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November 29, 2017

Hon. Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
H-232, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan,

I urge you to take immediate action to allow the former House employee who accused Representative John Conyers, Jr. of unwanted sexual advances to tell her story publicly.

Last week, BuzzFeed reported that Rep. Conyers settled a wrongful dismissal complaint with a "severance payment" of \$27,111.75 to the complainant. Under the settlement, the complainant was forced into a non-disclosure agreement and has been unable to openly discuss the workplace harassment and abuse she was subjected to, while Rep. Conyers and his attorney, Arnold Reed, have been free to make their case to the public. Three additional women (Maria Reddick, Melanie Sloan, and Deanna Maher) have been able to speak publicly about harassment by Rep. Conyers because they chose not to pursue a complaint through a system that is now universally acknowledged to be stacked against the victim. The accuser who attempted to seek help through a deeply flawed system should not continue to be silenced by the institution that failed to protect her in the first place.

Mr. Reed has made clear his client will not release the former employee from the agreement, and it is unclear whether the Office of Compliance, the House Ethics Committee, House Employment Counsel, or some combination of the three has the authority to do so. As Speaker of the House, I urge you to immediately intervene to right this wrong. The woman named in the settlement agreement with Rep. Conyers deserves the opportunity to tell her story and I ask you to swiftly intercede on her behalf.

Sincerely,

KATHLEEN M. RICE  
Member of Congress

