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FMC EXECUTIVE BOARD, LEADERSHIP PENS OPEN LETTER AGAINST POLITICAL VIOLENCE SIGNED BY OVER 140 FORMER MEMBERS OF CONGRESS

Washington, DC – U.S. Association of Former Members of Congress (FMC) President Barbara Comstock (R-VA, 2015-2019), President Elect Donna Edwards (D-MD, 2008-2017), and Board Member Rodney Davis (R-IL, 2013-2023), led a letter in response to the shocking attempted assassination against President Trump whole heartedly condemning the act of political violence and calling for American leaders to end their use of divisive rhetoric against one another.

Political violence in America has seen an appalling rise over the past several years, something our Former Members have frequently experienced themselves. [In a recent survey by FMC and UMass Amherst](#), 47% of Former Members indicated that they or their families received threats while in Congress, with the frequency increasing to 69% for Former Members who are women or people of color. Additionally, a growing number of [Americans believe political violence may be necessary](#) in order to protect our democracy.

Many feel the heightened vitriol and antagonistic rhetoric used by both parties against the other has played a large part in the growth of these tensions, and only adds fuel to the fire. The letter said in part, “The attempt on former President Trump’s life must serve as a wake-up call for us all, and thus we are coming together, across party lines and ideological differences, to summon the nation’s political leadership to do everything they can and put an end to this ever-increasing escalation of rhetoric. Like us, they love this country, and rising above hyper-partisan party politics is the service they must now render to the Union.”

This letter was signed by 143 Former Members of Congress, including FMC’s entire Executive Board, with 83 Democrats and 60 Republicans showing support for this message.

Read the full letter and see all signatories below.

As members of the bipartisan Former Members of Congress Association (FMC), we believe strongly that the attempted assassination of former President Trump must be a turning point for our political culture. For over a decade, too many candidates, elected officials, activists, and the media have increasingly turned up the political temperature by employing more aggressive and irresponsible rhetoric. The result is that what used to be a political opponent can now simply be

referred to as an enemy. As a nation we have arrived at a reflection point that must serve as a call to action for us all.

Almost all of us, whether Democrat or Republican, have been subjected to threats or acts of political violence during our time serving in public office. Over the years, the rhetoric of tribalism and dehumanization has become accepted as normal and has nearly replaced any semblance of civil and acceptable norms in our political discourse. This in turn has given rise to a political environment, where unstable individuals believe they have a mandate to inflict harm on those they disagree with. Threats of political violence have caused election volunteers and officials to resign, prevented qualified candidates from seeking public office, and brought menacing intruders to the homes of Members of Congress and Supreme Court Justices.

The attempt on former President Trump's life must serve as a wake-up call for us all, and thus we are coming together, across party lines and ideological differences, to summon the nation's political leadership to do everything they can and put an end to this ever-increasing escalation of rhetoric. Like us, they love this country, and rising above hyper-partisan party politics is the service they must now render to the Union.

Leadership in this context means: demand of our elected officials to call out members of their party when their rhetoric is inflammatory and dangerous; reinforce that those we disagree with are fellow citizens – not enemies; commit to the fact that our differences are dealt with during vigorous campaigns and at the ballot box, not through intimidation and threats; and respect that those we disagree with have the right to be heard, a right so sacred that our Founding Fathers enshrined it in the Constitution's First Amendment.

Our Republic is fragile, and *We The People* must come together. Within hours of blood being shed in Pennsylvania and a family losing their father solely because he attended a political rally, social media helped spread conspiracy theories, vitriol, and calls to arms. Too many of those messages came from current elected officials or candidates for office. Our call-to-action is that we as a society, led by our elected officials, reject and admonish unequivocally those within our own political circles who continue to use belligerence and tribalism as they seek to build support. This must be a scared-straight moment for our country, and we – the leadership and members of FMC – demand of our fellow citizens and political leaders to rise to the urgency of now.

We leave you with words President Lincoln said during his first inaugural address, still so appropriate and inspirational over 160 years later: "The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battlefield and patriot grave to every living heart and hearthstone all over this land, will yet swell the chorus of Union, when again touched, as surely, they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

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1.Rep. Jason Altmire (D-PA, 2007-2013)

2.Rep. Tom Andrews (D-ME, 1991-1995)

3.Rep. Cindy Axne (D-IA, 2019-2023)

4.Rep. Brian Baird (D-WA, 1999-2011)

5.Rep. Mike Barnes (D-MD, 1979-1987)

6.Rep. Steve Bartlett (R-TX, 1983-1991)

7.Rep. Robert Bauman (R-MD, 1973-1981)

