

(The document referred to follows:)

TESTIMONY OF THE HONORABLE GEORGE BUSH, SEVENTH DISTRICT TEXAS, BEFORE
HOUSE RULES COMMITTEE, REGARDING ESTABLISHMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE ON
STANDARDS AND CONDUCT

Gentlemen, I am appearing on behalf of House Resolution 18, introduced by the Honorable Charles Bennett. I realize that it oftentimes is presumptuous for a freshman member to push hard for new legislation. But I strongly feel that the field of ethics goes way beyond seniority, party politics, or regional differences.

Mr. Bennett's resolution is a sound one in my opinion as it proposes a Select Committee on Standards and Conduct. I feel we must have a committee formed for this specific purpose because no matter how good the intentions of any other committee are, the fact remains that only a Select Committee will devote its full time and energies to the problem, and only a Select Committee will assure the public we are taking a new and forthright look at the problem. In fact, I would like to see us go even further than Mr. Bennett's resolution and, for that reason, on February 27, I introduced House Resolution 279. It calls for a Select Committee, just as House Resolution 18 does, but it requires the committee to recommend a code of ethics by August 31 of this year. My bill also requires certain disclosure provisions. It asks for specific disclosure of assets, liabilities, and sources of income. It asks for revelation of relationships with lobbying organizations. It requires disclosure of ownership in any concern whose right to conduct business is regulated by the federal government. And it requires a full disclosure by the member and spouse of their relatives on the Congressional payroll.

In the past, none of us felt that any of these provisions should be required of us as members. But I don't think our feelings are of paramount importance right now. I don't think it is a question of what you or I want. I think the issue is—what do the American people want? And I am convinced that they want a full and accurate accounting by us—financially, kin-wise, and business-wise, and they want to see a code of ethics adopted and enforcement provisions voted which require us to live by this code.

I feel this is one area where we can give the American people what they desire. I urge this committee to vote the resolution to the floor for action. Let us once and for all show the public that our only obligation as a duly-elected Representative is to the people and to no one else.

Mr. BUSH. I am not familiar with your rules, but two other members asked me to bring statements to be included in the record, if that will be in order.

The CHAIRMAN. That is in order, and it is so ordered. You can leave them with counsel.

(The documents referred to follow:)

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE DONALD RUMSFELD SUBMITTED TO THE HOUSE
COMMITTEE ON RULES IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 18, TO CREATE A SELECT
COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND CONDUCT

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased to have an opportunity to present a statement in support of the establishment of a Select Committee on Standards and Conduct in the House of Representatives. It is my hope that the committee be constituted so that it can continue the work I consider to be so important to the statute, and ultimately, to the effectiveness, of the U.S. House of Representatives.

All would agree, I think, that the recent action by the House to exclude a Member-elect for misconduct does not represent the conclusion of our responsibility. Rather, that action requires us to face the need for a definitive statement of standards for the entire membership in this body, and should serve as an incentive to the House to assure that a committee is established to deal with such problems in the future. To accomplish this goal requires not only the development of reasonable criteria and standards, but, also, and equally important, the establishment of a standing committee to deal with such matters.