



*Congressional Debate
Rules & Legislation*

2013 UC-Berkeley National Congress

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Rules of Order

Thank you for choosing to attend the 2013 University of California-Berkeley National Congress. We are pleased that you are taking part in this Congress, part of the largest high school invitational tournament in the country by overall entry total. The following rules are designed to promote procedural unity among the chambers and to promote a consistently high standard of Congressional debate at this tournament matching others across the nation. These regulations cannot be altered or ignored by a chamber through the use of a motion to suspend the rules. Your Congress Tournament Directors, Mr. Jonathan Peele of the Harker School and Mr. PJ Samorian of New Trier High School, welcome your questions in advance of the tournament and can be reached at jonathan.peele@harker.org and samoriap@newtrier.k12.il.us respectively.

1. Recency and Priority: Modern high school Congressional Debate has long since institutionalized the practice of recency (as opposed to standing time) as the secondary principle of priority. The National Forensic League has now officially written into its rules this standard for its District and National tournaments. Priority for speaker recognition will then be governed by the below principles.

- Primary Principle: Number of speeches
- Secondary Principle: Recency (who spoke longest ago)
- Tertiary Principle: Randomness (applicable only if those seeking recognition have not yet spoken)

2. Debate at the Will of the Chamber (the “Open Podium” Rule): The UC-Berkeley National Congress will allow for “open podiums” (skipping a speech slot when no one wishes to speak, thus creating two or more affirmative or negative speeches in a row) to maximize our use of time. Students are also reminded that “dividing the house” as a survey of who wishes to speak affirmative and negatively is a misuse of the motion, and that there are no minimum “cycles” of debate (all motions are welcome between all speeches). In the unlikely absence of a first affirmative speech, debate may also begin on a new piece of legislation with a negative speech.

3. Clarification of Voting Standards: “[Fractional] motions such as previous question, seconding an amendment, or suspending the rules reflect the will of the entire body. Presiding Officers should calculate these numbers upon first taking the Chair. For these votes, ‘No’ votes are not even required because the number needed is either reached or it’s not. However, in all votes requiring a majority, the Presiding Officer needs to take ‘Yes’ votes, ‘No’ votes, and ‘Abstentions.’ Abstentions do not count as a ‘No.’ In order for such a motion to pass (including the main bill or resolution), the ‘Yes’ votes must simply outnumber the ‘No’ votes. Abstentions are not counted, except as a courtesy to those members who wish to register their desire to avoid voting or those who are undecided on the issue. In theory, all majority votes could be decided by 3 people (2-1) with everyone else abstaining.”¹

Therefore, the Presiding Officer determines the method of voting on each question that comes before the chamber. All simple majority votes are based upon the number of legislators present and voting in the chamber; consequently, the Presiding Officer does not need to call for or count abstentions. For all votes requiring a fraction of the chamber to agree to a motion or question (2/3, 1/3, or 1/5), the chair determines whether the chamber agrees with the motion/question using the number of legislators present in the chamber at the time of the vote. Because of this system, the Presiding Officer must track the number of legislators in the chamber at all times. By custom, the Presiding Officer is not included in the count of legislators present and does not vote.

Notes on voting:

- Final votes on legislation, amendments, and motions to appeal the chair require a counted vote.
- Voice voting is acceptable for all other votes, but a counted vote must be taken if any one legislator calls for a division of the chamber.

¹ Peters, Tammy. *Most Commonly Misunderstood Points of Parliamentary Procedure*. The Rostrum. February 1997.

4. Voting By Unanimous Consent: When a motion is unlikely to be contested, it is appropriate for the Chair to call for unanimous consent by asking, “are there any objections” before executing the motion. Members may then respond by announcing “objection” to the chamber. This is not an automatic recognition to explain the substance of that objection. Proper expression of your objection is to then vote “Nay” in the subsequent division of the chamber (this prohibition includes explaining that you have a speech you still wish to deliver; the chamber is aware that you’ve been standing thus far and is not obliged to allow every member to deliver every speech he/she may desire). It is imperative that Presiding Officers cease the inefficient practice of allowing objections to be explained ad nauseam.

