United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 13, 2014

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader Reid and Leader McConnell:

As both the Senate and the nation look toward the 114th Congress and beyond, we believe that better functioning relationships in this body will be a necessary prerequisite in order to meet our common challenges.

Last year, under your leadership, members from both sides of the aisle were able to come together and have a frank, open and fruitful discussion during the Joint Caucus meeting in the Old Senate Chamber. As you know, nearly half of the members of the Senate are currently serving their first term, a level not seen in 30 years. Soon more new members will join our ranks. We believe that regular bipartisan meetings like the one in July 2013 can help foster the kind of productive relationships that will be critical for the Senate to live up to its reputation as the world's most deliberative body.

It is our hope that our respective leadership teams take concrete steps to broaden the relationships and deepen the rapport among members. Specifically, we believe that monthly bipartisan lunches would serve this goal. Given that our caucuses already meet separately at least twice weekly, surely scheduling a bipartisan lunch just once a month would make for a workable option.

We appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jeff Flake

Dean Heller

John McCain

Dianne Feinstein

Susan Collins

Jack Reed

Bill Nelson

Sherrod Brown

Tom Udall

Mark R Warner

Kirsten Gillibrand

Jerry Moran

Joe Donnelly

Kelly A. Ayotte

Heidi Heitkamp