

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2308

March 11, 2021

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

Dear Speaker Pelosi,

As we enter our third month in the 117th Congress, I would like to draw your attention to a concerning pattern that is limiting Americans' representation in this body.

I have offered several amendments during Committee markups and through the Rules Committee to improve legislation slated for Floor consideration. In particular, I have offered several amendments this Congress, and during the 116th Congress, to address child slave labor and human right abuses.

These amendments include:

- (6/17/2020) Stauber 46, an amendment to H.R. 2 during the Transportation and Infrastructure markup;
- (9/30/2020) Stauber 01, an amendment to H.R. 5598 during the Natural Resources markup;
- (2/10/2021) Stauber 10, an amendment to the budget reconciliation legislation in the Transportation and Infrastructure markup;
- (2/23/2021) Stauber 12, an amendment to H.R. 803 submitted to the Rules Committee; and
- (2/23/2021) Stauber 20, an amendment to H.R. 1319 submitted to the Rules Committee.

Although I have repeatedly offered these amendments during both markups and full bill considerations, they have continually been blocked by the majority. In fact, during the June 17, 2020 T&I markup of H.R. 2, my amendment, Stauber 46, passed with a bipartisan vote of 43-19. Despite this overwhelmingly bipartisan vote, my committee-adopted amendment was stripped from the bill before coming to the Floor for full consideration.¹

This blatant disregard for regular order and dismissal of legitimate committee action is concerning. These actions are particularly concerning considering the topic of such blocked amendments. Amnesty International reports that approximately 40,000 boys and girls work as forced slave laborers in the Congo. These children, as young as seven, work in horrific conditions where they are forced to extract cobalt by hand or face the wrath of traffickers, if the precarious mines do not collapse around their ears first.²

¹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-green-new-deal-in-action-11593645373>

² <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2016/06/drc-cobalt-child-labour/>

It is my goal to end these horrific practices and ensure that the minerals that are used in our phones, renewable energies, and infrastructure projects, are sourced ethically. Unfortunately, the reality remains that the technologies which Americans enjoy today are still powered by minerals sourced and mined by child slaves.

It remains unclear to me and many of my colleagues as to why preventing and combatting child slave labor is a controversial issue for the majority. Nevertheless, it is my hope that you will carefully review my future efforts to prevent these abuses and make the correct decision to hold the United States to the moral standard our constituents, and the rest of the world, expect.

I will continue to offer legislative solutions to combat these horrific human rights abuses and ensure that the United States does not encourage these practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Pete Stauber". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Pete Stauber
MEMBER OF CONGRESS