APPOINTMENT OF HONORABLE FRANK R. WOLF TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH APRIL 24, 2001

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

WASHINGTON, DC,
April 4, 2001.

I hereby appoint the Honorable FRANK R. WOLF to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through April 24, 2001.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointment is approved.

There was no objection.

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE TO BE AVAILABLE TO SERVE ON INVESTIGATIVE SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, and pursuant to clause 5(a)(4)(A) of rule X, the Chair announces that the Speaker named the following Members of the House to be available to serve on investigation subcommittees of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for the 107th Congress:

Mr. GEKAS of Pennsylvania;
Mr. CHABOT of Ohio;
Mr. LATOURETTE of Ohio;
Mr. SHADEGG of Arizona;
Mr. WICKER of Mississippi;
Mr. MORAN of Kansas;
Mr. FOSSELLA of New York;
Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin; and
Mr. TERRY of Nebraska.

There was no objection.

NEWSPAPERS' RECOUNT SHOWS GEORGE W. BUSH WON ELECTION

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks and include extraneous material.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, there has been much said about the Florida election returns, and we hear over and over again from people that, well, Bush really did not win the election; that he stole it.

I would invite Members of the House to pick up a copy of the USA Today newspaper. It says, ''Newspapers' Recount Shows Bush Prevailed in Florida Vote.''

I am going to read the first paragraph, and keep in mind newspapers are not exactly known for being conservative instruments.

The first paragraph says, ''George W. Bush would have won a hand count of Florida's disputed ballots if the standard advocated by Al Gore had been used, the first full study of the ballot reveals.''

My, my, my. Where are all the accusers, where are all the finger-pointers to say, well, gee whiz, I was wrong, it looks like Mr. Bush is the legitimate President of the United States?

Mr. Speaker, I am going to submit this full article for the RECORD because I am sure Members in their hurry to get out of town will not have time to read this paper; but out of my concern for these Members, I want this to be in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD and maybe they could share it with some of their friends in academia and the unions and the other great liberal institutions throughout the land.

[From USA Today, Apr. 4, 2001]

NEWSPAPERS' RECOUNT SHOWS BUSH PREVAILED IN FLORIDA VOTE

(By Dennis Cauchon)

George W. Bush would have won a hand count of Florida's disputed ballots if the standard advocated by Al Gore had been used, the first full study of the ballots reveals.

Bush would have won by 1,665 votes—more than triple his official 537-vote margin—if every dimple, hanging chad and mark on the ballots had been counted as votes, a USA TODAY/Maimi Herald/Knight Ridder study shows.

The study is the first comprehensive review of the 61,195 ''undervote'' ballots that were at the center of Florida's disputed presidential election. The Florida Supreme Court ordered Dec. 8 that each of these ballots, which registered no presidential vote when run through counting machines, be examined by hand to determine whether a voter's intent could be discerned. On Dec. 9, the U.S. Supreme Court stopped the hand count before it was completed. That gave Bush Florida's 25 electoral votes, one more than he needed to win the presidency.

USA TODAY, The Miami Herald and Knight Ridder newspapers hired the national accounting firm BDO Seidman to examine undervote ballots in Florida's 67 counties. The accountants provided a report on what they found on each of the ballots.

The newspapers then applied the accounting firm's findings to four standards used in Florida and elsewhere to determine when an undervote ballot becomes a legal vote. By three of the standards, Bush holds the lead. The fourth standard gives Gore a razor-thin win.

The results reveal a stunning irony. The way Gore wanted the ballots recounted helped Bush, and the standard that Gore felt offered him the least hope may have given him an extremely narrow victory. The vote totals vary depending on the standard used:

Lenient standard. This standard, which was advocated by Gore, would count any alteration in a chad—the small perforated box that is punched to cast a vote—as evidence of a voter's intent. The alteration can range from a mere dimple, or indentation, in a chad to its removal. Contrary to Gore's hopes, the USA TODAY study reveals that this standard favors Bush and gives the Republican his biggest margin: 1,665 votes.

Palm Beach standard. Palm Beach County election officials considered dimples as votes only if dimples were found in other races on the same ballot. They reasoned that a voter would demonstrate similar voting patterns on the ballot. This standard—attacked by Republicans as arbitrary—also gives Bush a win, by 884 votes, according to the USA TODAY review.

Two-corner standard. Most states with well-defined rules say that a chad with two or more corners removed is a legal vote. Under this standard, Bush wins by 363.

Strict standard. This ''clean punch'' standard would only count fully removed chads as legal votes. The USA TODAY study shows that Gore would have won Florida by 3 votes if this standard were applied to undervotes.

Because of the possibility of mistakes in the study, a three-vote margin is too small to conclude that Gore might have prevailed in an official count using this standard. But the overall results show that both campaigns had a misperception of what the ballots would show. The prevailing view of both was that minority or less-educated Democratic voters were more likely to undervote because of confusion.

Gore's main strategy throughout the post-election dispute was to secure a recount of any kind in the hope of reversing the certified result. Bush's strategy was to stop the recount while he was ahead. But his views on how recounts should be done, in the counties where they were underway, would have been potentially disastrous for him if used statewide.

Bush and Gore were informed Tuesday of the new study's results. Both declined comment. But White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said, ''The President believes, just as the American people do, that this election was settled months ago. The voters spoke, and George W. Bush won.''

The newspapers' study took three months to complete and cost more than $500,000. It involved 27 accountants who examined and categorized ballots as they were held up by county election officials.

The study has limitations. There is variability in what different observers see on ballots. Election officials, who sorted the undervotes for examination and then handled them for the accountants' inspection, often did not provide exactly the same number of undervotes recorded on election night.

Even so, the outcome shows a consistent and decisive pattern: the more lenient the standard, the better Bush does. Because Gore fought for the lenient standard, it may be more difficult now for Democrats to argue that the election was lost in the chambers of the U.S. Supreme Court rather than the voting booths of Florida.

The study helps answer the question: What would have happened if the U.S. Supreme Court had not stopped the hand count of undervotes?

However, it does not answer all the questions surrounding another set of Florida ballots: the 110,000 ''overvotes,'' which machines recorded as having more than one presidential vote. These ballots were rejected by the machines and were considered invalid. Some Democrats say if all of Florida's overvote ballots were examined by hand to learn voters' intent, Gore would have prevailed.

USA TODAY, The Miami Herald and Gannett and Knight Ridder newspapers also are examining Florida's overvotes for a study to be published later this spring. Overvotes contain some valid votes, mostly instances when a voter marked the oval next to a candidate's name and then wrote in the name of the same candidate.

No candidate requested a hand count of overvotes and no court—federal or state—ordered one. The U.S. Supreme Court cited the state court's failure to include the overvotes