8.Sen. Mark Begich (D-AK, 2009-2015)

9.Rep. Doug Bereuter (R-NE, 1979-2004)

10.Rep. Mike Bishop (R-MI, 2015-2019)

11.Rep. David Bonior (D-MI, 1977-2003)
12.Rep. Mary Bono (R-CA, 1998-2013)
13.Rep. Robert Borski (D-PA, 1983-2003)
14.Rep. Carolyn Bourdeaux (D-GA, 2021-2023)
15.Rep. Charles Boustany (R-LA, 2005-2017)
16.Rep. Nancy Boyda (D-KS, 2007-2009)
17.Rep. Bruce Braley (D-IA, 2007-2015)
18.Sen. Carol Moseley Braun (D-IL, 1993-1999)
19.Rep. Carolyn Bourdeaux (D-GA, 2021-2022)
20.Rep. Susan Brooks (R-IN, 2013-2021)
21.Rep. Glen Browder (D-AL, 1989-1997)
22.Rep. Ann Marie Buerkle (R-NY, 2011-2013)
23.Rep. Cheri Bustos (D-IL, 2013-2023)
24.Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-MO, 2005-2013)
25.Rep. Ben Chandler (D-KY, 2004-2013)
26.Rep. Rod Chandler (R-WA, 1983-1993)
27.Rep. Lacy Clay (D-MO, 2001-2021)
28.Rep. Barbara Comstock (R-VA, 2015-2019)
29.Rep. Mike Conaway (R-TX, 2005-2021)
30.Rep. Sam Coppersmith (D-AZ, 1993-1995)
31.Rep. Christopher Cox (R-CA, 1989-2005)
32.Rep. Mark Critz (D-PA, 2010-2013)
33.Rep. Lincoln Davis (D-TN, 2003-2011)
34.Rep. Rodney Davis (R-IL, 2013-2023)
35.Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR, 1987-2023)
36.Rep. Jeff Denham (R-CA, 2011-2019)
37.Rep. Charlie Dent (R-PA, 2005-2018)
38.Rep. Val Demings (D-FL, 2017-2023)
39.Rep. Peter Deutsch (D-FL, 1993-2005)
40.Sec. Charles Djou (R-HI, 2010-2011)
41.Rep. Thelma Drake (R-VA, 2005-2009)
42.Rep. Steve Driehaus (D-OH, 2009-2011)
43.Rep. Donna Edwards (D-MD, 2008-2017)
44.Rep. Mickey Edwards (R-OK, 1977-1993)
45.Rep. Brad Ellsworth (D-IN, 2007-2011)
46.Rep. Glenn English (D-OK, 1975-1994)
47.Rep. Ben Erdreich (D-AL, 1983-1993)
48.Rep. Elizabeth Esty (D-CT, 2013-2019)
49.Rep. Dave Evans (D-IN, 1975-1983)
50.Rep. John Faso (R-NY, 2017-2019)
51.Rep. Bill Flores (R-TX, 2011-2021)
52.Rep. Jim Gerlach (R-PA, 2003-2015)
53.Rep. Phil Gingrey (R-GA, 2003-2015)
54.Sec. Dan Glickman (D-KS, 1977-1995)
55.Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-VA, 1993-2019)
56.Rep. Bart Gordon (D-TN, 1985-2011)
57.Rep. Bill Gradison (R-OH, 1975-1993)
58.AG. Tim Griffin (R-AR, 2011-2015)
59.Rep. Gil Gutknecht (R-MN, 1995-2007)
60.Sec. Chuck Hagel (R-NE, 1997-2009)
61.Rep. Melissa Hart (R-PA, 2001-2007)
62.Rep. Dennis Hertel (D-MI, 1981-1993)
63.Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ, 1999-2015)
64.Rep. Kendra Horn (D-OK, 2019-2021)
65.Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison (R-TX, 1993-2013)
66.Gov. Asa Hutchinson (R-AR, 1997-2001)
67.Sen. Tim Hutchinson (R-AR, H: 1993-1997; S: 1997-2003)
68.Rep. Steve Israel (D-NY, 2001-2017)
69.Rep. James R. Jones (D-OK, 1973-1987)

