

United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

February 22, 2023

Dear Colleague:

Like many of you, I was surprised to hear reports that Speaker Kevin McCarthy plans to allow Fox News' Tucker Carlson and his producers to review highly sensitive security camera footage captured in the events around January 6, one of the darkest days in American history.

Unfortunately, Speaker McCarthy, to get the votes he needed from the MAGA wing of the House Republican Conference to become speaker, agreed to make tens of thousands of hours of sensitive footage from across the Capitol complex publicly available. This disclosure poses grave security risks to members of Congress and everyone who works on Capitol Hill.

The speaker is needlessly exposing the Capitol complex to one of the worst security risks since 9/11. The footage Speaker McCarthy is making available to Fox News is a treasure trove of closely held information about how the Capitol complex is protected and its public release would compromise the safety of the Legislative Branch and allow those who want to commit another attack to learn how Congress is safeguarded.

Releasing security footage publicly reveals the location of security cameras across the Capitol grounds, making it harder and more dangerous for our brave Capitol police officers to do their job. It also risks exposing the carefully laid out and highly guarded plans for the continuity of government, intended to preserve our democracy in the event of an attack. All things anyone who would want to harm our country would love to learn.

And by handpicking Tucker Carlson, Speaker McCarthy laid bare that this sham is simply about pandering to MAGA election deniers, not the truth. Tucker Carlson has no fidelity to the truth or facts and has used his platform to promote the Big Lie, distort reality, and espouse bogus conspiracy theories about January 6. If the past is any indication, Tucker Carlson will select only clips that he can use to twist the facts to sow doubt of what happened on January 6 and feed into the propaganda he's already put on Fox News' air, which based on recent reports he may not even believe himself.

Giving someone as disingenuous as Tucker Carlson exclusive access to this type of sensitive information is a grave mistake by Speaker McCarthy that will only embolden supporters of the Big Lie and weaken faith in our democracy.

Let me be clear, the Senate strongly objects to the release of this sensitive security footage to Tucker Carlson and Fox News. The speaker— nor any elected official— does not have the right to jeopardize the safety of senators nor Senate and Capitol staff for their own political purposes. Period. Full stop.

I know the Senate Sergeant-at-Arms will continue to do everything in her power to ensure the safety and security of the Senate and everyone who works in the Senate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles Schumer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator