The Hon. Joseph Lieberman, Chairman
The Hon. Susan Collins, Ranking Member
Committee on Homeland Security & Government Affairs
U.S. Senate, 340 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dec. 1, 2011

RE: Support the "Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act"

Dear Chairman and Ranking Member:

Our organizations – Campaign Legal Center, Common Cause, Democracy 21, Public Citizen, Sunlight Foundation and US PIRG – strongly support passage of the "Stop Trading on Congressional Knowledge Act" (STOCK Act) designed to prevent congressional insider trading, and encourage you to move the legislation for a full floor vote.

Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) introduced S. 1903 and Sen. Scott Brown (R-Mass.) introduced S. 1871 in an effort to apply the laws against insider trading to members and staff of Congress and provide a system of transparency for commodities and securities trading to help ensure that the law is monitored and enforced. Together, the bills have a combined 16 cosponsors.

Under current law, "insider trading" is defined as the buying or selling of securities or commodities based on non-public information in violation of confidentiality – either to the issuing company or the source of information. Congressional officials and employees in the course of official business, it is often believed, do not owe a duty of confidentiality to these companies and thus are not liable for insider trading.

Legislation is needed to provide a clear and balanced application of the laws against insider trading to both the private and public sectors and offer the important tool of disclosure for ensuring compliance with the law.

We encourage all members of the Senate to join in a bipartisan effort to apply the insider trading laws uniformly across Congress before any new scandals may arise.

Sincerely,

Campaign Legal Center Common Cause Democracy 21 Public Citizen Sunlight Foundation US PIRG