

the right approach. A number of Members of the Senate and House objected to this approach, however. It is a parliamentary body, and we sometimes have to compromise a bit. They use the separation of powers as the grounds for not wanting to do that. Their concern is focused particularly on what they see as a potential for partisan motivation in the manner in which the executive branch might enforce the law.

In an effort to ensure the broadest possible support for, as well as speedy enactment of, congressional coverage legislation, I agreed to support this compromise, the compromise embodied by the bill before us now, S. 2.

Under this compromise, congressional employees who believe that their employer—congressional employer—is violating one of the laws made applicable to the Congress by S. 2 have a choice, they have a choice that is a compromise here. After counseling, they can either file a formal complaint with the new congressional office of compliance or they can go directly to the courts.

The only highly limited exceptions are with respect to those substantive laws that do not afford an analogous right to go to court to other persons who are not congressional employees.

So, I agreed to support this compromise. It is a good compromise and a reasonable compromise because it is consistent with the spirit of the proposal I introduced. I congratulate Senator GRASSLEY for his leadership and his willingness to discuss this matter and to listen to those of us who wanted to make some changes.

Mr. President, I believe that it is imperative that we should move forthwith to take this important step toward restoring the confidence and the trust of the American people in their Congress. Acting promptly to place the Congress under the same laws by which it expects the rest of society to abide will send a powerful message to the American people that we got the message. We got the message that the reign of an arrogant and imperial Congress is over. By moving expeditiously, we in the Congress can send that clear and unmistakable message to the American people that we are committed to true and honest reform.

Finally, Mr. President, I believe that S. 2 has another equally important purpose. Beyond moving to restore the confidence of the American people in their Congress, I believe the enactment of the Congressional Accountability Act will help us to make better laws. If we have to live under the laws we make, we will make better laws. Some say we ought to make a lot less laws, and I totally agree. Others say we ought to repeal one for every one we pass. That sounds like a good idea as well.

But learning firsthand what effects the laws that are passed have on those to whom the law applies will give Congress a unique and invaluable way in

which to learn by experience what is wrong with those laws.

Moreover, living under those laws will give Congress a powerful disincentive. It will think twice before passing laws which it would not want to live under.

So I am hopeful, in conclusion, that one spinoff from this excellent piece of legislation will be that we may look at some of these laws that are so onerous on the American people and on many businesses throughout the country and change some of them, as well, when we realize how bad they really are.

I thank you, Mr. President. I thank the Senator from Iowa for his courtesy, and I yield the floor.

Mr. GRASSLEY addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The able Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to add Senator HUTCHISON as a cosponsor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, this request is from the floor leader. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate stand in recess from 3:15 p.m. until 4 p.m. today.

There being no objection, at 3:15 p.m., the Senate recessed until 4 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mrs. HUTCHISON).

APPOINTMENT BY THE PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to provisions of Public Law 102-166, and upon the recommendation of the majority leader, in consultation with the minority leader, appoints Dr. Harriett G. Jenkins as Director of the Office of Senate Fair Employment Practices.

THE CONGRESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1995

The Senate continued with the consideration of the bill.

Ms. SNOWE addressed the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair recognizes the Senator from Maine.

Ms. SNOWE. Thank you, Madam President.

It is with great pride that I appear today to speak on the floor of the U.S. Senate as Maine's new Senator, particularly because of the legislation that is before us today on the Congressional Accountability Act.

I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the Senate majority leader for setting this as a high priority in the 104th session of Congress.

In a year when people are talking about change, and looking for more accountability and accomplishments

from Congress, there is no more important message that we could send than this: that we will play by the rules, and we will abide by the laws—and Congress will no longer set itself above the law of the land.

Madam President, this is basic fairness, and I congratulate my colleague from Iowa, as well, for his tireless efforts to bring this legislation forward.

It was a decade ago, Madam President, when I first testified in support of the principles embodied in this legislation before the Senate today. Ten years ago, I spoke before the House's Post Office and Civil Service Committee about the need for Congress to treat its employees in the same way we require private businesses to treat their employees.

And I have made the application of our Nation's laws to this Congress a chief objective since that occasion 10 years ago. The issue then, as now, was fairness. Congress should not live above the law. In both of the last two Congresses, I introduced legislation in the other body to extend coverage for Congressional employees under the Civil Rights Act and the Age Discrimination Act, as well as OSHA.

Last year, I testified before the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress [JCOC], which was established in 1993 to review and improve the legislative process. And last September, I expressed my support for this Chamber's congressional compliance legislation in a bipartisan letter sent to former majority leader and fellow Mainer George Mitchell, as well as to other Members of this body.

Madam President, I have remained vigilant in working for this legislation because we must show the American people that we are willing to abide by the same laws that we require of them. The elections last November made clear that the American people expect more of Congress—that they want changes in the way this institution does business.

This is one of the most important and necessary pieces of legislation this body will consider in this Congress, and I am proud that it is among the first we will consider this session.

We must support this legislation, not only to heed the wishes of the American people to change Congress, but also to deliver on our promise to do what is right. Congress simply cannot continue to live above the law and call itself a body that is "representative" of the America we live in today.

After all, what kind of message does Congress send to Americans when it sets itself above the law? What kind of message does Congress send to America when it believes it is beholden to different standards? And how can Congress claim to pass laws in the best interest of the American people if Congress refuses to abide by those very same laws.

Madam President, Congress should be the very last institution in America to