5. Personal Privileges: It has become common practice in recent years to suspend the rules and allow for an “open” chamber where members may freely enter and exit between speeches. While this does relieve the Chair of traffic directing duties, it has led to some degree of abuse by members. Therefore, for the UC-Berkeley National Congress, suspension of the rules for the purposes of an open chamber is not permitted. Members are reminded that the proper exchange to ask for permission to leave or enter the chamber and return occurs as follows:

- Member: “Mr./Mme. President/Speaker, I rise to a point of personal privilege.”
- Chair: “State that privilege.”
- Member: “Enter/Exit chambers.”
- Chair: “Granted.” or “Denied (with brief explanation).”

6. Permission to Preface and Leading Questions in Cross-Examination: Please remember to keep all questions concise. That being said, some Presiding Officers have required use of the prohibitive request for “permission to preface” is to prevent lengthy questions from being asked when time is short. Similarly some legislators are often chided for asking “leading questions.” Simply put, unless Presiding Officers have achieved clairvoyance, they have no way to discern whether the preface material is truly too long before the question is even asked or to where it might lead. Often times the material is central to understanding the question. Moreover, questions without prefaces often surpass prefaced ones in their length and complexity. Therefore at the UC-Berkeley National Congress no member of the Congress shall have to request permission to preface and no Presiding Officer may force/request that members do so. However, Presiding Officers are also urged that if a legislator repeatedly devours cross-examination time, he/she should not be recognized in future cross-examination periods.

7. Proper Phrasing of Motions: Members of Congress are reminded to avoid the amateurish practice of “making a motion.” Instead, please consider employing the lovely verb our language offers us for occasions when we make motions in the present tense: I move. This of course should not result in the phrase “I move to make a motion” but rather should lead to statements such as “I move to the previous question” or “I move to amend.”

8. Decorum: The UC-Berkeley National Congress strives to be a contest with the highest standards of behavior at all times among attending students. Debate modeling the work of the United States Congress should be enjoyable but also taken seriously. Particularly note that each chamber will be designated as either a Senate or a House of Representatives. A member of a Senate is always referred to as Senator, while a member of a House of Representatives is always referred to as Representative. The Presiding Officer of a Senate is addressed as Mister/Madam President, while the Presiding Officer of a House of Representatives is addressed as Mister/Madam Speaker. The Presiding Officer is responsible for enforcing proper decorum.

9. Legislative Day and Speaker Recognition: Preliminary sessions 1 and 2 constitute a single legislative day, as do Preliminary sessions 3 and 4, meaning that speaking priority resets once beginning Sunday morning. Semifinals and finals shall each constitute a new legislative day respectively. The priority system outlined in Rule 1 is the required method for recognizing speakers at the UC-Berkeley National Congress.

10. Questioning: A mandatory two-minute questioning period follows all first affirmative and first negative speeches. A mandatory one-minute questioning period follows all other speeches. The Presiding Officer recognizes legislators who wish to ask a question of a speaker; the speaker may not perform this function him/herself. Suspensions of the rules to abolish questioning periods are not permitted. Repeated use of the motion

to suspend the rules for the purpose of extending the cross-examination periods is prohibited. The Presiding Officer has an obligation to rule that two-part, misleading, or irrelevant questions are out-of-order.

11. Agenda Order: Each preliminary chamber sets its own agenda order for the legislation designated for that preliminary session. The proposed agenda order must receive approval by a simple majority vote of the chamber before the beginning of each session. No chamber may debate legislation at any time other than during its designated session(s).

12. Amendments: Legislators may submit amendments to the Presiding Officer in writing. A motion to amend is necessary to consider the written amendment; such a motion is in order anytime after the first affirmative speech. Once the motion is made, the Presiding Officer decides if the amendment is germane. The Presiding Officer must consult with the Parliamentarian to make this decision. If the amendment is deemed not to be germane, the chair rules it out-of-order and the amendment process stops. If the chair rules the amendment germane, he/she should read the contents of the amendment to the chamber. A 1/3 second of the members present in the chamber is required to debate the amendment. If the chamber votes a second, debate on the amendment commences immediately. Legislators may make a motion to table or call the previous question on the amendment at any time. The first speech on the amendment is a sponsorship speech. The chair determines speaker recognition for the sponsorship speech on the basis of priority; the author of the amendment is not guaranteed the sponsorship speech. The sponsor accepts responsibility for the mechanics of the amendment and yields to two minutes of questioning. All amendment speeches receive a score and count towards priority. A majority vote is necessary for the chamber to adopt the amendment (this of course after a 2/3 vote has been achieved to call previous question on the amendment).

