

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1989

To establish a commission to make recommendations on the appropriate size of membership of the House of Representatives and the method by which Members are elected.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 28, 2005

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To establish a commission to make recommendations on the appropriate size of membership of the House of Representatives and the method by which Members are elected.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Congress 2008 Com-
5 mission Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT.**

2 There is established a commission to be known as the
3 “Congress 2008 Commission” (hereafter in this Act re-
4 ferred to as the “Commission”).

5 **SEC. 3. DUTIES OF COMMISSION.**

6 The Commission shall—

7 (1) analyze the current size of the membership
8 of the House of Representatives considering the re-
9 quirement for the institution to carry out its respon-
10 sibilities in an effective manner under the challenges
11 of the new century;

12 (2) examine alternatives to the current method
13 by which Representatives are elected (including cu-
14 mulative voting and proportional representation) to
15 determine if such alternatives would make the House
16 of Representatives a more representative body;

17 (3) provide consideration to the continuing dis-
18 solution of adherence to the platforms and can-
19 didates of the Nation’s two major political parties as
20 well as to the reduction in electoral participation by
21 the citizenry;

22 (4) consider whether alternative methods of
23 electing House Members might include more citizens
24 in the electoral process;

25 (5) to the extent necessary, formulate proposals
26 for changes in the size of the membership of, and

1 the method of electing Representatives to, the House
2 of Representatives; and

3 (6) not later than the end of the One Hundred
4 Ninth Congress, submit to the President and the
5 Congress a report of the work of the Commission,
6 together with a draft of legislation (including tech-
7 nical and conforming provisions) to implement the
8 proposals referred to in paragraph (5).

9 **SEC. 4. MEMBERSHIP.**

10 (a) **NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.**—The Commission
11 shall be composed of 17 members as follows:

12 (1) 3 members appointed by the President.

13 (2) 10 members appointed by the House of
14 Representatives, of whom 5 shall be appointed by
15 the Speaker and 5 shall be appointed by the Minor-
16 ity Leader.

17 (3) 4 members appointed by the Senate, of
18 whom 2 shall be appointed by the Majority Leader
19 and 2 shall be appointed by the Minority Leader.

20 (b) **QUALIFICATIONS.**—In making appointments
21 under this section, the appointing authorities shall make
22 a special effort to appoint individuals who are particularly
23 qualified to perform the functions of the Commission, by
24 reason of either practical experience or academic expertise
25 in politics or government.

1 (c) TERMS AND VACANCIES.—Each member shall be
2 appointed for the life of the Commission. A vacancy in
3 the Commission shall be filled in the manner in which the
4 original appointment was made.

5 (d) PAY AND TRAVEL.—Each member of the Com-
6 mission, other than a full-time officer or employee of the
7 United States—

8 (1) shall be paid the daily equivalent of the an-
9 nual rate of basic pay payable for level V of the Ex-
10 ecutive Schedule for each day (including travel time)
11 during which the member is engaged in the actual
12 performance of duties vested in the Commission; and

13 (2) shall receive travel expenses, including per
14 diem in lieu of subsistence, in accordance with appli-
15 cable provisions under subchapter I of chapter 57 of
16 title 5, United States Code.

17 (e) QUORUM.—9 members of the Commission shall
18 constitute a quorum, but a lesser number may hold hear-
19 ings.

20 (f) CHAIRMAN.—The Chairman of the Commission
21 shall be elected by the members.

22 (g) MEETINGS.—The Commission shall meet at the
23 call of the Chairman or a majority of its members.

1 **SEC. 5. STAFF.**

2 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—With the approval of the Commis-
3 sion, the Chairman may appoint and fix the pay of not
4 more than six individuals for the staff of the Commission.
5 Such individuals may be appointed without regard to the
6 provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing ap-
7 pointments in the competitive service, and may be paid
8 without regard to the provisions of chapter 51 and sub-
9 chapter III of chapter 53 of that title relating to classifica-
10 tion and General Schedule pay rates, except that an indi-
11 vidual so appointed may not receive pay in excess of the
12 maximum annual rate of basic pay payable for grade GS-
13 15 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of title
14 5, United States Code.

15 (b) **EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS.**—With the ap-
16 proval of the Commission, the Chairman may procure tem-
17 porary and intermittent services in the manner prescribed
18 in section 3109(b) of title 5, United States Code, but at
19 rates for individuals not to exceed the daily equivalent of
20 the maximum annual rate of basic pay payable for grade
21 GS-15 of the General Schedule under section 5332 of title
22 5, United States Code.

23 (c) **STAFF OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.**—Upon request
24 of the Commission, the head of any Federal department
25 or agency may detail, on a reimbursable basis, any of the

1 personnel of that department or agency to the Commission
2 to assist it in carrying out its duties under this Act.

3 **SEC. 6. POWERS OF COMMISSION.**

4 (a) HEARINGS.—The Commission may, for the pur-
5 pose of carrying out this Act, hold hearings, sit and act
6 at times and places, take testimony, and receive evidence
7 as the Commission considers appropriate.

8 (b) MEMBERS AND AGENTS.—Any member or agent
9 of the Commission may, if authorized by the Commission,
10 take any action which the Commission is authorized to
11 take by this section.

12 (c) MAILS.—The Commission may use the United
13 States mails in the same manner and under the same con-
14 ditions as departments and agencies of the United States.

15 (d) ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT SERVICES.—Upon
16 the request of the Commission, the Administrator of Gen-
17 eral Services shall provide to the Commission, on a reim-
18 bursable basis, the administrative support services nec-
19 essary for the Commission to carry out its responsibilities
20 under this Act.

21 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

22 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
23 this Act \$5,000,000, to remain available until expended.

1 **SEC. 8. TERMINATION.**

2 The Commission shall cease to exist on the last day
3 of the month in which its report is submitted under section
4 3.

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