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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4707

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March 10, 2021

The Honorable Theodore E. Deutch
Chairman
House Committee on Ethics
1015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jackie Walorski
Ranking Member
House Committee on Ethics
2015 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Deutch and Ranking Member Walorski:

I respectfully request the Committee on Ethics launch an investigation into Representative Paul Gosar (AZ-04) for his involvement in instigating and aiding the violent riot at the Capitol Building on January 6, 2021.

On January 6, 2021, a mob of insurrectionists forcefully breached the Capitol Building, breaking windows and pounding down doors. At that same moment, Members of Congress and staff were confirming the results of the 2020 Presidential election. The violent insurgency forced Congress to adjourn and Members to shelter in place. The riot resulted in the deaths of five people, including Capitol Police officer Brian Sicknick.

In the weeks and days leading up to the riot, Representative Gosar urged supporters to take action against election certification, repeatedly insisting that the election had been stolen and participating in rallies alleging voter fraud.¹

- 1) Representative Gosar maintained a close and public relationship with far-right activist Ali Alexander, who has cited him as a key figure in planning the January 6 rally.² Mr. Alexander stated, "Congressman Gosar has been the spirit animal of this movement, and he's helped out where he could. He's offered to call donors. We actually had our first D.C. march because he called me and he said, 'You need to go to the Supreme Court.' I said, 'All right, my captain.'"³

¹ In addition to the evidence presented in this letter, Republican elected officials alleged to have ties to the insurrection reportedly sought clemency from then-President Trump before he left office. *See, e.g.,* Kaitlan Collins, Kevin Liptak & Pamela Brown, *Trump talked out of pardoning kids and Republican lawmakers*, CNN (Jan. 19, 2021) <https://www.cnn.com/2021/01/19/politics/trump-self-pardon-warning/index.html>.

² Ryan Grim & Aida Chávez, *Freedom Caucus Chair Andy Biggs Helped Plan January 6 Event, Lead Organizer Says*, THE INTERCEPT (Jan. 11, 2021) <https://theintercept.com/2021/01/11/capitol-plot-andy-biggs-paul-gosar> [hereinafter "Grim & Chávez"].

³ *Id.*

On December 21, 2020, Representative Gosar appeared at a rally in Phoenix, AZ that Mr. Alexander had planned. Representative Gosar has called Mr. Alexander “a true patriot” on Twitter.⁴ He tagged Mr. Alexander repeatedly in posts made in November and December and tagged him on Twitter no less than three times on January 6.⁵

- 2) On January 4, Representative Gosar tweeted an image advertising the January 6 rally that included the text “#FightforTrump. The Time is Now. Hold the line” with the caption “Who is joining me?”⁶
- 3) At the rally prior to the storming of the Capitol, Representative Gosar told attendees “You get to go back home once we conquer the Hill [and] Donald Trump is returned to being president.”⁷ Refusing to accept the election results, he has repeatedly referred to President Biden as an “illegitimate usurper.”⁸
- 4) On December 7, 2020 he published an op-ed titled “Are We Witnessing a Coup d’état?” alleging fraud in the 2020 election and taking credit for organizing the first “Stop the Steal” rally in Arizona, stating “As many of you know, I helped organize the very first “Stop the Steal” rally in Arizona right after it became clear that voting patterns emerged that could not occur in the absence of fraud.”⁹ He told supporters in the op-ed to “Be ready to defend the Constitution and the White House.”¹⁰
- 5) Representative Gosar has amplified and perpetuated the vote-stealing myth first promoted on Steve Bannon’s podcast and radio show, “War Room.”¹¹ In a series of tweets on November 6, he called on Arizona’s governor “to call a special session of the AZ Legislature under Article IV of our state constitution to investigate the accuracy and reliability of the Dominion ballot software and its impact on our general election.”¹² He added, “No election results should be certified until a complete audit of the Dominion machine tallies is made.”¹³ In addition, he tweeted, “Audit all Dominion software machines used in this election. Massive fraud potential.”¹⁴

⁴ Rep. Paul Gosar (@DrPaulGosar) Twitter (Nov. 6, 2020) 10:05 PM.

⁵ See Grim & Chávez, *supra* n. 2; Rep. Paul Gosar (@DrPaulGosar) Twitter (Jan. 6, 2021) 11:09 AM; Rep. Paul Gosar (@DrPaulGosar) Twitter (Jan. 6, 2021) 12:05 PM; Rep. Paul Gosar (@DrPaulGosar) Twitter (Jan. 6, 2021) 7:58 PM.

⁶ Rep. Paul Gosar (@DrPaulGosar) Twitter (Jan. 4, 2021) 4:56 PM.

