

Kings and Queens Addressing Joint Meetings of Congress

Updated May 4, 2026

On April 28, 2026, King Charles III of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland addressed a joint meeting of Congress. King Charles was [jointly invited](#) by Speaker of the House of Representatives Mike Johnson, Senate Majority Leader John Thune, Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, and House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries. King Charles was the 11th king or queen to address a joint meeting of Congress.

Invitation Process

When a foreign leader formally visits the United States, he or she is sometimes invited to address a joint meeting of Congress. The decision to invite a foreign leader to address Congress has historically been made by the congressional leadership, often in consultation and conjunction with the executive branch. No formal procedure on when or how to issue invitations is codified in law or in House or Senate rules. Not all foreign leaders who visit the United States are invited to address Congress. For more information on foreign leaders who have addressed Congress, see CRS In Focus IF10211, *Foreign Leaders Addressing Congress*, by Jacob R. Straus.

Past Kings and Queens Who Have Addressed a Joint Meeting of Congress

To date, 11 individuals holding the title of king or queen have addressed a joint meeting of Congress. The first address by a king or queen occurred on December 18, 1874, when King Kalakaua, from the Kingdom of Hawaii, addressed Congress. The most recent occurred when King Charles III of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland addressed a joint meeting of Congress on April 28, 2026. **Table 1** lists the monarchs that have addressed a joint meeting of Congress.

Table 1. Addresses by Kings and Queens to a Joint Meeting of Congress

Date	Monarch	Country
December 18, 1874	King Kalakaua ^a	Kingdom of Hawaii

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Date	Monarch	Country
April 3, 1952	Queen Juliana	Kingdom of the Netherlands
May 12, 1959	King Baudouin	Kingdom of Belgium
April 28, 1960	King Mahendra	Kingdom of Nepal
June 29, 1960	King Bhumibol Adulyadej	Kingdom of Thailand
June 2, 1976	King Juan Carlos I	Kingdom of Spain
April 21, 1982	Queen Beatrix	Kingdom of the Netherlands
May 16, 1991	Queen Elizabeth II	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
July 26, 1994	King Hussein I ^b	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
March 7, 2007	King Abdullah II Bin Al Hussein	Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan
April 28, 2026	King Charles III	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Source: Historian of the House of Representatives, “Joint Meeting & Joint Session Addresses Before Congress by Foreign Leaders & Dignitaries,” <http://history.house.gov/Institution/Foreign-Leaders/Joint-Sessions>.

Notes:

- a. King Kalakaua was unable to deliver his speech “because of a severe cold and hoarseness.” The speech was “read by former Representative Elisha Hunt Allen, then serving as Chancellor and Chief Justice of the Hawaiian Islands” on King Kalakaua’s behalf. See U.S. Congress, “Joint Sessions and Meetings, Address to the Senate or the House, and Inaugurations,” fn. 13, https://www.senate.gov/reference/resources/pdf/joint_sessions.pdf.
- b. The address by King Hussein I was a joint address with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. See “Joint Meeting of the House and Senate to Hear Addresses by His Majesty King Hussein I of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan and His Excellency Yitzhak Rabin, Prime Minister of Israel,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 140, part 12 (July 26, 1994), pp. 17891-17895, <https://www.congress.gov/103/crecb/1994/07/26/GPO-CRECB-1994-pt12-9-1.pdf>.

Most joint meetings of Congress to hear addresses by foreign leaders, including kings and queens, have been held in the Hall of the House. For example, **Figure 1** shows King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand addressing a joint meeting of Congress on June 29, 1960.

Figure 1. King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand Addressing a Joint Meeting of Congress



Source: Library of Congress, “Bhumibol Adulyadej, King of Thailand speaking before a joint session of the United States Congress, Washington, D.C.,” Marion S. Trikosko, June 29, 1960, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2023631222>.

For more information on foreign leaders addressing Congress, see CRS In Focus IF10211, *Foreign Leaders Addressing Congress*, by Jacob R. Straus.

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