

The original documents are located in Box D16, folder “Release Candidacy for Minority Leader, December 20, 1964” of the Ford Congressional Papers: Press Secretary and Speech File at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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STATEMENT BY REP. GERALD R. FORD

FOR RELEASE:
AM's Sunday, December 20, 1964

In the past 33 years there has been but one two-year period in which the Republican Party has controlled both the White House and the Congress at the same time.

We have come to a point in history where fine citizens of all political faiths all over the country are gravely concerned about the very survival of the two-party system. We must begin a new chapter with new ideas, new spirit, and new leadership.

The vitality of the two-party system, and indeed the strength of our form of government, will be severely tested in the months ahead. How our Republican minority conducts itself during the next two years will be crucial in determining the future of our party and the two-party system.

Every Republican Congressman, charged with this heavy responsibility, wants our party to be dynamic and positive. We can become the majority party only if we in the House effectively represent and promote the best hopes and the aspirations of the American people for themselves and for their country.

We have within our Republican ranks a great wealth of talent, energy, and dedication. When properly channeled and utilized to the fullest, this talent will promote and communicate the image of a fighting, forward-looking party seeking responsible and constructive solutions to national problems.

By finding ways to better utilize these impressive talents through new techniques and bold leadership, by a willingness to try new ideas, by leading rather than simply reacting, we can and we must develop the respect and the support of the American people.

It would have been far easier for me to have avoided this contest. But I am convinced that meaningful changes must be made now for the benefit of our Republican Party and the preservation of our two-party system.

For these reasons, I announce my candidacy for the position of minority leader of the House of Representatives.

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Following is a copy of a telegram which has been sent to my Republican colleagues in the 89th Congress:

"Today I am announcing my candidacy for the Minority Leadership of the House. During the next two years our performance as Republican Congressmen will have a great impact on the future of our party. I am convinced that our House Republican talent, energy and dedication can and must be utilized fully if we as a party are to better represent and promote the best hopes of the American people and if we are to become a majority Party. I hope I have your support. I look forward to a personal visit with you in the near future.

My best wishes for a happy holiday season.

Jerry Ford."

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