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# Senator Claiborne Pell Introduces Bill to Senate Which Would Give Former Presidents a Seat in the Senate

Office of Senator Claiborne Pell

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*Circa 64*

FROM THE OFFICE OF SENATOR  
CLAIBORNE PELL, (D-R. I.)

For further information call:  
Ray Nelson, Administrative Ass't,  
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4642, or at home; 656-6118

PRESS RELEASE  
IMMEDIATE

Senator Claiborne Pell (D-R. I.) intends to introduce on  
Wednesday, January 30th, a bill which would give former Presidents of  
the United States a seat in the Senate.

In a statement prepared to accompany introduction of the bill,  
Mr. Pell said that the Senate, at this critical time in world history, would  
stand to benefit considerably from "the unique wisdom of our retired chief  
executives."

The Rhode Island Senator, who was elected in 1960, said that  
"the presence of former Presidents in the Senate would prove of immeasurable  
value to we who are amongst the newer Senators here and might also prove  
of value to those who have been here for many more years than I."

Enactment of the resolution, he said, would be a demonstration  
of non-partisanship, since the Democrats are in a 2 to 1 majority in the  
Senate, while ex-Presidents are in a 2 to 1 majority for the Republicans.

Mr. Pell pointed out that former President Harry S. Truman  
and President Kennedy already have the right to the Senate floor as former  
members.

"But that the luster of our body would be even further en-  
hanced if former Presidents Herbert Hoover and Dwight Eisenhower were  
to sit amongst us," Senator Pell declared.

SEE ATTACHED STATEMENT

FROM THE OFFICE OF SENATOR  
CLAIBORNE PELL (D-R. I.)

For further information call:  
Ray Nelson, Administrative Assistant  
to Senator Claiborne Pell  
Room 6327, New Senate Office Building  
Capitol 4-3121, Ext. 4642--or at home  
656-6118

FLOOR STATEMENT BY SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL (D-R. I.) TO ACCOMPANY INTRODUCTION OF BILL WHICH WOULD GIVE FORMER PRESIDENTS OF THE U. S. A SEAT IN THE SENATE.

Mr. President:

I rise today to offer for the consideration of my colleagues a Senate Resolution according former Presidents of the United States a seat in the Senate.

At this time in our Nation's history when we find ourselves exercising the leadership of the free world, adoption of this idea would be of special value because the wisdom and experience of those who have occupied our Presidency is unique to those few men who had this awesome responsibility. In view of the United States Senate's responsible role in guiding our country's destiny, it would seem particularly advantageous if, as a collective body, we could benefit by the unique wisdom of our retired chief executives.

The presence of former Presidents in the Senate would help give an awareness to the Senate of the problems of the Executive. It would be one further step toward increasing the co-operation and understanding between our Legislative and Executive branches of Government. This, I believe, is a much needed step to day, when the Legislative and Executive branches of our Government too often think of themselves as antagonists rather than as allies.

Then, too, the presence of former Presidents in the Senate would prove of immeasurable value to we who are amongst the newer Senators here and might prove of value to those who have been here for many more years than I. I know how much I would appreciate the advice and reactions of former Presidents when it comes to some of these rather difficult problems on which we have to vote, particularly those problems where our own Senate committee recommendations run counter to those of our Chief Executive.

Moreover, these Senators-at-Large, as former Presidents no longer responsible to a single State, would tend to have a more national view than we as Senators from individual states are always able to achieve.

The presence of ex-Presidents would add an ever further dignity and prestige to our chamber making it more truly the golden Legislative chamber it should be.

No expense would be involved in the adoption of this resolution, since ex-Presidents presently receive \$25,000 as salaries and \$50,000 for staff expenses.

Finally, if this resolution were to be adopted at this time when the Democrats in the Senate are in a 2 to 1 majority and the Republican ex-Presidents are in a 2 to 1 majority, it would reflect a real spirit of non-partisanship when it came to promoting the interest of our Republic.

Already both former President Truman and President Kennedy have the right to the Senate Floor by virtue of their former membership in our body. But the luster of our body would be even further enhanced if former Presidents Herbert Hoover and Dwight D. Eisenhower were to sit amongst us.

Similar proposals have been advanced in the past, but no real action has ever been taken on them. The first such bill was presented in the Senate in 1947, and six similar measures have been offered to subsequent sessions of the Senate. Since 1944, 13 such proposals have been submitted to the House of Representatives.

It is my hope that the Senate will give serious consideration to this proposal and will see fit to enact it.