



[The House of Representatives Delays Return to Washington](#)

The House of Representatives reversed course and announced that members would not be returning to Washington next week amid concerns over their safety. Washington D.C. currently has over 38,000 cases of COVID-19, with thousands more in the nearby suburbs of Maryland and Virginia. Majority Leader Steny Hoyer announced that after consultation with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle and the Capitol physician, representatives would not be required to return to Washington D.C. as had been originally planned. The House had initially planned to return on May 4th, the same day as the Senate. However, widespread backlash from both Republicans and Democrats forced the leadership to reconsider. This has not dissuaded the Senate, as Majority Leader Mitch McConnell still intends on calling his chamber back, despite warnings from the Capitol physician.

In addition to safety concerns over members returning to Washington, there were also questions about how practical it would be. Some members raised the issue of how committee hearings would work to comply with social distancing regulations. This same concern was voiced about staffers working in close proximity to each other in members' offices. Leader Hoyer said that they still hoped to return in the near future, but it wasn't prudent to do so yet. Until they are able to safely return, the chamber will likely turn to remote voting to pass important legislation. President Trump heaped scorn on the decision not to return, saying Democrats were "enjoying their vacation." The president has frequently called for the country to reopen and return to business as usual, despite warnings from healthcare professionals. In contrast, the leadership of the House of Representatives has heeded the advice from those professionals.