of the page classes, reducing the stipend, or making it a commuter program?

Providing this information will go a long way in instilling public confidence that the proper decision has been made in this instance. I look forward to your response and to working with all interested parties to ensure that Congress remains open and accepting to the contributions of young people.

With every good wish,

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John D. Dingell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

John D. Dingell
Member of Congress