13. Overtime Speeches: Any regular floor speech that extends more than ten (10) seconds beyond the maximum speaking time of three minutes shall be penalized one full point on the speech score by the judge evaluating the session. The Presiding Officer is required to keep accurate time of each speech and report it to the judges when the speaker has finished. The judges shall heavily penalize a Presiding Officer for inaccurate timing and/or reporting.

14. Electronic Device Use: The use of laptops in chambers is permitted, though it is strongly recommended that students avoid reading notes from laptops when delivering speeches in front of the chamber. Students shall be allowed to use tablet devices when delivering speeches and under no circumstances shall students be penalized for electronic device usage in accordance with these rules. Please be advised that limited power supplies will exist in the classrooms at UC-Berkeley and the tournament accepts no responsibility for providing Congressional debaters with a power source at any tournament site. Internet access in chambers during a session is not permitted.

15. Selection of Presiding Officers: A single presiding officer will serve for each session. A legislator is allowed to serve as Presiding Officer for more than one session, though he or she must be re-elected for each session served. Members of each chamber are encouraged to hold an informal, brief “business meeting” in their chamber before the beginning of Session 1 to discuss the agenda order and to elect a Presiding Officer for the session. For other preliminary sessions, the Presiding Officer will be elected at the conclusion of the preceding session (thus, at the conclusion of Session 1 the Presiding Officer for Session 2 will be elected, and so forth). A presiding officer must serve for the entire three-hour session and may not deliver a speech during the session. There is no such thing as “presiding officer privilege” for speech recognition in future sessions, and for priority purposes the presiding officer should be recorded as having given the first and second speech of the session in which he or she presided.

16. Time Signals: Presiding officers are strongly encouraged, the not required, to use the “gavel tap” method of providing speakers with time signals during their speeches. This standard is the overwhelming preference of presiding officers at other major national invitational tournaments, NCFI Nationals, and NFL Nationals.

17. Direct Questioning in Elimination Sessions: For the UC-Berkeley National Congress semifinal and final sessions direct questioning shall be used. The chair to yield time to other members of the chamber in blocks of 30

seconds, prioritizing the previous opposition speaker. Please note this rule applies only to the semifinal and final sessions and should not be used in the preliminary sessions.

In closing, attention to parliamentary detail gives judges one more clue as to who among you really is the best at this most polite contest we all love: Congressional Debate. The Congress Tournament Directors reserve the right to issue additional special rules for the UC-Berkeley National Congress as warranted. Points of parliamentary procedure not specifically enumerated in this document are otherwise governed by the latest version of *Robert's Rules of Order*.

Judging & Results Tabulation

1. Scoring: In the preliminary session, each judge will score every speech on a scale of 1-6 points (6 is best). The parliamentarian will score the presiding officer on a scale of 1-6 points for each hour of presiding. In addition, at the end of each preliminary session, the two judges will independently each rank the top eight students who advanced the debate most effectively (1st is best). All unranked students will receive a rank of ninth. The Presiding Officer may be ranked in the top eight, and should be if he or she provides outstanding service to the chamber. All judges will be instructed that they must consider the Presiding Officer. Once at the end of the four preliminary sessions (and also at the conclusion of semifinals and finals respectively) the Parliamentarian will rank all of the legislators in the chamber. These rankings will be included in their entirety (no tie at ninth) in the calculation of which legislators advance from each chamber.

2. Advancing to Semifinals: Based on chamber size, the top 5-8 legislators from each preliminary chamber will advance to semifinals as follows:

- Sum of all judge ranks and parliamentarian rank in preliminary sessions. (Low totals are best.)
- The parliamentarian's ranking will serve to break any ties.

3. Advancing to Finals: The top 4-6 legislators in each semifinal chamber will advance to finals as follows:

- Sum of all judge ranks and parliamentarian rank in the semifinal session.
- The parliamentarian's ranking will serve to break any ties.

4. Finals Awards: The top 6 legislators in finals will receive awards based on their placement as follows:

- Sum of all judge ranks and parliamentarian rank in final session.
- The parliamentarian's ranking will serve to break any ties.

