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## Pelosi says no to C-SPAN request on floor proceedings

Associated Press

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WASHINGTON -- Speaker-to-be Nancy Pelosi cited the need to preserve the "dignity and decorum" of the House as she rejected a request Friday that C-SPAN operate its own cameras in covering the chamber.

The public service network has provided gavel-to-gavel television coverage of House proceedings since 1979. But the House leader has kept control of the cameras, with coverage generally limited to tight shots of the speaker or the podium.

The situation is similar in the Senate, which C-SPAN has televised since 1986.

C-SPAN's chairman and chief executive told Pelosi, D-Calif., that under this arrangement, cameras are prevented "from taking individual reaction shots or from panning the chamber, leaving viewers with an incomplete picture of what's happening in the House of Representatives."

Brian Lamb wrote Pelosi on Dec. 14 that media cameras long have been permitted to cover committee hearings and that for a dozen years or more independent cameras have been allowed into the chamber for joint sessions and joint meetings in the House.



Pelosi (AP Photo)

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He said C-SPAN would cover floor proceedings in the same manner it covers hearings \_ "fully, accurately and with the unbiased production style on which we've built our reputation for the past 28 years."

Pelosi said in her response Friday, "I believe the dignity and decorum of the United States House of Representatives are best preserved by maintaining the current system of televised proceedings."

Lamb said in an interview he was "very disappointed" by Pelosi's decision. He said he tried unsuccessfully to change the policy when Republicans gained control of the House in 1995 and thought this would be another good opportunity because Pelosi has stressed that this will be the most open and ethical Congress in history.

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