

TOM EMMER
6TH DISTRICT, MINNESOTA

COMMITTEES
FINANCIAL SERVICES
SUBCOMMITTEES
INVESTOR PROTECTION,
ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND
CAPITAL MARKETS

NATIONAL SECURITY, INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT AND MONETARY POLICY

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2306

315 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2331

DISTRICT OFFICE
9201 QUADAY AVENUE NE
SUITE 206
OTSEGO, MN 55330
(763) 241-6848

HOUSE REPUBLICAN STEERING

REPUBLICAN WHIP TEAM

DEPUTY WHIP TEAM

April 19, 2021

Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Steny Hoyer
Majority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-107, the Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

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

Zoe Lofgren
Chairwoman
House Committee on Administration
1309 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Hoyer, Chairman Deutch, Chairwoman Lofgren,

On the evening of Saturday, April 17th, Representative Maxine Waters participated in a demonstration outside of the Brooklyn Center Police Department in Brooklyn Center, Minnesota. As Representative Waters addressed the crowd, she encouraged those in attendance to “*stay in the streets*” and “*get more active, get more confrontational, and let them know we mean business.*” Further, Representative Waters encouraged protestors to defy locally enacted curfews designed to protect life and property, and decried any verdict short of “guilty of first-degree murder” as insufficient in the trial of Derek Chauvin, despite it not being one of the charges presented against Mr. Chauvin.

During a time of increased tension around the nation - especially in a state like Minnesota where hundreds of businesses were destroyed and dozens of people were injured in riots less than one year ago - these comments from a senior member of the majority party and Committee Chair in the House of Representatives are unacceptable, divisive, and can only be viewed as a means to incite further violence and destruction.

As leaders of the House of Representatives, we ask you: provide for the immediate consideration of a resolution censuring Representative Waters for her inflammatory rhetoric, investigate whether taxpayer funds were used for Representative Waters’ travel to a state and district that she was not elected to represent for activities unrelated to her official duties, and publicly condemn Representative Waters’ remarks and urge calm in the days and weeks ahead.

Although Representative Waters spoke to those gathered around the Brooklyn Center Police Department for more than ten minutes¹, the most concerning aspects of her remarks came when answering questions from the crowd:

Representative Waters: “We are looking for a guilty verdict, we are looking for a guilty verdict and we are looking to see if all of the talk that took place and has been taking place, after they saw what happened to George Floyd, if nothing does not happen then we know, uh, that we have got to not only

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnNBvN4ZXms>

stay in the street, but we have got to fight for justice. But I am very hopeful and I hope that we are going to get a verdict that say guilty, guilty, guilty and if we don't, we cannot go away."

Question: "And not just Manslaughter, right?"

Representative Waters: "Oh no, not manslaughter, no, no, no this is guilty for murder. I don't know if it's in the first degree but as far as I'm concerned it's first degree murder."

Question: "Congresswoman, what happens if we do not get what you just told, what should the people do, what should protestors on the street do?"

Representative Waters: "...I didn't hear you."

Repeated question: "What should protestors do..."

Representative Waters: "Well, we gotta stay on the street, and we have got to get more active, we have to get more confrontational, we have got to make sure that they know that we mean business."

Question: "What do you think about curfew tonight?"

Representative Waters: "I don't think anything about curfew. I don't know what curfew means. Curfew means I want you to stop talking. It means I want you to stop leading. I want you to stop gathering. I don't agree with that."

Question: "Are you going to stay out here?"

Representative Waters: "I'm not going to stay out here. I came here from Washington just to be here to make sure that I let my voice be heard among all of those who have been putting so much time on the street. I'm hopeful that the protests will continue."

Between May 26 and June 7, 2020, more than 600 people were arrested and 1,500 buildings were damaged – 100 of which were completely destroyed – in Minneapolis and St. Paul, totaling more than \$500 million in property loss. The destruction included the elimination of the Minneapolis Police Department's Third Precinct as well as countless minority owned small businesses. Additional riots around the country occurred simultaneously with the ones in Minneapolis, causing widespread looting and violence. It wasn't until local officials implemented a system of curfews and deployed the National Guard that communities were able to restore calm and stop the destruction.

On the eve of yet another significant and contentious decision, Representative Waters' calls to "*get more confrontational*," while deliberately objecting to locally established curfews is irresponsible and harmful to the safety of the hardworking families and businesses in Minnesota. In fact, according to local reports, Representative Waters left the protest as an altercation occurred between protesters and reporters². Shortly after that, a Minnesota National Guard and Minneapolis Police Department neighborhood security team was fired upon during a drive-by shooting early Sunday morning³.

Since the start of the 117th Congress, Democratic leadership has repeatedly said that accountability is necessary and healing is imperative. After listening to Representative Waters' divisive rhetoric and watching violence

² <https://minnesota.cbslocal.com/2021/04/17/u-s-rep-maxine-waters-visits-brooklyn-center-protests/>

³ <https://minnesotanationalguard.ng.mil/minnesota-national-guard-neighborhood-security-team-fired-upon-in-minneapolis/>

erupt following her remarks, there is a stunning silence from members of Democrat leadership on the subject of accountability and healing. Calls for accountability and healing are swift when it involves members of the minority in Congress, yet, when a member of the majority party travels to a community they do not represent to incite violence and sow division – no action is taken.

As leaders of the people's house, we urge you to immediately censure and investigate Representative Waters for her inflammatory rhetoric and make a public call for calm in the days and weeks ahead. The eyes of the nation are on Minnesota. In order for our state and the nation to heal, the focus on accountability must not be contingent upon political affiliation as every Member of Congress must ensure their actions as an elected official contribute to an atmosphere of unity, rather than lawlessness.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Tom Emmer
Member of Congress



Jim Hagedorn
Member of Congress



Michelle Fischbach
Member of Congress



Pete Stauber
Member of Congress