Schedule

Saturday, February 16, 2013 at Skyline High School

7:15 AM – 7:45 AM Meeting of all Congressional Debate contestants and judges, Auditorium
8:00 AM – 11:00 AM Preliminary Session 1
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM Preliminary Session 2

Sunday, February 17, 2013 at Skyline High School

8:00 AM – 11:00 AM Preliminary Session 3
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM Preliminary Session 4
ASAP Posting of the semifinalists at Skyline HS and online

Monday, February 18, 2013 on the UC-Berkeley Campus

8:00 AM – 11:00 AM Semifinal Session
12:30 PM – 3:30 PM Final Session
4:30 PM Awards

Any and all motions to change this published schedule are out of order. Be on time, please.

A Resolution Apologizing to the Egyptian People for United States Support of Hosni Mubarak

1 **WHEREAS,** The United States spent billions of dollars over four decades supporting the Mubarak regime; and

2 **WHEREAS,** The United States should acknowledge its role in creating the conditions that lead to Egypt's
3 revolution; and

4 **WHEREAS,** The United States should support democracy more than in name only; now, therefore, be it

5 **RESOLVED,** That the Congress here assembled issues a formal apology to the Egyptian people for the United
6 States' role in supporting Hosni Mubarak.

A Constitutional Amendment to Ensure Majority Rule

1 **RESOLVED,** That upon approval of two-thirds of the chamber of this Congress here assembled, the following
2 Constitutional amendment be sent to the state legislatures for approval:

3 **SECTION 1.** The House of Representatives and the Senate shall establish no procedure of any
4 kind that inhibits the right of the absolute majority to move business forward and
5 pass legislation.

6 **SECTION 2.** Should the President veto an Act of Congress, the House of Representatives and
7 the Senate may override the President's veto with a three-fifths vote of each
8 chamber.

A Bill to Extend the Federal Unemployment Insurance System

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** The emergency federal unemployment insurance program (hereafter referred to as
3 "unemployment insurance") is hereby extended for an additional two year period beyond the
4 latest extension reached in the "fiscal cliff compromise."

5 **SECTION 2.** This extension will continue at current levels of funding as of December 31, 2011.

6 **SECTION 3.** Should the national unemployment rate, as measured by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS)
7 should reach 4.5% before December 31, 2015, then funding for unemployment insurance will
8 instead expire six months from the issuance of that report.

9 **SECTION 4.** A percentage of future tax revenue equal to the cost of this extension, garnered from the payroll
10 tax of those who move off of unemployment insurance between December 31, 2012 and
11 December 31, 2015, shall be used to pay back the costs incurred in funding.

12 **SECTION 5.** This extension will expire on December 31, 2015.

13 **SECTION 6.** All laws that conflict with the administration or implementation of this bill are hereby declared
14 null and void.

A Resolution to Encourage a Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement with the European Union

1 **WHEREAS,** The European Union’s unsolved economic crisis poses a direct risk to American prosperity; and

2 **WHEREAS,** Freer trade provides a simple path towards boosting economic growth; and

3 **WHEREAS,** The U.S. and E.U. are already each other’s most important trading partners by far; and

4 **WHEREAS,** A breakthrough on trade with the European Union would set an international benchmark for
5 regulatory and environmental standards; now, therefore, be it

6 **RESOLVED,** That the Student Congress here assembled encourage the President of the United States to
7 negotiate a comprehensive free trade agreement with the European Union to eliminate tariffs and
8 harmonize regulations; and, be it further

9 **RESOLVED,** That the Congress here assembled urges the President of the United States to make a trade
10 agreement with the European Union the top trade priority.

A Bill to Promote Fiscal and Environmental Responsibility

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Effective January 1, 2014, the Gasoline Tax shall increase to 38.4 cents per gallon (2012 dollars)
3 and be indexed to inflation thereafter.

4 **SECTION 2.** A \$20 per ton tax (2012 dollars) on carbon dioxide emissions shall apply beginning January 1,
5 2016. The tax shall increase to \$30 per ton (2012 dollars) on January 1, 2021 and to \$40 per ton
6 (2012 dollars) on January 1, 2026.

7 **SECTION 3.** This Congress hereby establishes a Special Committee on the Taxation of Hazardous Pollutants
8 to study and make recommendations to raise revenue through the taxation of hazardous pollutants
9 other than carbon dioxide.

