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Brian P. Lamb  
Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

December 14, 2006

Hon. Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker-Designate  
US House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Pelosi:

After your party's November 16<sup>th</sup> leadership elections, you held a news conference in which you pledged to lead a congress committed to openness. In that spirit and as you and your leadership team work through the many organizational decisions needed for the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, we'd like to make two requests of you which we were unsuccessful in pursuing with the incoming Republican majority twelve years ago:

- Allow House floor proceedings to be covered by C-SPAN cameras.
- Release individual House votes electronically immediately after voting periods have closed

Independent media cameras have long been permitted in congressional committees, yet for nearly 30 years, television cameras in the House chamber have operated under the control of the Speaker. This compromise was crafted long ago to convince wary members to allow congressional sessions to be televised, and in the ensuing years it has become an anachronism that does a disservice to the institution and to the public. During debate, congressional technicians are limited to taking static, head-on shots of the representative who's speaking at the podium. Rules and established practices prevent congressional cameras from taking individual reaction shots or from panning the chamber, leaving viewers with an incomplete picture of what's happening in the House of Representatives.

For a dozen years or more, independent media cameras have been permitted in the House chamber during joint sessions and joint meetings. We're asking you to take the next step and open the regular House floor proceedings to C-SPAN cameras on a permanent basis. We will commit to covering House debate in the same manner we televise congressional hearings -- fully, accurately, and with the unbiased production style on which we've built our reputation for the past 28 years. We also pledge to make our floor coverage fully available to accredited news media following established pool practices.

Immediate electronic access to voting records is also an important step in making the House more open and accessible to the television viewing public. Votes have been electronically recorded for decades. A visitor to the chamber can watch as they are recorded in real-time on an electronic tally board. Yet, official public release of individual votes is still delivered long after a vote has closed. Frequently, by the time individual voting records are released by the Clerk, the House has moved on to other issues. The net effect is that this important information is rarely included in C-SPAN's live telecasts of House floor proceedings. Members' votes are the most critical part of Congress' public record. Help us present a complete picture of Congress' work by permitting immediate electronic release of individual votes.

Both of these proposals are made with one simple goal in mind – to allow a viewer of C-SPAN's gavel-to-gavel coverage the same access to information as any citizen who's watching the debate while sitting in the House gallery.

On March 19, 1979, when the House was televised for the first time, Representative Al Gore made a speech on the floor that welcomed Congress to the television age. He predicted that members would become so comfortable with the presence of television that they would soon move to open the floor proceedings to coverage by the independent media.

Under your leadership, Speaker-designate Pelosi, we hope that Al Gore's long ago prediction will finally become reality. Please let us know what we can do to advance your consideration of these two important requests.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brian P. Lamb". The signature is written in black ink and includes a long, sweeping horizontal stroke at the end.

Brian P. Lamb  
Chairman and CEO

Cc: Hon. Steny Hoyer  
Hon. John Boehner