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**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC**

January 27, 2009

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein  
Chairwoman  
Joint Inaugural Committee  
331 Hart Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

I am writing to join with the other Members of Congress who have expressed very serious concerns about the ticket problems, and the other access and logistical foul-ups that occurred at the Inauguration. I have heard from a number of my constituents who had tickets and arrived in the gate areas early enough that they should have had no difficulty gaining entrance to their designated viewing sections in time for the ceremony. Unfortunately, they were among the thousands who were unable to participate in this historic event, despite having followed the directions they were given. As I am sure you understand, while the inability to get inside the gates was a disappointment to anyone who had a ticket, the disappointment was compounded for those who traveled long distances at considerable personal expense only to end up having to watch the swearing-in on television (or, in some cases, missing it entirely because they were stuck in one of the ticket lines).

I appreciate the fact that the event may have been unprecedented – even for Washington, DC -- in terms of the numbers of participants. But, the actual crowds were in line with the predictions, and so the number of attendees should not have been a surprise. I am aware that the Joint Committee has apologized for the problems that occurred, and made arrangements for those who were unable to make use of their tickets to register on line to receive memorabilia associated with the event. However, I believe we need to go beyond those gestures, and conduct a thorough investigation into how the ticketing process broke down. I understand that you have begun to initiate that process. I believe that, as part of that effort, it is essential to look specifically at how the overlapping jurisdictions of the various official entities involved in the ceremony (Capitol Police, Metropolitan Police, House and Senate Sergeants at Arms, the Joint Committee, etc.) may have played a part in the confusion. In addition, it is vital to examine how some members of the public were able to gain access to restricted viewing areas without going through the magnetometers.

While the Inauguration was of course a one-time event, and there is no true consolation for those who were unable to enjoy the ceremony despite holding tickets, I think we owe all of the participants not only an apology, but also a clear explanation as to why the problems occurred, and what will be done to rectify them. I would add that this is important not only

from the perspective of those who attempted to observe the swearing-in, but also because there will be future large events in the area (some planned, others potentially as a result of security problems), and we cannot afford to have a repeat of the level of disorganization we saw on January 20.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response.

  
BARNEY FRANK

CC: Senator Robert Bennett, Member, Joint Inaugural Committee  
The Honorable Terrance Gainer, Senate Sergeant-at-Arms  
The Honorable Wilson Livingood, House Sergeant-at-Arms