

111TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. J. RES. 53

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating  
to Congressional succession.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 20, 2009

Mr. ROHRBACHER (for himself and Mr. BAIRD) introduced the following  
joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

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## JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United  
States relating to Congressional succession.

1       *Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives*  
2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled*  
3 *(two-thirds of each House concurring therein),* That the fol-  
4 lowing article is proposed as an amendment to the Con-  
5 stitution of the United States, which shall be valid to all  
6 intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when  
7 ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several  
8 States within seven years after the date of its submission  
9 for ratification:



1 after, when the Representative transmits to the Speaker  
2 of the House of Representatives his written declaration  
3 that no such inability exists, he shall immediately resume  
4 the powers and duties of the office of Representative.

5       “SECTION 4. No person shall be a Senator who has  
6 not selected and been elected together with an Alternate  
7 Senator. Alternate Senators shall serve during the term  
8 of their Senator, and their tenure in office shall end when  
9 a new Senator and Alternate Senator are elected for the  
10 same State and class of Senators. Such elected Senator  
11 and Alternate Senator shall assume office immediately  
12 upon election whenever there is a vacancy in the office  
13 of Senator.

14       “SECTION 5. Upon the death, resignation, or expul-  
15 sion of a Senator, or if at the time fixed for the beginning  
16 of the term of the Senator-elect, the Senator-elect shall  
17 have died or failed to qualify, the duties and powers of  
18 the office of Senator shall be discharged by his Alternate  
19 as Acting Senator until the Senator-elect shall have quali-  
20 fied, or until a new Senator and Alternate Senator are  
21 elected.

22       “SECTION 6. Whenever the Senate declares that a  
23 Senator is unable to discharge the powers and duties of  
24 his office, or a Senator transmits to the President pro  
25 tempore of the Senate his written declaration that he is

1 unable to discharge such powers and duties, such powers  
2 and duties shall be discharged by his Alternate as Acting  
3 Senator. Thereafter, when the Senator transmits to the  
4 President pro tempore of the Senate his written declara-  
5 tion that no such inability exists, he shall immediately re-  
6 sume the powers and duties of the office of Senator.

7       “SECTION 7. No one who has not been elected Sen-  
8 ator or Alternate Senator may be or act as Senator, except  
9 that the legislature of any State may empower the execu-  
10 tive thereof to appoint an Acting Senator in the absence  
11 of a qualified Alternate when there is a vacancy in the  
12 office of Senator, or when, pursuant to section 6 or section  
13 9 of this article, the Senator has been declared unable to  
14 discharge the powers and duties of his office.

15       “SECTION 8. Alternate and Acting Senators and Rep-  
16 resentatives shall have the qualifications of Senators and  
17 Representatives, respectively, and each House may punish  
18 its Alternates for disorderly behavior, and with the concur-  
19 rence of two thirds, expel an Alternate.

20       “SECTION 9. In the absence of a quorum for three  
21 days or more, each House may declare all of its members  
22 who have not recorded their presence during such period  
23 to be unable to discharge the powers and duties of their  
24 offices. In such a case, such powers and duties of each

1 such member shall be discharged by the member's Alter-  
2 nate until such member records his presence.

3       “SECTION 10. The Congress shall have power to en-  
4 force this article by appropriate legislation.

5       “SECTION 11. This article shall take effect at noon  
6 on the next date established by this Constitution for the  
7 beginning and ending of the terms of Senators and Rep-  
8 resentatives one year after the ratification of this article,  
9 except that qualification to be Senator in section 4 of this  
10 article shall not apply to any person who had begun his  
11 current term of office prior to the effective date of this  
12 article.”.

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