**Fitness to Serve**

As members of Congress age, many citizens become concerned whether the Senator or Representative is in good enough health to actually serve. Our older members of Congress possess a wealth of wisdom, knowledge, and experience, making them very valuable to the entire Legislative body. However, the human body and mind tends to deteriorate as we age. We need of members of Congress at their best.

To balance the benefits and problems of an aging Congressional population, we need to be able to assess their health. Since people physically age at very different rates, age alone is not indicative of physical or mental health. This bill would require that all members of Congress submit to an annual physical and mental health evaluation to continue to serve. Once the member of Congress reaches the age of 65, the annual physical and mental health evaluation would take place every 6 months.

If at any time the Senator or Representative is found to not meet the physical and/or mental health qualifications to continue to serve, a Special Election would be held within 6 months to replace the incumbent. However, the Incumbent would be allowed to continue to serve until the new Senator or Representative is able to be sworn in. This will ensure that the seat is not left vacant.

The qualifications and standards will be set by Congress, with the assistance of military and civilian medical and mental health experts, to ensure that the standards and qualifications are fair to the members of Congress and the American people.

Candidates: Once the bill is enacted, the physical and mental health evaluation would be required for any candidate for the United States House of Representatives or United States Senate. For candidates, the only results released to the public would be the overall recommendations of the doctors evaluating the candidate, stating either “fit to serve” or “questionable fitness to serve” without divulging protected, private health information .

Current Members of Congress: This legislation would apply to all CURRENT members of Congress. For an elected member of Congress, more details may be given, such as a specific reason. The reason for this difference is because the candidate who is still a private citizen (and may not win the election) still has the same “expectation of privacy” and everyone else. Once elected, the Senator or Representative loses some of that “expectation of privacy”.