10 **SECTION 4.** Effective January 1, 2014, Congress shall commit at least 10 percent of the revenue from Sections
11 2-4 to direct payment rebates that will alleviate the financial burden these tax increases will place
12 on low-income individuals and families.

13 **SECTION 5.** The Department of Energy shall oversee the creation of the Special Committee on the Taxation of
14 Hazardous Pollutants as well as the definition and implementation of regulations governing the
15 exact nature of these taxes. The Internal Revenue Service shall oversee the collection of these
16 taxes as well as the definition and implementation of regulations governing the rebate program to
17 low-income individuals and families.

18 **SECTION 6.** All provisions of U.S. Code in conflict with this bill shall be null and void.

A Bill to Expand ROTC/CSPI

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** All high school seniors shall take the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) in
3 September of their senior year, including the Coding Speed Section. All students who wish to
4 apply for entrance to an institution of higher education must include their ASVAB score on their
5 application. Those students who score in the 95th Percentile or above shall be automatically
6 guaranteed admission to a state school of their choice, not limited to schools of their home state,
7 that offers an ROTC or CSPI Program. Students who wish to utilize the guaranteed admission,
8 henceforth referred to as the ROTC/CSPI Preferred Admission Program, will receive identical
9 benefits as students at Service Academies, including an additional four years being counted in
10 their retirement benefits if they enter federal service, as well as allowances for food, housing, and
11 a monthly spending stipend. Students utilizing this guaranteed admission will be required to
12 participate in an AROTC, NROTC, AFROTC, or CSPI Program of their choice. Following their
13 graduation, they will be required to serve at least 5 years in the service corresponding to their
14 chosen program.

15 **SECTION 2.** An institution of higher education consists of any educational institution meeting the
16 requirements put forth in the United States Code, Title 20, Chapter 28, Subchapter 1, Part A, §
17 1001. State Schools are public universities that fall under the requirements for an institution of
18 higher education and accept state or federal money. The Service Academies include the United
19 States Military Academy (West Point, USMA), the United States Naval Academy (USNA), the
20 United States Air Force Academy (USAFA), the United States Coast Guard Academy (USCGA),
21 and the United States Merchant Marine Academy (USMMA).

22 **SECTION 3.** Any state school supporting an AROTC, NROTC, AFROTC, or CSPI program that fails to
23 comply fully with the requirements set forth in this legislation shall be ineligible to receive
24 research funding from any agency of the Federal government and its students shall be ineligible
25 for all federal education loans.

26 **SECTION 4.** \$250 Million will be appropriated annually to fund the ROTC/CSPI Preferred Admission
27 Program, including the benefits for its participants, from the Department of Defense General
28 Budget.

29 **SECTION 5.** This bill shall be enforced by the Department of Education and the Department of Defense.

30 **SECTION 6.** This bill shall go into effect July 1, 2013. Members of the high school class of 2014 shall be
31 eligible to participate in the ROTC/CSPI Preferred Admission Program by taking the ASVAB in
32 September of 2013.

33 **SECTION 7.** All Laws in conflict with this piece of legislation are hereby declared null and void.

A Bill to Impose Financial Sanctions on North Korea

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Financial sanctions shall be imposed upon the government of the Democratic People's Republic
3 of Korea (“North Korea”), along with any third-country business partners or independent
4 collaborators.

5 **SECTION 2.** Financial sanctions shall be defined as restrictions upon the provision of financial services;
6 prohibitions on investment, payments, and capital movements; and freezing of funds and
7 economic resources.

8 **SECTION 3.** Exceptions shall be made on a case-by-case basis for transactions that can be verified to be for
9 humanitarian purposes only.

10 **SECTION 4.** The U.S. Department of the Treasury shall be responsible for the implementation of this
11 legislation.

12 **SECTION 5.** This legislation shall take effect within 12 months after passage.

13 **SECTION 6.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

A Bill to Bolster Medicaid and CHIP Financing

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** The current Medicaid federal-state matching funds system, known as the Federal Medical
3 Assistance Percentage, and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) financing system are
4 hereby replaced with a single, blended matching rate of funding for each state to provide for their
5 expenditures on Medicaid and CHIP.

6 A. This rate shall be determined and gradually adjusted over time by HHS, with the goal of
7 setting single, blended matching rates for each state that save the federal government at least
8 \$100 billion.

