

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 612

Raising a question of the privileges of the House.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 3, 2007

Mr. BOEHNER submitted the following resolution; which was laid on the table

RESOLUTION

Raising a question of the privileges of the House.

Whereas clause one of House rule XXIII (Code of Official Conduct) states, “A Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer or employee of the House shall conduct himself at all times in a manner that shall reflect creditably on the House,”;

Whereas the House Ethics Manual states that, “The public has a right to expect Members, officers and employees to exercise impartial judgment in performing their duties” and “This Committee has cautioned all Members to avoid situations in which even an inference might be drawn suggesting improper action”;

Whereas during proceedings of the House on August 3, 2007, with the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Murtha) presiding, a question occurred on approval of the Journal of the previous day’s proceedings;

Whereas following the vote, the gentleman from Wisconsin, Representative Sensenbrenner, inquired “Could the chair tell me how many Members rose to request a recorded vote and [the] total number of Members present in the House upon which the chair made his decision?”;

Whereas Representative Murtha replied, “It is up to the chair. Let me tell you this, the vote will show that the approval would be approved by the House as it has been.”;

Whereas the Speaker, as the presiding officer, has a duty to be a fair and impartial arbiter of the proceedings of the House, held to the highest ethical standards in deciding the various questions as they arise with impartiality and courtesy toward all Members, regardless of party affiliation;

Whereas a presiding officer of the House cannot achieve the requisite standard of impartiality while attempting to influence the outcome of a vote, predict the outcome of a vote, or express a preference for a particular outcome of a vote; and

Whereas when the chair imbues his parliamentary statements with a partisan hue or with language more appropriate to a participant in the debate than to its presiding officer, Members’ essential confidence in the impartiality of the chair is impaired: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That by his actions on August 3, 2007, the
2 gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. Murtha, has brought
3 dishonor and discredit to the United States House of Rep-
4 resentatives by misusing the powers of the chair.

○