

him a brilliant public servant in the 46 years that have followed. Prior to his present post as clerk, Mr. Tabb served as Magistrate on the Hardin County Fiscal Court, as Assistant Principal at East Hardin High School and Principal at Sonora Elementary.

Today, I would like to correct a four-decade old administrative oversight and finally recognize Mr. Tabb, before the entire U.S. House of Representatives, for his childhood heroism and for his dutiful service to the Elizabethtown, KY, community in the years since. His efforts, then and now, make him an outstanding American, worthy of our collective respect and honor.

CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT ON
CONGRESSIONAL SUCCESSION

HON. DANA ROHRABACHER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Speaker, I have just introduced a constitutional amendment on congressional succession. Much has been said over the last couple years about the need to make sure we have a functioning Congress that is perceived as legitimate in the case of a national disaster that kills or incapacitates a large proportion of Members of Congress. So far, none of the proposals that have been introduced have been able to appeal to a broad, bipartisan cross-section of Congress. I believe the constitutional amendment I have introduced today addresses the major criticisms that have been leveled against the “continuity of Congress” constitutional amendments that have been introduced so far.

Under my proposal, each general election candidate for the House or Senate would be authorized to publicly appoint, in ranked order, 3 to 5 potential temporary successors. The legitimacy of a successor designated in this way temporarily succeeding a deceased or incapacitated Representative or Senator is similar to that of a Vice President succeeding a deceased or incapacitated President—not separately elected, but chosen by the principal and known well in advance of the election.

The problem faced by other proposals of how to determine when sufficient members have died or been incapacitated to trigger emergency procedures is avoided in my proposal because no such determination is necessary. If a congressional continuity solution is good enough to use when 110 Representatives are killed or disabled, it should be good enough to use when 50 or 20 or even one Representative dies or becomes unable to discharge his or her duties. Continuity of Congress is certainly important, but so is continuity of representation. Death or incapacity of Representatives and Senators (as in the case of the late Senator Paul Wellstone) should not change the control of either House of Congress or the outcome of votes. Also, the legitimacy of a congressional succession plan is more likely to be accepted in a national emergency if it has previously worked in smaller tragedies.

To further legitimize temporary successors, my proposal would repeal the current power state governors have to appointment temporary Senators. Since the adoption of the 17th Amendment, the American people have

expected that the members of both Houses of Congress should be democratically elected. When a more democratic solution is available, we don't need to perpetuate the practice of a governor of another party being able to change the composition and control of the Senate just because a Senator tragically dies or is incapacitated.

My proposal would allow governors to appoint temporary Senators and Representatives only if the elected Senator or Representative has not submitted a list of successors or if none of the listed successors is able to serve. This backup appointment authority provides an incentive for Senators and Representatives (and potential Senators and Representatives) to make sure their “political will” is in order, since otherwise their governor could appoint someone they may not like. The backup authority of course also provides a further assurance of congressional continuity.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that my congressional succession constitutional amendment would solve the continuity of Congress problem in a way that would appeal to both sides of the aisle. I ask my colleagues for their support.

WELCOMING THE ACCESSION OF
BULGARIA, ESTONIA, LATVIA,
LITHUANIA, ROMANIA, SLO-
VAKIA, AND SLOVENIA TO THE
NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY OR-
GANIZATION

SPEECH OF

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 30, 2004

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to this resolution. I do so because further expansion of NATO, an outdated alliance, is not in our national interest and may well constitute a threat to our national security in the future.

More than 50 years ago the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was formed to defend Western Europe and the United States against attack from the communist nations of Eastern Europe. It was an alliance of sovereign nations bound together in common purpose—for mutual defense. The deterrence value of NATO helped keep the peace throughout the Cold War. In short, NATO achieved its stated mission. With the fall of the Soviet system and the accompanying disappearance of the threat of attack, in 1989–1991, NATO's reason to exist ceased. Unfortunately, as with most bureaucracies, the end of NATO's mission did not mean the end of NATO. Instead, heads of NATO member states gathered in 1999 desperately attempting to devise new missions for the outdated and adrift alliance. This is where NATO moved from being a defensive alliance respecting the sovereignty of its members to an offensive and interventionist organization, concerned now with “economic, social and political difficulties . . . ethnic and religious rivalries, territorial disputes, inadequate or failed efforts at reform, the abuse of human rights, and the dissolution of states,” in the words of the Washington 1999 Summit.

And we saw the fruits of this new NATO mission in the former Yugoslavia, where the US, through NATO, attacked a sovereign state

that threatened neither the United States nor its own neighbors. In Yugoslavia, NATO abandoned the claim it once had to the moral high ground. The result of the illegal and immoral NATO intervention in the Balkans speaks for itself: NATO troops will occupy the Balkans for the foreseeable future. No peace has been attained, merely the cessation of hostilities and a permanent dependency on US foreign aid.

The further expansion of NATO is in reality a cover for increased US interventionism in Europe and beyond. It will be a conduit for more unconstitutional US foreign aid and US interference in the internal politics of member nations, especially the new members from the former East.

It will also mean more corporate welfare at home. As we know, NATO membership demands a minimum level of military spending of its member states. For NATO's new members, the burden of significantly increased military spending when there are no longer external threats is hard to meet. Unfortunately, this is where the US government steps in, offering aid and subsidized loans to these members so they can purchase more unneeded and unnecessary military equipment. In short, it is nothing more than corporate welfare for the US military industrial complex.

The expansion of NATO to these seven countries, we have heard, will open them up to the further expansion of US military bases, right up to the border of the former Soviet Union. Does no one worry that this continued provocation of Russia might have negative effects in the future? Is it necessary?

Further, this legislation encourages the accession of Albania, Macedonia, and Croatia—nations that not long ago were mired in civil and regional wars. The promise of US military assistance if any of these states are attacked is obviously a foolhardy one. What will the mutual defense obligations we are entering into mean if two Balkan NATO members begin hostilities against each other (again)?

In conclusion, we should not be wasting US tax money and taking on more military obligations expanding NATO. The alliance is a relic of the Cold War, a hold-over from another time, an anachronism. It should be disbanded, the sooner the better.

YOU CAN BE A PART OF BUILDING
SAFETY WEEK

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 2, 2004

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Building Safety Week, observed April 4–10. Building safety affects many aspects of American life. Because of building safety code enforcement, we enjoy the comfort of structures that are safe and sound. Building safety and fire prevention officials work with citizens to address building safety and fire prevention concerns everyday.

The dedicated members of the International Code Council, including building safety and fire prevention officials, architects, engineers, and others in the construction industry, develop and enforce the codes that safeguard Americans in the buildings where we live, work, play and learn. The International Codes, the most widely adopted building safety and