



UNITED STATES CONGRESS

Committee Guide

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Introduction

Welcome to the United States Congress! This guide will help you prepare for your role as a member of the United States Congress for HMCE this year. Capitol Hill is one of the most exciting posts for a politician, but it comes with its fair share of rules and responsibilities. In order to serve your nation to the best of your ability, your constituents expect you to prepare for your role by familiarizing yourself with the legislative process and thoroughly researching the issues your committee will discuss.

We encourage you to begin preparing for HMCE right away! The more time you spend becoming acquainted with congressional procedure and considering the legislative issues that lay before you, the more fun you will have at the conference.

Congressional Programs at HMCE

The Congress is a dynamic legislative body. As a congressional leader, you will experience what it is like to create the laws for an entire nation. Accurately portraying the senator or representative assigned to you will require some background research about your member, his or her party, and his or her ideology.

For the purposes of Model Congress Europe, both the House of Representatives and the Senate are divided into two subcommittees. To begin the conference, each subcommittee will consider their topics separately, debating and drafting bills. The “Full House” and “Full Senate,” each consisting of both subcommittees from a chamber, will meet twice towards the end of the conference to debate the bills passed during subcommittee sessions. At this time, any bills passed by the Full Senate will go to the Full House for consideration, and the Full Senate will also consider those bills passed by the House. Any bill passed by both legislative bodies then goes on to a specially convened Conference Committee that reconciles any differences between the two versions of the bill. Bills then return to each chamber for final approval. When a bill has been passed in exactly the same form in both the House and the Senate, it lands on the desk of the president for approval or veto. If the president vetoes a bill, a vote will be held during the closing ceremony of the conference when, with a two-thirds vote of all representatives and senators, the veto may be overridden.

This year’s conference will discuss the issues that are on the briefings posted on the HMCE website. These briefings should be considered starting points for the issues; you are strongly encouraged to follow up with your own research. While each subcommittee will only consider three topics, you should read all six briefs so that you are familiar with all topics that will be debated when the House of Representatives and Senate meet during their respective full sessions.

Also keep in mind that all debate will be run according to parliamentary procedure. Please carefully read the explanation of parliamentary procedure that is in this guide. Having a

good understanding of these rules will ensure that everybody's ideas are heard and that the best possible legislation comes out of every session.

Preparing for the Conference

As a member of Congress, your political commitments and legislative decisions are shaped by a number of factors. Each of your positions should reflect your personal feelings (as senator or representative), the opinions of your constituents, what is best for your region, and what is best for the nation as a whole. As soon as you are assigned a role, begin by researching your role's biography in order to familiarize yourself with your senator or representative's background and your district profile. Also be sure to carefully read through the "liberal view" and "conservative view" sections of your briefings so that you know how each political party traditionally feels about the topics you will be discussing.

In addition to researching your role's positions, we strongly encourage you to research your assigned issues so you can consider the topic from multiple viewpoints. Delegates who have thoroughly read the briefings and done outside research on the issues are often the most successful at crafting thoughtful legislation.

At the Conference

During the conference, you will alternate between formal debate and caucus, each of which contributes to the congressional committee process. During formal debate, your committee chair will recognize different senators or representatives to speak on the issue at hand. Speaking during formal debate is often the best way to communicate your idea to the whole group. During caucus, committee members may brainstorm ideas for legislation and work on the bill writing process in smaller groups.

After setting the agenda, your chair will open committee by forming a general speakers' list to begin debate on the topic at hand. It is a useful strategy to raise your placard early in order to place yourself on the speakers' list. While you may think you have nothing to say, inevitably a fellow committee member will make a statement that you wish to object to or echo your support for. By placing yourself on the speakers list early, you can be confident that your ideas are brought front and center so the committee can consider your opinion while crafting legislation.

Some of you might feel hesitant to speak in front of the committee; many delegates feel nervous in the new situation. But while speaking may seem frightening at first, debating ideas during committee is the best way to enrich your conference experience.