70.Rep. John Katko (R-NY, 2015-2023)
71.Rep. Ric Keller (R-FL, 2001-2009)
72.Rep. Sue Kelly (R-NY, 1995-2007)
73.Rep. Barbara Kennelly (D-CT, 1982-1999)
74.Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI, 1997-2023)
75.Sen. Paul Kirk Jr. (D-MA, 2009-2010)
76.Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL, 2011-2023)
77.Rep. Mike Kopetski (D-OR, 1991-1995)
78.Rep. Ken Kramer (R-CO, 1979-1987)
79.Rep. John LaFalce (D-NY, 1995-2003)
80.Rep. Larry LaRocco (D-ID, 1991-1995)
81.Rep. Brenda Lawrence (D-MI, 2015-2023)
82.Rep. John LeBoutillier (R-NY, 1981-1983)
83.Sen. Blanche Lincoln (D-AR, H: 1993-1997;
S: 1999-2011)
84.Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-IL, 2005-2021)
85.Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ, 1995-2019)
86.Rep. Alan Lowenthal (D-CA, 2013-2023)
87.Rep. Tom MacArthur (R-NJ, 2015-2019)
88.Rep. Andy Maguire (D-NJ, 1975-1981)
89.Chair Dan Maffei (D-NY, 2009-2011;
2013-2015)
90.Rep. Tom Malinowski (D-NJ, 2019-2023)
91.Rep. Don Manzullo (R-IL, 1993-2013)
92.Rep. Marjorie Margolies (D-PA, 1993-1995)
93.Rep. Betsy Markey (D-CO, 2009-2011)
94.Rep. Matthew McHugh (D-NY, 1975-1993)
95.Rep. Tom McMillen (D-MD, 1987-1993)
96.Rep. Michael McNulty (D-NY, 1989-2009)
97.Rep. Luke Messer (R-IN, 2013-2019)
98.Rep. Dan Mica (D-FL, 1979-1989)
99.Rep. Harry Mitchell (D-AZ, 2007-2011)
100.Rep. Connie Morella (R-MD, 1987-2003)
101.Rep. Patrick Murphy (D-PA, 2007-2011)
102.Sen. Ben Nelson (D-NE, 2001-2013)
103.Rep. Richard Nolan (D-MN, 1975-1981;
2013-2019)
104.Rep. Steven Palazzo (R-MS, 2011-2023)
105.Rep. Erik Paulson (R-MN, 2009-2019)
106.Rep. L.F. Payne (D-VA, 1988-1997)
107.Rep. Edward Pease (R-IN, 1997-2001)
108.Rep. Tim Petri (R-WI, 1979-2015)
109.Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND, 1993-2011)
110.Rep. David Price (D-NC, 1987-1995;
1997-2023)
111.Rep. Nick Rahall (D-WV, 1977-2015)
112.Rep. Tom Reed (R-NY, 2010-2022)
113.Rep. Reid Ribble (R-WI, 2011-2017)
114.Rep. Martha Roby (R-AL, 2011-2021)
115.Rep. Peter Roskam (R-IL, 2007-2019)
116.Rep. Dennis Ross (R-FL, 2011-2019)
117.Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-CA, 1997-2017)
118.Rep. Mark Schauer (D-MI, 2009-2011)
119.Rep. Lynn Schenk (D-CA, 1993-1995)
120.Rep. Claudine Schneider (R-RI,
1981-1993)
121.Rep. Chris Shays (R-CT, 1987-2009)
122.Rep. Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH,
2007-2011; 2013-2015; 2017-2019)
123.Rep. David Skaggs (D-CO, 1987-1999)
124. Rep. Lawrence Smith (D-FL, 1983-1993)
125. Rep. Vince Snowbarger (R-KS,
1997-1999)
126. Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-FL, 1989-2013)
127. Rep. Steve Stivers (R-OH, 2011-2021)

128. Rep. Tom Tauke (R-IA, 1979-1991)
129. Rep. John Tanner (D-TN, 1989-2011)
130. Rep. Jill Long Thompson (D-IN, 1989-1995)
131. Rep. Todd Tiahrt (R-KS, 1995-2011)
132. Rep. Pat Tiberi (R-OH, 2001-2018)
133. Rep. Peter Torkildsen (R-MA, 1993-1997)
134. Rep. Dave Trott (R-MI, 2015-2019)
135. Rep. Jim Turner (D-TX, 1997-2005)
136. Sen. Mark Udall (D-CO, H: 1999-2009, S: 2009-2015)
137. Rep. Robert Underwood (D-GU, 1993-2003)
138. Rep. Fred Upton (R-MI, 1987-2023)
139. Rep. Mimi Walters (R-CA, 2015-2019)
140. Rep. Mike Ward (D-KY, 1995-1997)
141. Rep. Jerry Weller (R-IL, 1995-2009)
142. Rep. Al Wynn (D-MD, 1993-2008)
143. Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY, 2007-2023)
144. Pete Weichlein, FMC CEO
145. Sabine Schleidt, FMC COO