

**The Apportionment Bill,**  
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**SPEECH**  
OF  
**HON. PAUL HOWLAND**  
OF OHIO,  
**IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,**  
*Thursday, February 9, 1911,*

On the Bill (H.R. 30566) for the reapportionment of Representatives in the Congress among the several States under the Thirteenth Decennial Census

**Mr. HOWLAND** said:

Mr. Speaker: The proposition embodied in the pending bill provides for a House of Representatives of 433 Members and one additional Representative for each of the new States of New Mexico and Arizona whenever these States are finally admitted. The proposition adopted and advocated by the Republican caucus provides for a House of 391 Members, its present size, to be increased by one Representative from Arizona and one from New Mexico when they become qualified to elect them. Notwithstanding the fact, Mr. Speaker, that the adoption of the 391 proposition will lose my State one Member, I am so firmly convinced that the number of Representatives ought not to be increased that I shall give my vote to retain a House of the present size. I have noticed that the influence of Members on the floor does not tint the least depend on the State from which they come or the size of the delegation from their State, but rather on their ability and standing among their fellow Members, and I am satisfied the loss of a Member from my State by the new apportionment, which applies to all the other States as well as my own, would not in any respect detract from the influence which the delegation would exert in future Congresses. I am satisfied, Mr. Speaker, that if such a thing were possible, it would be the part of wisdom to reduce the House of Representatives even below the present number of 391. The criticism of the rules of procedure of the House of Representatives has largely grown out of the fact that the present House is too large, and the critic, losing sight of this fact, has called attention to the rules of procedure limiting debate and often cutting off the right to amend.

Everyone familiar with the proceeding of the House knows that such rules are absolutely necessary in order to transact business, and the parliamentary body. With a House of 391 Members, and each Member anxious to instruct the country upon vital and important questions, there are not enough days in the year, Sundays included, to give each Member one day's time in which to present his views. With a smaller House more freedom of debate would be possible and better results obtained in the matters of legislation. We are cited by the advocates of a larger House to the House of Commons, which is composed of 670 members, as showing that a larger number is not necessarily detrimental. In this connection, however, we should bear in mind that it only requires 40 members of the House of Commons to transact business, while in this country a majority of all Members must be in attendance in order to have a quorum necessary to transact business. It is impossible, however, to draw any satisfactory conclusion from a comparison of the size of the various parliamentary bodies of other countries with our own, or their ratio of members to population. The problem is one essentially our own, and to be solved by the consideration of circumstances and conditions peculiar to our people and to our form of government. The House of Representatives has grown from a membership of 65 in 1789 to its present membership of 391, and the ratio has grown from 30,000 to 194,182. There has been an increase in the number of Representatives every decade since the adoption of the Constitution

with the exception of the Sixth Census in 1843, and the ratio has been increased every decade with the exception of the Second Census in 1803. The sentiment in favor of a smaller House has always prevailed quite generally, but a practical question has, as a rule, intervened whenever the attempt has been made to decrease the size of the house or increase of the ration to such an extent as to prevent an increase of its size.

Whenever any actions of this kind is contemplated it is always discovered that the numerical representation of some States will be decreased, whereupon the Representatives of those States feel called upon to fight any proposition the adoption of which would reduce the representation of their States. It has often happened that the decrease in the representation of a State would legislate out of future Congresses some of the strongest and most influential Members. It thus happens that the personal equation enters largely into legislation of this character and partisan considerations exert powerful influence. The time has come, Mr. Speaker, when considerations of this character must give way to the general welfare. Our Democratic friends are lined up on this occasion in one solid column in favor of increasing the membership from 391 to 433.. IT is said that an increase of this character carries with in an increased expenditure of about \$1,000,000 per annum. It would seem that the cry of economy so recently shouted from all the hustings in the county is now hushed as they are about to take up the scepter of power and to assume responsibility. I, for one, Mr. Speaker, prefer that the responsibility for the enormous increase in the size of the House of Representatives shall be placed upon the Democratic Party, for it again demonstrates the case and celerity with which that party can do the wrong thing. And to those Republicans, my colleagues, who would vote for a larger House, let me say that the loss of one Representative from their States or mine ought not to be considered when the efficiency and usefulness of the House of Representatives is involved. The welfare of the whole country should outweigh local considerations.