

GOP to fight abortion at convention

Dole awarded two convention posts to staunch abortion opponents Bush, Hyde

WASHINGTON (AP) — Trying to dodge a revolt by anti-abortion conservatives, GOP presidential challenger Bob Dole has given two top convention posts to Republicans who promise not to weaken the party's hard line against abortion.

Illinois Rep. Henry Hyde, who, as platform committee chairman, will write the new GOP platform, and Texas Gov. George W. Bush, who will preside over the convention as "temporary" co-chairman, both reiterated their commitment to the platform plank that calls for a constitutional ban on abortion.

Their appointments, announced Wednesday by the Republican National Committee, dampened speculation that Dole would move to the middle on abortion. Any change risked a revolt by Pat Buchanan, who nominally remains in the GOP presidential race and has threatened a third-party candidacy if the abortion plank were modified.

"I don't intend to weaken the pro-life position the party's had for the past four elections. My posture is not one of retreat," Hyde told the Daily Herald in Arlington Heights, Ill.

"Good for Henry. I'll stand with him 100 percent on that," Buchanan said at a campaign rally in Indianapolis Wednesday night.

Bush, son of the former president, favors limiting abortions to cases of rape, incest or to save the life of the mother. And while his own view is different, he said

reassuring," said activist Phyllis Schlafly, who served with Hyde on the 1984 committee that wrote the existing abortion plank.

Dole had explored the idea of tinkering with the platform's abortion language, nonetheless promising a plank that "will support the pro-life position." His

co-chairman with another of the party's rising stars — Gov. Christie Whitman of New Jersey.

Gingrich's selection was in keeping with the Republican tradition of having the party's House leader serve as convention chairman. But some Dole advisers, concerned that negative public opinion of Gingrich would damage Dole, have sought to limit the speaker's prime-time exposure at this summer's nationally televised convention in San Diego.

Whitman and Bush, both popular governors from states with considerable blocs of electoral votes, will share the gavel with Gingrich in presiding over four days of convention activities beginning August 12.

In a statement, RNC Chairman Haley Barbour said the governors were selected to reflect the Republican commitment to "moving power and money away from Washington and back to families, states and communities." Furthering that theme, nine co-chairmen of the platform committee are to be drawn from state and local leaders and announced later, Barbour said.



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— BOB DOLE
presumed GOP presidential nominee

he believes the GOP should retain a platform plank calling for a constitutional ban on abortion.

"It was a winning platform in 1988. I don't think it determined the outcome of the 1992 election. I think it's important to keep it in," he said.

Anti-abortion conservatives welcomed the news.

"Henry Hyde is very capable. It's splendid, and yes, it's

campaign is not eager for a public fight over the issue at the August convention, which marks the formal kickoff of his general-election campaign for the White House.

In other convention appointments announced Wednesday, House Speaker Newt Gingrich will serve as permanent chairman while Bush will share the prominent job of "temporary"

Perot continues to push for third party

1992 presidential candidate says Republicans too busy playing games with reform issues

WASHINGTON (AP) — Ross Perot said today he will step up his campaign for a new political party because Republicans "are playing games" with his ideas for reforming the federal government.

Asked why he doesn't support Republican leaders since they claim to agree on such issues as term limits and campaign reform, Perot said: "They're talking about it. But they haven't done it."

"We want results, not talk," Perot said of his new Reform Party, which he hopes to put on the ballot in all 50 states.

Speaking on Dallas radio station KRLD this morning, Perot



said Reform Party members planned to be across Texas today gathering signatures on a petition that could get them on the November ballot in Texas.

Perot said a third party is needed to restore faith in government.

"We've got to put our financial house back in order. Our country is in a financial mess," Perot said.

He told "CBS This Morning" that Republicans hold a majority in both the House and Senate

"because independent voters gave it to them in 1994."

"When you've got a majority in the House and Senate, you can always push (legislation) all the way through both and put it on the president's desk. This is not being done," Perot said.

Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole and other GOP leaders have said they don't understand why Perot wants a third party instead of working with the Republican Party.

"Things like campaign finance reform, things like setting the highest ethical standards in government, things like term limits ... they just don't want to touch and they're playing games with it," he said.

"The people feel that the two existing parties are bought and paid for by the special interests

and that the peoples' interests are not represented," Perot said, claiming that "93 percent of the American people think that Congress wastes their money and 7 out of 10 Americans feel that Congress is not acting in the best interests of the nation."

Perot said politics have become "so mean, so bitter-spirited that the best people in our country are leaving it. People like General (Colin) Powell won't even touch it."

In yet another interview this morning, Perot told Dallas radio station KEWS that the focus of his political work is in the future of America.

"We're looking for young people, parents and grandparents who understand the critical financial condition this country is in," Perot said.

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