While drafting legislation, it is important to keep in mind the rules for bill-writing. First, legislation must be approved by the committee chair before it can be officially introduced. While each bill will be discussed in turn, chairs especially look for well-written legislation drafted through debate and compromise. The committee may pass more than one bill on the same topic, but it is always a good idea to make each bill as thorough as possible so that your legislation makes it on to the full session docket.

Party Caucus

Before full session, you and your fellow senators and representatives from each political party (Republican or Democrat) will meet in a party caucus, where you will rally behind your party's political platform and articulate the party stance on each issue. Your chairs will present the bills on the full session docket so that your party can attempt to construct a cohesive party strategy for addressing the proposed pieces of legislation.

Full Session

Next, the Speaker of the House or President of the Senate will call together the House or Senate Full Session so that the entire chamber can begin reviewing the legislation passed in committee. In full session, members of Congress have the opportunity to discuss the legislation that successfully passed in committee, in hopes that the bill will eventually be signed into law. During full session, each legislative chamber will discuss both legislation passed in its committees and bills passed in the other chamber's full session. If legislation passes in the Senate, the bill will then be sent to House for approval, and vice versa. Legislation passing both chambers is submitted to the president, who signs or vetoes the bill before a joint session of Congress at the HMCE closing ceremony.

If the House and Senate pass similar bills, the Conference Committee, a small group of representatives from both the House and Senate, will work to combine both bills into a single, more comprehensive piece of legislation, which will be sent back to the House and Senate full sessions to be voted upon.

Special Programs in Action

Presidential Cabinet

Senate committees will periodically hear testimony from members of the Presidential Cabinet. Cabinet testimony is especially helpful because their statements can often remind the committee of the presidential policy on the issue that is under discussion. Furthermore, their testimony will give you a good idea of whether or not the president plans to support or veto your bill.

Press Corps

During the conference, the *HMCE Times* reporters will update all conference participants about important votes, court decisions, national crises, and political scandals that occur throughout the day. While observing committees, reporters will take notes on committee progress and may ask to interview you about current legislation ideas.

Executive Office

The Executive Branch is a group of elite HMCE staff members focused on operating the Home Office, which keeps an eye on wayward members of Congress. Senators or representatives who do not faithfully represent their constituency may receive a letter from concerned voters urging them to reconsider their position. In addition, if constituents notice that their senator or representative is not actively participating in the debate, the voter may decide to pay an office call to remind the congressman that it is important to speak up during committee discussion. Members of Congress are advised to take such letters or visits very seriously since they

reflect the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of your constituency. Citizens in your district are counting on you—do not let them down!

Partisan Viewpoints

Unlike many European countries, the United States' political party structure is fairly loose. Since each member of Congress is elected as an individual first, and as a member of a party only secondarily, maintaining a strong party line is often difficult. This looseness also makes bipartisan compromise possible, as many politicians do not want to appear too extreme to their constituents. Nevertheless, there are two major and distinct parties in the United States: the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

Republicans

The Republican Party (also known as the Grand Old Party or GOP) is the more conservative party in the United States. Republicans generally favor a diminished governmental role in daily life and favor delegating more authority to state and local authorities as opposed to the federal government. Republicans claim that free enterprise has led to national economic prosperity, and they usually side with businesses. The party draws the bulk of its support from the wealthy and middle class citizens who are concerned with high taxes and what they see as an excessively intrusive government and wasteful government spending. Consequently, it should come as no surprise that the GOP has been a strong advocate for a balanced budget. On social issues such as abortion, the GOP is split between religious conservatives who believe in using legislation to uphold traditional morality and family values, and more libertarian lawmakers who believe that government should defer to individuals' rights. On foreign policy issues, Republicans are often divided, with many conservatives favoring isolationism, and some moderates subscribing to the internationalist free-trade school of thought. The GOP is united, however, in its desire for a strong national defense. The traditional symbol of the GOP is the elephant.

Democrats

The Democratic Party is the more liberal, or progressive party in US politics. Democrats have been advocates of an increased role of the government in improving the lives of people. They have been traditionally concerned with providing access to health care, education, old age pensions, and protecting the environment. Traditionally strong in urban areas, the Democrats side with labor against business interest. The Democrats have also been strong with minority populations, such as African-Americans, Latinos, and Asians, and they have championed affirmative action and other programs aimed at improving race relations in the country.

