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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

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STATEMENT OF THE CHAIRMAN AND RANKING MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

The Ethics Committee is deeply committed to delivering appropriate transparency and accountability in all cases of ethical misconduct. All Members of the Committee treat their roles with solemn responsibility and utmost seriousness. Regardless of party affiliation, there is a shared view that sexual harassment and workplace misconduct in particular have no place in the halls of Congress. Here and elsewhere, perpetrators of sexual misconduct should never be shielded from responsibility for their misdeeds.

We believe the forced disclosures mandated by House Resolution 1072 could chill victim cooperation and witness participation in ongoing and future investigations. Victims may be retraumatized by public disclosures of interim work product, excerpts of interview transcripts, and certain exhibits. And witnesses, who often only speak to the Committee confidentially or on condition of future anonymity, could fear retaliation if their cooperation is made public.

Across all our investigations, the Committee strives to maximize information-sharing with the public while balancing the confidentiality rights of victims, whistleblowers and witnesses with the due process rights of respondents. We will continue to strive to improve the Committee's investigative processes, and the Committee is always open to considering ways to more swiftly bring accountability to bear. We believe House Resolution 1072 could have a negative impact on the Committee's ability to investigate and eliminate sexual misconduct in the House. We encourage the House to refer the resolution to the Committee at this time.

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