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One Hundred Eighteenth
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

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March 8, 2024

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson:

As Speaker, it is your duty to preserve order and decorum in the House of Representatives.¹ Last night during the State of the Union address, you failed to perform that duty.

As you know, official resources of the House—including the House Chamber—may not be used for campaign or political purposes.² However, as noted extensively in public reporting, Congresswoman Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-GA) wore a hat with a political campaign slogan during the address.³ Appallingly, according to Ms. Greene herself, she was approached by the Sergeant at Arms who asked her to take the hat off because it violated the rules of decorum. She refused.⁴

Recounting the exchange, she said, “I was like, ‘You can hold me out of here. Go ahead and try it, but I’m not going to take this hat off.’”⁵ Her refusal to remove the hat was juvenile and showed immense disrespect—not just to the President himself, but to the office of the presidency and the House as an institution. That her impertinence extended to a nonpartisan House officer simply trying to perform their duties and maintain order is beyond the pale.

The disrespect did not end there. As further observed in public reporting, House Republicans “repeatedly heckled President Biden,”⁶ “jeered and interrupted Biden during his speech,”⁷ and led

¹ House Rule I, cl 2.

² See House Ethics Manual, p. 127.

³ Arthur Delaney, *Marjorie Taylor Greene Dons MAGA Hat, Accosts Biden at State of the Union*, HuffPost (Mar. 7, 2024), https://www.huffpost.com/entry/marjorie-taylor-greene-state-of-the-union-maga-hat_n_65ea7b5be4b0c77c7415dec6.

⁴ Giulia Carbonaro, *Marjorie Taylor Greene Threatened With Removal During State of the Union*, Newsweek (Mar. 8, 2024), <https://www.newsweek.com/marjorie-taylor-greene-threatened-removal-state-union-1877162>.

⁵ *Id.*

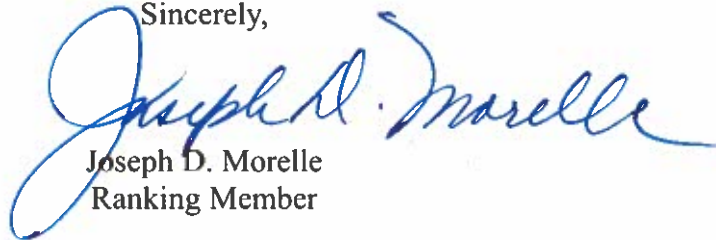
⁶ Andrew Solender, *House Republicans defy Mike Johnson on heckling Biden*, Axios (Mar. 8, 2024), <https://www.axios.com/2024/03/08/house-republicans-biden-heckling-state-of-the-union>.

⁷ Morgan Rimmer and Ted Barrett, *Here's how Republican lawmakers are responding to Biden's speech*, CNN (Mar. 7, 2024) https://www.cnn.com/politics/live-news/state-of-the-union-biden-03-07-24/h_510bf7e669e9cc82f44970319fd0dbfb.

to “the House chamber descending again into a reality television program”.⁸ This behavior was offensive and disappointing. However, it speaks to House Republican’s dysfunction and inability to perform the basic duties of governing and institutional management that it was wholly unsurprising.

There are approximately 300 days left in the 118th Congress. Whether those 300 days are marked by a House chamber resembling a middle school auditorium or the venerable institution in which we were elected to serve is up to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Joseph D. Morelle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Joseph D. Morelle
Ranking Member

⁸ Niels Lesniewski, *The State of the Union continues evolving into a circus*, Roll Call (Mar. 7, 2024), <https://rollcall.com/2024/03/07/the-state-of-the-union-continues-evolving-into-a-circus/>.