On social issues, Democrats tend to be liberal, advocating progressive policies such as relatively easy access to abortion and non-discrimination against homosexuals. Some Democrats from the South, however, are slightly more conservative.

On foreign policy issues, the Democrats are as divided as the Republicans. Many Democrats favor trade protectionism, because of a concern that US jobs are being exported overseas. Former President Clinton and a core of moderate Democrats, self-termed the "New Democrats," have revolutionized the party, advocating policies that are socially liberal and fiscally

laissez-faire. Democrats typically favor spending more on education and social programs and less on defense. The traditional symbol of the Democratic Party is the donkey.

Independents

Politicians that are not members of either of the two main parties are typically independents; that is, they are members of no party. Some of the more prominent independents in US politics today include Senator James Jeffords (VT-Jr.) and Representative Bernie Sanders (VT-1). Independent politicians have their own specific views on the major issues and are often united in their distrust of the large party bureaucracy.

Working with the Party Leaders

At HMCE, the House and Senate staffs will include a Republican (Majority) Leader and a Democratic (Minority) Leader. The leaders will be responsible for organizing party caucuses and working with delegates from their party on legislation. To assist with legislation, the leaders will answer questions, coordinate party strategy on specific bills and amendments, as well as work with individual students on substantive proposals. The party leaders will also work to encourage party unity during important votes; students ought to remember, however, that their allegiance does not always primarily rest with the party, and they should not be afraid to disagree with fellow party members.

Every bill and amendment will have to be approved by the leader of the party of the student proposing it. In that sense, the leader will act as an agent of the Speaker of the House or the President of the Senate. Students are encouraged to develop a working relationship with their party leaders, as the leaders will be the ones that will be there to answer questions, help write bills, and encourage participation in committee decisions.

Regional Viewpoints

Unlike European countries with proportional representation, lawmakers in the US Congress represent specific constituents based on geographic considerations. Since many elections are run on local issues, members of Congress typically feel a great obligation to do what is in the best interest of their constituents first. Although legislators never intend to neglect broader party and national interests, they are very aware of how policy affects their local district, as their jobs depend on the voters therein.

Participants in the US domestic programs hail from eight regions that shape their perspectives on issues.

New England

This region is one of the oldest and most wealthy regions in the US. It consists of Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont. Legislative priorities include protection of civil liberties, the environment, social programs, and labor. Democrats tend to prevail over Republicans more often than not in this region; for example, all of the New England states were carried by Democratic presidential candidate Senator John F. Kerry in the 2004 US presidential election.

Mid-Atlantic

This region in the middle belt of the Atlantic seashore includes Delaware, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. The Mid-Atlantic is the center of commerce and banking, as well as a highly industrialized part of the country. Politically, the region is fairly Democratic, but it usually elects moderates who are both fiscally conservative and socially progressive. The Atlantic states were carried by Senator Kerry in the 2004 presidential election. The region includes such major cities as New York and Philadelphia, urban centers with dynamic economies but many problems associated with the urban poor. The “ethnic” constituencies and business interests of the Mid-Atlantic states tend to oppose curbs on legal immigration.

South

The South, which still reveals influences from the Civil War in the 1860s, is a rapidly developing region with many contrasts. Historically one of the most solidly Democratic regions of the country, it has over the past decade firmed up as the stronghold of the more conservative Republican Party. Despite this recent trend, two recent Democratic US Presidents (Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton) have been moderate Southern governors. The South is a region with a booming economy focused on cities such as Atlanta, Raleigh, Dallas, and Miami, but it is also home to some of America’s poorest rural areas. In terms of demographics, the South has a prominent African-American population, and Florida contains a substantial aged population of retirees, as well as a politically powerful population of Cuban-Americans who arrived in Miami after the rise of Fidel Castro. The South includes Arkansas, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia, all of which were carried by Republican President George W. Bush in the 2004 election.