⁷ Ryan Grim (@ryangrim) Twitter (Jan. 12, 2021) 5:51 PM; Matt Ford, *The Call is Coming from Inside the House (and Senate)*, THE NEW REPUBLIC (Jan. 13, 2021) <https://newrepublic.com/article/160917/call-coming-inside-house-and-senate>.

⁸ Catie Edmonson and Luke Broadwater, *Before Capitol Riot, Republican Lawmakers Fanned the Flames*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 11, 2021) <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/11/us/politics/republicans-capitol-riot.html>.

⁹ Paul Gosar, *Congressman Paul Gosar’s Open Letter to Arizona: Are We Witnessing a Coup d’état?* REVOLVER (Dec. 7, 2020) <https://www.revolver.news/2020/12/congressman-paul-gosars-open-letter-to-arizona-arc-we-witnessing-a-coup-detat>.

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Jim Rutenberg, Jo Becker, *et al*, *77 Days: Trump’s Campaign to Subvert the Election*, N.Y. TIMES (Jan. 31, 2021) <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/01/31/us/trump-election-lie.html>.

¹² Rep. Paul Gosar (@DrPaulGosar) Twitter (Nov. 6, 2020) 11:50 PM.

¹³ Rep. Paul Gosar (@DrPaulGosar) Twitter (Nov. 6, 2020) 11:50 PM.

¹⁴ Rep. Paul Gosar (@DrPaulGosar) Twitter (Nov. 6, 2020) 11:35 PM.

- 6) He has also maintained relationships with far-right extremist groups, such as the Oath Keepers, a far-right anti-government militia organization that was present and involved in the storming of the Capitol. In September 2020, the leader of an Arizona chapter of Oath Keepers said that, “We asked [Gosar] flat-out, at that time, do you think we’re heading into a civil war? [...] And his response to the group was just flat-out ‘We’re in it, we just haven’t started shooting yet.’”¹⁵

The Campaign for Accountability filed a complaint with the Office of Ethics requesting an investigation into Representative Gosar and two others, alleging that Representative Gosar “incited a riot as part of a seditious conspiracy to use force to prevent Congress from carrying out its constitutional and statutory duties to count the votes of the Electoral College.”¹⁶ Democratic members of the Arizona Legislature have asked the FBI and the Department of Justice to investigate the involvement of Representative Gosar and others.¹⁷ Representative Gosar has not released any statement across his public platforms denouncing the rioters or apologizing for his previous statements or role in inciting violence.

I am requesting this investigation pursuant to the House Ethics Rules. Rule 23, Clause 1 specifies that Members must conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects credibly on the House. The Committee previously found Representative Matt Gaetz (FL-01)¹⁸ in violation of Clause 1, illustrating adequate precedent for this investigation. I urge the Committee to also investigate whether Representative Gosar’s conduct violates other applicable standards, provisions, or federal law statutes.

It is critical for the functioning of Congress—and therefore the functioning of our democracy—that this investigation is conducted. I urge the Committee to thoroughly investigate Representative Gosar’s conduct and refer any appropriate findings to the Department of Justice.

Sincerely,

PRAMILA JAYAPAL
Member of Congress

¹⁵ Eliza Relman. *The leader of a far-right militant group says Republican Rep. Paul Gosar told him the US was in a civil war: ‘We just haven’t started shooting yet.’* BUSINESS INSIDER (Jan. 29, 2021)

<https://www.businessinsider.com/paul-gosar-told-oath-keepers-militia-us-in-civil-war-2021-1>

¹⁶From Michelle Koppersmith, Executive Director, Campaign for Accountability to Omar Ashmawy, Staff Director and Chief Counsel, Office of Congressional Ethics RE: Request for Investigation of Representative Paul Gosar, Andy Biggs and Madison Cawthorn (Jan. 22, 2021) <https://beta.documentcloud.org/documents/20461784-cfa-complaint-occe-reps-biggs-gosar-cawthorn>.

¹⁷ Letter from Arizona Democratic State Leadership to Jeffrey A. Rosen, Acting Attorney General, Dep’t of Justice; Christopher Wray, Director, FBI RE: Arizona Representatives involvement in Jan 6 Capitol attack. (Jan. 12, 2021) <https://beta.documentcloud.org/documents/20449398-doj-fbi-jan-6-investigation-003>

¹⁸ Comm. on Ethics. “In the Matter of Allegations Relating to Representative Matt Gaetz,” H. Rpt., 116th Congress, 2d Sess. 2 (2020) https://ethics.house.gov/sites/ethics.house.gov/files/documents/Appendix%20A_6.pdf.