

**From:** J. C. Boggs  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 7, 2023 2:35 PM  
**To:** John "JT" Tomaszewki (JT@foreign.senate.gov)  
**Subject:** Senator Coons, Congressman McCaul write letter to DRC President Tshisekedi calling on him to ensure free and fair elections next month

***This material is distributed by King & Spalding on behalf of The Honorable Moise Katumbi Chapwe. Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.***



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## **Senator Coons, Congressman McCaul write letter to DRC President Tshisekedi calling on him to ensure free and fair elections next month**

*Lawmakers note reports of political attacks on political figures and harassment of activists in the runup to elections*

WASHINGTON — Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations (SFOPS) Chris Coons (D-Del.) and Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Michael McCaul (R-Texas) [wrote a letter](#) today to Felix Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, expressing support for free, fair, and transparent general elections in December and noting the lack of transparency surrounding the electoral process so far, including with respect to the country's central electoral body, the National Independent Electoral Commission (CENI).

"As you know, holding credible, inclusive, and transparent elections within the Democratic Republic of the Congo's constitutionally determined deadlines is fundamental to the development of democracy, peace, and prosperity in your country. A poorly administered election would undermine not only these goals, but would jeopardize efforts to strengthen our bilateral relationship, including cooperation on regional security, environmental protection, and U.S.-DRC trade and investment," **the lawmakers wrote.**

**They continued,** "As the Democratic Republic of the Congo's central electoral body, it is critical that the CENI operates impartially and transparently to ensure the integrity of the electoral process. We are concerned that the CENI has not provided adequate transparency regarding the voter register, and we join the U.S. Department of State in calling on the CENI to publish voter registration lists as soon as possible."

In the runup to December's election, reports of physical attacks on political figures, harassment of political party activists, and arbitrary detentions of civil society members have risen. Additionally, concerns over the lack of transparency of CENI's spending and failure to commit to publishing preliminary and final election results in a timely fashion have raised questions about the integrity of the electoral process.

These concerns come five years after the Democratic Republic of the Congo's last general election in 2018, when the results announced by CENI did not match projections made by local election observers, and local civil society groups made accusations of widespread irregularities and fraud.

You can read the full letter [here](#).

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