Midwest

Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin make up the Midwest. This region, dotted with such prominent cities as Chicago, Detroit, Cleveland, and St. Louis, is America’s industrial heartland. The labor constituency is strong, but so is the middle class, making this a very competitive region in American politics. Opposition to free trade runs strong in the Midwest, where former manufacturing sectors are transforming their industrial economies towards services. The region’s successful Republican governors have experimented with cutting welfare and implementing reform in education and other social programs. The region split between presidential candidates in the 2004 election, with Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin being carried by Senator Kerry, and Indiana, Missouri and Ohio going to President Bush.

Plains

The Plains region is divided into the states of Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, North and South Dakota, and Oklahoma. The Plains are a land of farmers and ranchers. For the inhabitants of the farm belt the most important issues are agricultural subsidies and protecting traditional American values. A socially conservative region, few minority populations can be found in the Plains. All of the Plains states voted for President Bush in the 2004 election.

Pacific Northwest

The region includes Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming. This resource-rich region is also home to some of America's greatest natural wonders. The export-oriented economy makes this region a staunch supporter of free trade. With its vast timber forests and many endangered species, the Pacific Northwest has pushed for advances in environmental protection. Yet, now that the economic costs of environmental legislation have become apparent, some in the region are skeptical of environmental regulation. The Pacific Northwest split in the 2004 presidential election, with Alaska, Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming carried by President Bush, while the two coastal states Oregon and Washington were won by Senator Kerry.

Southwest

The Southwestern US includes Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. The Southwest has a large population of Hispanic descent, and is very concerned about the future of immigration policy. It also contains most of the nation's Native American population. The Southwest enjoys a growing, dynamic economy based around such urban centers as Denver, Phoenix, and Salt Lake City; most of this economic growth comes from technology and government defense contracts. The region tends to be Republican and socially conservative, being home to more than 4 million members of the Mormon Church. All of these states were won by President Bush in the 2004 election.

California/Hawaii

California is the most populous state in the Union. It can be divided into roughly three regions: sprawling, heavily populated, and ethnically diverse southern California (Los Angeles area), rapidly growing central California (San Francisco area), and sparsely populated but resource-rich northern California. California's economy is extremely diversified, including such industries as agriculture, high technology (Silicon Valley is near San Francisco), and entertainment (Hollywood is near Los Angeles). Politically, California is extremely diverse, encompassing some of the most liberal and most conservative politicians in the nation, yet most Californians are fiscally conservative and socially liberal. Recently, California has led the nation in cutting benefits to illegal immigrants and eliminating affirmative action programs.

Hawaii, the last state to join the US, is a volcanic archipelago located in the Pacific Ocean more than 2000 miles southwest of California. Environmental issues are central to Hawaiian politics, as are the rights of its native Hawaiian population in this socially liberal state. Both Hawaii and California were won by Senator Kerry in the 2004 presidential election.

Guide to Drafting Legislation

Proposing a Bill

When debate enters the bill writing stage, there are usually several different bills being written by committee members at the same time. According to committee rules, however, only one bill may be debated at any given time; so the process of getting a bill onto the floor becomes something of a race. Following the guidelines below will increase the chances that the Chair will sign your bill so that it may be discussed in committee.

Format for All Bills

All bills must follow the format specified below:

- A) Title
- B) Preamble—the bill’s basic purpose and intent
- C) Content—the legislation
- D) Definitions—definitions of ambiguous terms
- E) Enforcement—penalties for violation
- F) Funding—the amount and the source

Within each section, each numbered clause should address a different idea, especially in the content section. A certain section may be omitted if absolutely unnecessary. For example, an enforcement clause might not appear in an appropriations bill in the House of Representatives.

The sample bill that follows this section is a good example of a precisely-worded, thorough piece of legislation. It develops several ideas and sufficiently defines its terms. The author has also devised a creative way to fund the bill.

Amendments

After debating a bill for some time, Members who do not wholly support a bill may wish to add, rewrite, or delete certain sections. Members must propose such changes in the form of amendments. Some amendments are minor and pass almost immediately; others may be detailed and require extensive debate. In any event, amendments require signatures of the Chair and either two senators or eight representatives.