9 B. This single, blended matching rate will be designed to automatically increase if enrollment
10 rises during times of economic recession and decline if enrollment drops during times of
11 economic growth.

12 **SECTION 2.** States are hereby barred from collecting more federal matching funds based on their level of
13 health provider taxes.

14 **SECTION 3.** The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Centers for Medicare and
15 Medicaid Services (CMS) shall further define, regulate, and enforce the provisions of this
16 legislation as necessary.

17 **SECTION 4.** This legislation shall take effect starting January 1, 2016.

18 **SECTION 5.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

A Bill to End Software Patents

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Patents shall no longer be granted for computer software.

3 **SECTION 2.** Computer software shall be defined as any series of mathematical codes, programs, instructions,
4 rules, routines, statements, or other functions, that allow or cause a computer to perform a
5 specific operation or series of operations and control a computer's hardware.

6 **SECTION 3.** Current computer software patents shall be rendered null and void as soon as five years have
7 passed since the patent was granted. No new computer software patents shall be granted.

8 **SECTION 4.** The United States Patent and Trademark Office and the Department of Commerce shall be
9 responsible for the implementation of this legislation.

10 **SECTION 5.** This legislation shall go into effect within 12 months after passage.

11 **SECTION 6.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

A Bill to Grant Permanent Residency to High-Skilled Immigrants

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Following the completion of an advanced degree in a science, technology, engineering, or
3 mathematics (STEM) field at a university located in the United States, foreign students will have
4 two years during which they may continue to reside in the United States while seeking
5 employment. After securing full-time employment in a STEM field or receiving investor backing
6 for a startup company, the graduate may have their status adjusted to Legal Permanent Resident.

7 **SECTION 2.** STEM field shall be defined pursuant to the STEM Designated Degree Program List maintained
8 by the Department of Homeland Security.

9 **SECTION 3.** The Department of Homeland Security shall be responsible for the implementation of this
10 legislation.

11 **SECTION 4.** This legislation shall take effect within 12 months after passage.

12 **SECTION 5.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

A Constitutional Amendment to Modernize the Legislature

1 **WHEREAS,** The United States Constitution makes no mention of political parties, and

2 **WHEREAS,** The United States Congress, as structured, has become so burdened by partisan gridlock that it is
3 no longer capable of performing its basic responsibilities; now, therefore, be it

4 **RESOLVED,** That upon approval of two-thirds of the chamber of this Congress here assembled, the following
5 Constitutional amendment be sent to the state legislatures for approval:

6 **SECTION 1.** The United States Senate shall be composed of 150 members that serve two-year
7 terms, and the House of Representatives shall be composed of 435 members that
8 serve six-year terms. Elections shall take place every two years. In each election,
9 all 435 House seats shall be up for election, but only fifty Senate seats shall be up
10 for election. Following the first election under this scheme, Senate terms shall be
11 staggered by randomly apportioning the seats into three groups and assigning
12 each group to one of the next three elections.

13 **SECTION 2.** Citizens shall vote for the Senate and House in national elections. Seats shall be
14 awarded according to the proportion of votes that each political party receives.
15 Following the election, seats shall be awarded to all political parties that received
16 at least 5 percent of the national vote. Seats shall be allocated in closest possible
17 proportion to the number of votes each political party received. States shall
18 manage elections and ballot requirements.

19 **SECTION 3.** Citizens shall cast instant runoff ballots in House and Senate elections. Citizens
20 shall rank their three most favored political parties by order of preference. For
21 purposes of allocating House and Senate seats, the vote of any citizen whose
22 most favored party received less than 5 percent of the national vote shall be
23 allocated to that citizen's second choice. In the event that the second choice also
24 received less than 5 percent of the vote, that citizen's vote shall go to their third
25 choice. If each of the three parties received less than 5 percent of the vote, that
26 citizen's vote shall not affect the allocation of seats.

27 **SECTION 4.** Political parties shall submit and certify lists of candidates to each State in which
28 they appear on the ballot. Each party that is allocated seats shall fill the seats in
29 the order in which those candidates appear on the ballot.

30 **SECTION 5.** In the event of a Senator or Representative's death, that member's political party
31 shall immediately appoint a replacement to serve the remainder of that term. In
32 cases where the Senate or Representative's death precedes the next election by
33 one month or less, the political party may choose to leave the seat vacant.

