

COMMUNICATION FROM THE  
SPEAKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER,  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, September 13, 2000.

Hon. WILLIAM F. GOODLING,  
Chairman, Committee on Education and the  
Workforce, U.S. House of Representatives,  
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is to advise you that Representative Matthew G. Martinez's election to the Committee on Education and the Workforce has been automatically vacated pursuant to clause 5(b) of rule X effective today.

Sincerely,

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House.

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The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER,  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Washington, DC, September 13, 2000.

Hon. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN,  
Chairman, Committee on International Relations,  
U.S. House of Representatives, Wash-  
ington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is to advise you that Representative Matthew G. Martinez's election to the Committee on International Relations has been automatically vacated pursuant to clause 5(b) of rule X effective today.

Sincerely,

J. DENNIS HASTERT,  
Speaker of the House.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER  
PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the foregoing communications, the party affiliation of Representative MARTINEZ has been switched for informational voting record purposes and his committee memberships have been vacated.

Had the foregoing communication of July 27, 2000, from Representative MARTINEZ to the Clerk been laid before the House at that time, the party affiliation for voting informational purposes would have been changed or, as has been the case in the past, the process would have been timely noticed in writing to the chairman of the Democratic Caucus who, in turn, would notify the Speaker by letter pursuant to clause 5(b) of rule X.

HONORABLE MATTHEW MARTINEZ  
JOINS REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

(Mr. MARTINEZ asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MARTINEZ. Mr. Speaker, on July 26, 2000, I participated in the

House Republican Conference as a Republican.

The next day I asked the Clerk of the House to change my party designation on his official records and database to Republican.

I have also notified the chairman of the Democratic Caucus of my resignation of the caucus and my desire to be a member of the Republican conference.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all records of the House as of July 26, 2000, reflect my voting status as a Republican.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

PRESIDENTIAL TRANSITION ACT  
OF 2000

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Government Reform be discharged from the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 4931) to provide for the training or orientation of individuals, during a Presidential transition, who the President intends to appoint to certain key positions, to provide for a study and report on improving the financial disclosure process for certain Presidential nominees, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, and I do not plan to object, but I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) for a brief explanation of the bill.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas for yielding to me. Mr. Speaker, the ranking member has been just inestimable in terms of all the help he has provided us on this and other pieces of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4931, the Presidential Transition Act of 2000, represents a bipartisan effort to update the Presidential Transition Act of 1963. H.R. 4931 would allow transition funds to be used for a formal training and orientation process for incoming appointees to senior administration positions, including cabinet members.

On November 2, 1999, the House passed a bill with similar provisions, H.R. 3137, by a voice vote under suspension of the rules.

On June 8, 2000, Senator FRED THOMPSON from Tennessee introduced a companion bill, S. 2705, the Presidential Transition Act of 2000. The Senator added some well thought out provisions that call for study and proposals to improve the financial disclosure process for presidential nominees.

In addition, the changes made in the Senate bill would require the admin-

ister of the General Services Administration to develop a transition directory. This directory would be a compilation of Federal publications supplementary material that would provide a new presidential appointees with a manual of information about the organization, statutory and administrative authorities, functions and duties of each department and agency in the Executive Branch. H.R. 4931, which we are considering today, includes those Senate amendments.

Over the years, there have been many examples of missteps and outright mistakes made by newly appointed officials in the White House. Those errors could have been avoided if the officials had more fully understood the scope of their responsibilities.

H.R. 3137 would set a time frame and authorize the funds for that necessary training and orientation.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill just as they supported its predecessor, H.R. 4931. It is an important step toward ensuring that a new administration, regardless of party affiliation, starts off on the right foot.

Mr. TURNER. Mr. Speaker, further reserving the right to object, I want to rise and join with the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) in strong support of this legislation, H.R. 4931, and urge its adoption.

I want to commend the gentleman from California (Chairman HORN) and the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. WAXMAN), ranking member, who have all focused on this bill and to be sure that it is brought before this House today and becomes law before a new administration occupies the White House.

The Presidential Transition Act would amend the Presidential Transition Act of 1963 to authorize the use of transition funds for the purpose of providing orientations for individuals that the President-elect plans to nominate to top White House positions, including cabinet positions.

The bill would probably affect 20 to maybe 40 political appointments in the White House. It is designed to give greater assurance that the orientation process would take place shortly after the incoming administration assumes office or preferably before they assume office.

This orientation will provide a smoother transition for a new administration, eliminating mistakes, and ensuring that the Federal Government will continue to function at a high level.

Our subcommittee heard testimony from distinguished witnesses who advocated the adoption of this new provision for orientation programs for incoming members of a new administration. Witnesses such as Elliot Richardson, former Attorney General to President Nixon; the Honorable Lee White,