Unlike bills, amendments are immediately placed on the floor of the committee upon introduction by a member, requiring neither debate nor a vote.

Amendments are often the result of compromise, yet an amendment can double as a political weapon to kill legislation. Members may seek to attach strategically controversial amendments to a bill knowing that the bill, as amended, will draw significant opposition from either the full House or Senate, or the president.

Passing Legislation

Eventually, the committee will bring a bill to a vote. Once debate on the bill is closed and upon a Motion for the Previous Question, the committee chambers are sealed for a placard vote. If a bill is particularly contentious, a member may request a roll call vote to make the record show exactly how each Member of Congress voted.

Sample Bill

Foreign Narcotics Control Act

Be it hereby enacted by the US Senate:

Preamble

The United States Senate resolves to strengthen the forces of the War on Drugs by increasing foreign law enforcement and military assistance and support for American drug interdiction.

Content

1. \$200 million in foreign aid shall be given to the nations of Bolivia and Colombia in order to train, equip and support their law enforcement and military forces for the purpose of combating narcotics trafficking.
2. The president of the United States shall be authorized to transfer immediately up to \$50 million worth of excess US military supplies to the militaries of major Latin American drug producing nations.
3.
 - (a) \$250 million shall be allocated to the Pentagon to support AWACS surveillance planes, E-2 Navy reconnaissance planes and P-3 planes in order to detect drug shipments.
 - (b) \$100 million shall be allocated to increase F-15 interceptor capabilities and Coast Guard patrols near US waters.
4. Up to \$200 million in economic aid shall be provided in matching funds to the governments of major Latin American drug producing nations. Funds will be provided to those nations matching their expenditures on internal crop substitution, drug eradication and drug education programs.

Definitions

AWACS — Airborne Warning and Control System; modified Boeing 707 airplanes outfitted with sophisticated radar equipment.

Major Latin American drug producing nations—Bolivia, Peru, Colombia, Belize, Mexico, Ecuador, Paraguay. For the purposes of this legislation, this list can be expanded subject to review by the Secretary of State.

Enforcement

Aid and assistance shall be reviewed quarterly by the General Accounting Office. There shall be a foreign penalty of up to complete cut-off of foreign aid for foreign misappropriation or misuse of funds.

Funding

Funding for this bill shall come from the Defense Discretionary Budget and sales of confiscated assets of persons convicted of narcotics-related felonies.

Rules of Parliamentary Procedure

While reading these rules, keep three key concepts in mind:

- Only bills and issues open for debate may be discussed.
- Motions may only be made when the floor is open.
- If there are several motions, then the motion with highest precedent is considered first.

Fundamentals

1. Scope: These rules of procedure shall be self-sufficient and shall be considered adopted in advance of the Conference. No other rules of procedure shall apply.

2. Powers of the Chair: The Chairperson of a committee shall direct discussions, put questions forward, announce decisions, accord the right to speak, decide all questions of order, sign all written proposals, and ensure and enforce observance of these rules. The Chairperson shall, subject to these rules, have complete control of the proceedings at any meeting and over the maintenance of order. The Chair shall not vote, except in the case of a tie. A Chair may suggest that a motion pass with unanimous consent.

3. Members: Every Member shall be present unless excused or necessarily prevented. A Member may not authorize any other individual to cast his or her vote or record his or her presence. No Member shall be recognized without his placard and badge of office. Senators shall be addressed as “the Senator from [State]”; Representatives as “the Congressman (or Congresswoman) from [State].”

4. Motions: When the floor is open, Members may rise and be recognized by the Chair by raising their placards. The floor is defined as open if no Member of the committee or congressional staff is speaking or has been recognized to speak. ONLY points of personal privilege and points of order may interrupt a speaker.

Only one motion may be on the floor at any given moment. If a new motion takes precedence over the motion currently on the floor, then the motion currently on the floor will be tabled while the new motion is being resolved. The old motion will then return to the floor. No motion may be recognized that falls below the current motion in precedence.

In order to be considered by the Committee, a motion must be immediately seconded by another Member. A Member may ask that his motion (or amendment, etc.) pass by unanimous consent, in which case the Chair shall ask if any Member objects. If there is an objection, the motion shall be considered normally; otherwise it shall pass immediately.