A Bill to Provide for Debt Limit Extensions

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** The president hereby possesses the authority to extend the public debt limit.

3 A. Subsection (b) of section 3101 of title 31, United States Code, is amended by striking “as
4 provided by law through the congressional budget process described in Rule XLIX of the
5 Rules of the House of Representatives or as provided by section 3101A or otherwise.”

6 B. The president shall, at a time of his or her choosing, raise the public debt limit.

7 C. Following any presidential public debt limit increase, Congress shall have 15 days to pass a
8 joint resolution of disapproval.

9 D. Should the President veto the Congressional resolution of disapproval, Congress may
10 override the veto. In this case, the public debt limit shall not increase.

11 E. If Congress fails to override the president’s veto of the joint resolution of disapproval, then
12 the public debt limit shall be extended pursuant to the President’s action.

13 **SECTION 2.** The U.S. Department of Treasury shall enforce the provisions of this legislation.

14 **SECTION 3.** This legislation shall take effect immediately upon passage.

15 **SECTION 4.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

A Bill to Protect the Medicare Program

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** Medicare shall be reformed to a “defined support” plan.

3 **SECTION 2.** New Federally administered Medicare exchanges shall establish a competitive marketplace in
4 which beneficiaries can choose among private health care plans and traditional fee-for-service
5 (FFS) Medicare. FFS Medicare will remain an option for all beneficiaries.

6 A. Participating private plans will be required to accept all applicants and will be prohibited
7 from “cherry picking” the youngest or healthiest seniors.

8 B. Every private plan will be required to provide benefits that have at least the same actuarial
9 value as FFS Medicare. The plans must include a specific base set of services, and the federal
10 support that each plan receives shall be adjusted for the age and health status of its enrollees.

11 C. The exchanges will provide easily accessible information about the costs and quality of plans
12 so that beneficiaries can make informed choices. Beneficiaries will have the opportunity to
13 change plans in an annual open season.

14 **SECTION 3.** Through competitive pricing by all plans, the federal contribution in each market area shall be
15 tied to the cost of the second-least expensive approved private plan or FFS Medicare, whichever
16 is less expensive (subject to the two lowest-price plans combined having enough capacity to
17 handle expected enrollment).

18 **SECTION 4.** For Parts A, B, and D of Medicare combined, per-beneficiary Medicare spending growth will be
19 limited to one percentage point faster than the per capita growth of the economy – “Per-Capita
20 GDP + 1%”.

21 **SECTION 5.** The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Centers for Medicare and
22 Medicaid Services (CMS) shall further define, regulate, and enforce the provisions of this
23 legislation as necessary.

24 **SECTION 6.** This legislation shall be enacted following a gradual process as determined by HHS, taking full
25 effect no later than January 1, 2018.

26 **SECTION 7.** All laws in conflict with this legislation are hereby declared null and void.

A Resolution Censuring President Obama for failing to defend American Interests in the Middle East

1 **WHEREAS,** The conflict in Syria between the regime of Bashar Assad and rebel force has killed thousands of
2 people; and

3 **WHEREAS,** The conflict has seen the alleged use and confirmed threat of chemical weapons; and

4 **WHEREAS,** The USA has taken steps to militarily intervene in similar Arab Spring uprising; and

5 **WHEREAS,** These military interventions have proven to be effective; and

6 **WHEREAS,** The USA has a moral obligation to uplift democracy and aid the cause of human rights around the
7 world; and

8 **WHEREAS,** President Obama has failed to appropriately shield America's national interest and the people of
9 Syria; and

10 **WHEREAS,** The alleged use of chemical weapons by Bashar Assad is in violation of President Obama's own
11 "red line" declaration; now, therefore, be it

12 **RESOLVED,** That the Congress here assembled censures President Obama for his refusal to take offensive
13 military action against the regime of Bashar Assad in the face of inhuman violence and abuse,
14 and failure to uphold America's moral authority in the Middle East by protecting the Syrian
15 people from the use of weapons of mass destruction.

