

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 5, 2018

Dear Women of America,

The possible confirmation of Brett Kavanaugh to be Associate Justice of the Supreme Court is a painful moment for women across our nation. Please know that if you are feeling outraged, afraid, hopeless, or uncertain, you are not alone. We understand you, we believe you, and we will keep fighting for you.

The confirmation process for Judge Kavanaugh has been reprehensible and disrespectful to survivors of sexual assault, especially women. The treatment of Dr. Christine Blasey Ford and others who bravely came forward with credible allegations shows that women are still not treated with respect and fairness, even at the highest levels of power. Many Senators demonstrated an unwillingness to take these allegations seriously in a rush to confirm Judge Kavanaugh at all costs. The FBI's background investigation of the allegations was constrained by the White House, which did not even allow for Judge Kavanaugh and Dr. Ford to be interviewed. This behavior is unfortunately all too familiar. Know that this sham of a process does not reflect an appropriate way to treat survivors.

We will not allow the outcome of this confirmation process to devalue the promise of justice for all survivors, especially women and girls. Nearly 1 in 3 women will survive sexual assault or violence in their lifetime and the rate of false reporting is only 2 to 8 percent, according to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center. Many of those women will not come forward for fear of shame, not being believed, or being revictimized. In fact, the Department of Justice states that 2 out of 3 sexual assaults go unreported to the police. We must hear their stories and support them. Sexual harassment and sexual violence are behaviors that must never be excused or explained away, especially given the profound harm inflicted on survivors and on our culture.

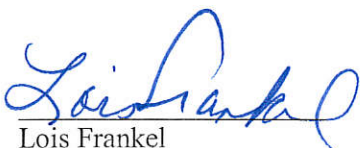
We believe survivors and we ask that you never give up hope. There are many resources and support systems available, including the National Sexual Assault Hotline, 1-800-656-4673. We hope you will continue to reach out in times of need, and we commend the organizations who provide this support.

Know that as women Members of Congress, we will continue fighting for women and girls. We are committed to strengthening our laws and policies to support women and survivors of sexual assault in the home, in schools and college campuses, in the workplace, and at every stage of life.

But changing our policies is not enough; we must also change our culture. All of us have a responsibility to show the next generation how to respect boundaries and each other, understand accountability and consent, and use their voices to speak up and believe survivors. Women and all Americans must never stop fighting to ensure that we finally have the full respect and equality we deserve as human beings.

We ask you to join us in this fight.

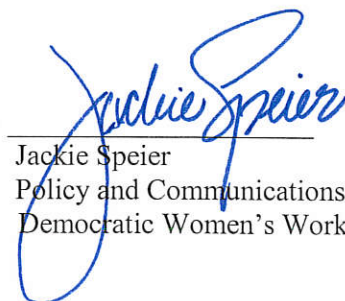
Sincerely,



Lois Frankel  
Chair  
Democratic Women's Working Group



Brenda L. Lawrence  
Vice Chair  
Democratic Women's Working Group



Jackie Speier  
Policy and Communications Chair  
Democratic Women's Working Group