

PROVIDING FOR SWEARING IN OF THE HONORABLE JOE WILSON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

Mr. ARMEY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) be permitted to take the oath of office today. His certificate of election has not arrived; but there is no contest, and no question has been raised with regard to his election.

The SPEAKER. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

SWEARING IN OF THE HONORABLE JOE WILSON, OF SOUTH CAROLINA, AS A MEMBER OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER. Will the Representative-elect and the Members of the South Carolina delegation present themselves in the well. Will the Representative-elect from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) come forward and raise his right hand.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina appeared at the bar of the House and took the oath of office, as follows:

Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that you will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that you take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that you will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which you are about to enter. So help you God.

The SPEAKER. Congratulations. You are now a Member of the 107th Congress.

WELCOMING THE HONORABLE JOE WILSON TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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

Mr. SPRATT. Mr. Speaker, I have the pleasure of presenting our newest Member to the House of Representatives: ADDISON GRAVES WILSON, better known to us in South Carolina as just "JOE."

JOE WILSON will fill the seat held for 30 years by Floyd Spence and represent the Second District of South Carolina. In many ways he will also fill Floyd's shoes, because the people of that district have chosen a man closely akin to Floyd Spence in personality, in politics, and in dedication to public service. In fact, Floyd Spence was in many ways Joe Wilson's mentor. His first political experience, after college at Washington and Lee, was in working on Floyd's first campaign for Congress. He has worked on all of Floyd's cam-

paigns since and served as manager or chairman of six.

JOE WILSON was first elected to office in his own right in 1984 when he won a seat in the South Carolina Senate to serve Lexington County. His legislative experience is extensive. This past year he served as chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee. He has also served on the Senate Judiciary Committee, the Education Committee, the Joint Committee on Aging, and the State House Committee.

Before being elected to the South Carolina Senate, JOE WILSON served in the Army Reserves. He is now a colonel in the Army National Guard, staff judge advocate for the 218th Mechanized Infantry Brigade. He is a graduate of the Command and General Staff College, and two sons have followed his footsteps into the military. One is a first lieutenant in the Army National Guard, another is an ensign in the Navy, attending the Armed Forces medical school in Bethesda right now.

JOE WILSON was born in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1947, to Hugh de Veaux Wilson and Wray Graves Wilson, both now deceased and unable to see their son attain, unfortunately, this high office. He is a lawyer, founder and senior partner in the law firm of Wilson, Moore, Taylor & Thomas in West Columbia.

JOE WILSON is happily married to Roxanne Dusenbury McCrory; and he and Roxanne are the proud parents of four children, Michael Alan McCrory-Wilson; Addison Graves, Jr.; Julian Dusenbury; and Hunter Taylor.

In addition to his legislative and military service, he has served as the deputy general counsel of the Department of Energy, and he has spent countless hours serving his community through a number of civic organizations.

Mr. Speaker, as dean of the South Carolina delegation, it is my privilege and my honor to welcome JOE WILSON of South Carolina to the United States House of Representatives.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. BROWN) who served in the General Assembly with JOE WILSON and would like to say a word of introduction himself.

Mr. BROWN of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to have the honor to help receive my great friend today. JOE WILSON and I started our careers in the legislature about the same time. We served 16 years together, he in the Senate, I in the House. In fact, he was a good Senator to work with. I am proud to have him as my friend. JOE and his wife, Roxanne, became good friends of my family, and I have had the pleasure of watching his children grow up.

It is a pleasure to be here today, JOE, to welcome you to this great body. It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to serve with you again. I welcome you to the U.S. Congress.

EXPRESSING GRATITUDE FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE AS A MEMBER OF CONGRESS

(Mr. WILSON of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, very few experiences live vividly in one's heart for all the days of your life. For me, this is such a moment.

First, let me say how deeply and profoundly grateful and appreciative I am to every citizen of South Carolina. Because of the election that took place yesterday, a rite of passage borne out and preserved by time-honored tradition, my job is to represent every voter in my district, regardless of age, gender, creed, color or party affiliation to the best of my ability. Today, I pledge to do that, so help me God.

In taking this oath of office, I am not alone. The path which led me to this moment was well traveled by so many people to whom I owe debts of gratitude. These are debts that can never be repaid. First among those is my wife, Roxanne, and our family. Their love and strength are the greatest assets of my life. So many other people have given time, support, hard work, advice and prayers. I cannot possibly thank each by name; but without them, this moment would not have been possible.

Still, there is one name which should not be veiled in silence, one person who for 31 years was my mentor and friend. That name is former United States Congressman Floyd Spence. It was Congressman Spence who first inspired me to run for public office. It was Congressman Spence who taught me that the first duty of government is to defend freedom. And it was Congressman Spence who taught us all that true public service does not spring from ambition. Real public service cannot be bought and sold, but must come from the deep regions of the heart and soul, as an expression of love to our country and all who make it one united Nation under God.

Therefore, as I take this oath of office, I also make this pledge: I will do everything in my power to keep alive the legacy of service Congressman Spence exemplified. I pray that his spirit will always be with me.

At this moment in the history of our Nation, we face very serious challenges at home and around the world. I look forward to working with my colleagues and our President to face these challenges. I know we individually and collectively will respond to those challenges with courage, with virtue, and with an unflinching spirit.

Again to the people of South Carolina, thank you for the trust you have placed in me. I ask you to join me in that simple, majestic, one-sentence prayer that binds our Nation and hearts together: may God bless America.