

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 27, 2021

The Honorable Joseph Biden
President of the United States of America
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Biden,

I write to strongly encourage you to use your executive authority to help create space for the American public and our democracy to heal from the January 6th insurrection. The country is hurting. While the Select Committee on the January 6 Attack and the whole of Congress continue its work to investigate and report on what happened that day to hold those responsible accountable, we must not lose sight of the need to heal from the trauma left unaddressed for almost a year. Therefore, as we approach the one year anniversary of the attack on the Capitol, I encourage you to issue a proclamation recognizing January 6th as a “National Day of Healing”.

Nearly 70% of Americans viewed the 2020 Presidential Election as a significant source of stress, which was only further exacerbated by the insurrection three months later.¹ Simultaneously, the COVID-19 global pandemic persists, which has created its own stress burden and precipitated a youth mental health crisis.² These challenges aren’t experienced by the American people in isolation. We need an opportunity to collectively heal together and a designated day to do so will help rally the country behind this cause.

Last month, I introduced a National Day of Healing Resolution (H.Res.820) to promote evidence-based solutions for addressing violence as the public health crisis that it is and to designate a National Day of Healing. As Americans continue to struggle through the financial hardships of the pandemic, they also face another pandemic that predates COVID-19: violence. The violent outburst on January 6th is only one expression of this public health crisis. We have a moral imperative and responsibility to do everything in our power to address violence in all its forms, and a national day of healing will contribute to and help coordinate these efforts. Considering violence as the public health crisis it is, trauma-informed cognitive behavior therapy, violence intervention and prevention programs, hospital-based violence prevention, and other innovative solutions can help communities heal.

As I continue the work to advance a National Day of Healing Resolution through the legislative process, I urge you to use your executive power to highlight the injustice of January 6th and make sure the trauma it caused is not lost to history. In less than a year since the insurrection, Republicans have

¹ <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2020/10/election-stress>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/07/science/pandemic-adolescents-depression-anxiety.html>

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already begun to rewrite the history of that painful day. As you know, the President has the power to issue a proclamation that recognizes an individual or an event to elevate important issues. Issuing a proclamation declaring January 6, 2022, a National Day of Healing will help ensure that no one can erase this traumatic event in our history or the need for resources that help us individually and collectively heal.

I hope this letter will help open a dialogue to explore and uplift ways to support communities. I thank you for your leadership and welcome the opportunity to work together on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D
Member of Congress