A Resolution to Support China in the Diaoyu Islands Dispute

- 1 **WHEREAS,** The United States has multiple political and economic ties with the People’s Republic of China;
2 and
- 3 **WHEREAS,** The prolonged dispute between China and Japan over the control of the Diaoyu (Senkaku) Islands
4 has placed the United States in a quandary between diplomatic commitments and economic
5 interests; and
- 6 **WHEREAS,** Supporting China in this dispute would provide an impetus to soften contentious trade relations;
7 now, therefore, be it
- 8 **RESOLVED,** That the Congress here assembled supports Chinese occupation and control of the Diaoyu Islands.

A Constitutional Amendment to Repeal the Second Amendment

1 **WHEREAS,** The universal right of private citizens to own firearms is a relic of a bygone era; and

2 **WHEREAS,** There exists no legitimate reason for universal gun access rights; and

3 **WHEREAS,** Private gun ownership facilitates crime and harms innocent lives; now, therefore, be it

4 **RESOLVED,** That upon approval of two-thirds of the chamber of this Congress here assembled, the following
5 Constitutional amendment be sent to the state legislatures for approval:

6 **SECTION 1.** The second article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is
7 hereby repealed.

8 **SECTION 2.** While in a State, Territory, or any Possession of the United States, no person
9 shall possess firearms in violation of the laws thereof.

10 **SECTION 3.** The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

A Resolution to Authorize Military Intervention in Mali

1 **WHEREAS,** The proliferation of Al Qaeda and other militant organizations in North Africa, specifically in
2 Mali, threatens American national security; and

3 **WHEREAS,** Current efforts by the French and Italian militaries have been tasked to quell temporary flares in
4 violence as opposed to permanently disperse the militant organizations' leadership and foot
5 soldiers; and

6 **WHEREAS,** Violence in Mali could rapidly increase without immediate action; therefore, be it

7 **RESOLVED,** That the Congress here assembled authorizes United States military aid for the French
8 intervention in Mali, up to and including air and drone strikes to target the leadership core of
9 militant organizations in the region.

A Bill to Redefine Teacher Effectiveness

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE CONGRESS HERE ASSEMBLED THAT:

2 **SECTION 1.** The *Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* is hereby reauthorized until January 1,
3 2024.

4 **SECTION 2.** All schools and local education agencies in the United States are hereby exempt from the
5 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements contained in section 1116(c) of the *Elementary*
6 *and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)* as reauthorized in 2001.

7 **SECTION 3.** All schools and LEAs receiving funds under *ESEA* Titles I and II shall implement qualifying
8 educator evaluation systems. A qualifying educator evaluation system shall:

9 A. Meaningfully differentiate teachers and principal effectiveness based on at least four
10 performance categories;

11 B. Weight measures of growth in student achievement on state- or LEA-approved tests as a
12 significant factor for all teachers of core subjects;

13 C. Include standardized observational assessments of professional practice; and

14 D. Provide meaningful, actionable feedback on instructional practice based on standards that are
15 clearly aligned to the LEA's professional development offerings.

16 **SECTION 4.** All schools and LEAs receiving funds under *ESEA* Titles I and II shall use the results of
17 qualifying educator evaluation systems to make personnel decisions, including compensation,
18 dismissal, hiring, and tenure. No school or LEA shall make personnel decisions on the basis of
19 seniority alone.

20 **SECTION 5.** The results of qualifying educator evaluation systems shall be used in place of Highly Qualified
21 Teacher (HQT) data for the *ESEA* section 1118(b) requirement that State Education Agencies
22 (SEAs) ensure poor and minority children are not taught at higher rates by inexperienced,
23 unqualified, or out-of-field teachers.

24 **SECTION 6.** All schools and LEAs receiving funds under *ESEA* Titles I and II shall administer their own
25 qualifying accountability systems for identifying schools as priority, focus, or reward schools, as
26 outlined in *ESEA*. State accountability systems shall establish a system for rating schools based in
27 significant part on rigorous measures of student growth and achievement, reducing achievement
28 gaps, and post-graduation outcomes. States may modify existing accountability systems.

29 **SECTION 7.** Exactly one year after this bill becomes law, all SEAs must submit a plan for implementing
30 qualifying accountability systems and ensuring that LEAs implement qualifying evaluation
31 systems.

32 **SECTION 8.** All schools, LEAs, and SEAs receiving funding under *ESEA* Titles I and II shall be subject to the
33 provisions of this law beginning on July 1, 2016.