



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 25, 2008

CONTACT: Brad Dayspring
(202) 225-3484

Hensarling: Democrats' Push for 'Fairness Doctrine' is Not Just Unfair, but likely Unconstitutional

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Congressman Jeb Hensarling (R-TX), Chairman of the Republican Study Committee, today spoke out against Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi's support for reinstating the "Fairness" Doctrine. The 'Fairness' doctrine is an antiquated Federal Communications Commission (FCC) regulation requiring that all political broadcasts that express opinion on the public airwaves are balanced with equal time for the opposing viewpoint. Hensarling issued the following statement:

"Speaker Pelosi's support of the 'Fairness' Doctrine is a direct attack on free speech, freedom and liberty. Her admonition is the latest example of Democrat efforts to crack down on the bedrock freedoms guaranteed to all Americans.

"The 'Fairness' Doctrine itself is a misnomer in the modern world, and would more aptly be called the 'unfairness doctrine' since it would guarantee censorship. In 1969 the Supreme Court examined the fairness doctrine and found that while constitutional at the time, the rule's constitutionality must be questioned should it ever begin to restrain speech. There is little doubt that in today's world, the 'fairness' doctrine would severely restrain speech, crippling Christian and talk radio and subjecting political discussion by everyday Americans to an Orwellian-like speech police in the process..

"Political debate is a bedrock principle of democracy and ought to be encouraged, not stifled. The bottom line is that the fairness doctrine will silence countless numbers of Americans, and that is not only unfair, but unconstitutional. I encourage all of my colleagues, both Republican and Democrat, to immediately sign Congressman Mike Pence's discharge petition to force the House to consider his bill to prevent a return of the 'Fairness' Doctrine."

###

Congressman Jeb Hensarling is Chairman of the Republican Study Committee (RSC).