

MATSUI: REPUBLICANS SLAM THE DOOR ON BI-PARTISANSHIP, MODERATION

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Washington, DC – Congresswoman Doris O. Matsui (CA-5) issued the following statement after the Republican Senate Leadership began the showdown in the Senate over changing rules and eliminating the filibuster.

“Our founding fathers were very deliberative about what was and was not included in our Constitution in writing our constitution they established firm principles that have served our country well. They gave each of the three branches of government enumerated and implied powers, such as the Senate’s role of advice and consent when the president nominates judges. But they also saw each branch, as James Madison said in the Federalist Papers, as being, the means of keeping each other in their proper places and may be a check on the other.”

“Further, the founding fathers gave weight to our country’s need to balance the voices of many with the voices of few, purposefully creating two distinctly different chambers. The Senate was specifically created to value debate and respect the individual and minority point of view.

“But today, the Republican members of the Senate are seeking to steamroll over our founding fathers and 200 years of Senate history and a core American value. The Republican Senate Leadership has ignored every Democratic attempt at compromise. They have even gone so far as to ignore the moderates of their own party.

“The Republican Senate leadership could not be clearer. This is not about judicial nominees; this is about a power grab. This is not about the seven judges out of over 200 who have not been confirmed. This is about a Supreme Court nominee. By taking this action, the Republican leadership has signaled their commitment to the extreme factions of their party. Their refusal to negotiate, to work with moderate Republicans and Democrats is a giant step away from the usual collegiality of the Senate and a giant step away from bi-partisanship.

“If this power grab is successful, we will no longer see a David Souter, an Anthony Kennedy, a Sandra Day O’Connor, a Ruth Bader Ginsberg, or a Stephen Breyer serving on the Supreme Court. Supreme Court nominees, who received across the board support when voted on in the Senate. And that would be a loss for this country.

“Rather than focusing on the agenda of a small minority at the fringes of a political debate, Americans want us, their elected representatives, to address the issues that affect their day-to-day lives – health care coverage, minimum wage, and the long-term solvency of Social Security and Medicare.”

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