5. Quorum: The Chairperson shall declare the opening of a session when at least one-third of the Members are present.

6. Courtesy: All Members shall show courtesy and respect to the congressional staff and to other Members. If any Member does not follow these rules, the Chairperson shall call him to order, in which case he shall immediately sit down.. No Member in debate shall refer offensively to any Member or to any State of the Union.

7. Agenda: The first item on the floor at the initial meeting of every committee shall be to set the agenda. The setting of the agenda shall be debatable to the extent of one speaker advocating each issue. The issue that receives a plurality of the votes shall be considered first.

Debate

8. Speakers' List: When a Member desires to speak on any question, he shall submit his State (and District number in the House, or rank in the Senate) to the Chair to be entered on the Speakers' List for that question. There should be one continually open general Speakers' List on the issue before the floor. Separate Speakers' Lists shall be established on all debatable questions, including motions, amendments, and bills. The Chairperson may rotate between majority and minority parties or between Members "For" and "Opposed" in order to give "Pro" or "Con" speeches.

9. Time Limit on Speeches: The Chairperson may limit the time allotted to each speaker and the number of times Members may speak on any question. If a Member exceeds his allotted time, the Chairperson shall call him to order.

10. Yields: A speaker who has remaining time at the end of his speech has three options:

- Yield his time to the Chair, whereby his time is ended and the floor is open for motions.
- Yield his time to questions, whereby the Chairperson will recognize questions from the floor until time expires. Only the speaker's responses to questions shall be deducted from remaining time.
- Yield his time to another Member, who may then rise and use this time to address the Committee.

At the end of a speech, if the speaker neglects to yield his remaining time to any of the above, any Member may rise and ask, "Will the speaker yield to questions?"

NOTE: *A speaker may not yield to another speaker after yielding to and answering questions. A speaker to whom time has been yielded may not then yield time to another speaker or to questions.*

Written Proposals

11. Signatures: Written proposals may only be distributed to the Committee after receiving the Chair's signature. Certain proposals also require the signatures of a number of Members. Signatures do not represent personal support for the proposal, but merely a willingness for debate

on the proposal. The Chairperson may refuse to sign a proposal if it: does not follow proper format, is incoherent in form or concept, essentially reproduces a previous proposal, would impede the progress of the Committee, is limited in content, or if it does not address the issue sufficiently. This decision cannot be appealed.

12. Working Papers: Members may bring working papers before the consideration of the Committee. Working papers are unofficial documents and may include general ideas, policy statements, or proposed bills. They are never officially introduced; however, they require the signature of the Chairperson to be copied and distributed to the Committee.

13. Bills: Proposals may be submitted as bills when they are signed by 6 senators in a Senate committee or 10 representatives in a House committee, as well as the Chairperson. Signing a bill for introduction need not indicate support for its content. Once submitted, the Chairperson shall have the bills copied and distributed, after which a Member may move to introduce a bill (see Motions).

Bills that pass in committee and pass both chambers of Congress will be sent to the President. If the President does not veto the bill, it becomes a law. Otherwise the veto must be over-ridden by a 2/3 vote of each chamber in order for the bill to become law.

14. Simple Resolutions: A simple resolution deals with matters entirely within the province of one chamber, such as allocating funds, recognizing individuals for outstanding service, or expressing the opinion of the House or Senate. A simple resolution undergoes the same procedure as a bill. When passed, simple resolutions hold no force of law; instead they affect only the particular chamber from which they are written.

15. Concurrent Resolutions: Simple resolutions that pass both chambers are termed concurrent resolutions. They have no force of law and express only the sentiment and will of the Members of Congress.

16. Joint Resolutions: Joint resolutions must concern limited, specific legislation, such as special appropriation for hurricane victims or a minor, technical change in an existing law. Joint resolutions require a majority vote and the president's signature and do indeed hold the force of law.

17. Joint Resolution to Amend the Constitution: Changes in the Constitution must be passed by a 2/3 vote in the originating Committee and in both chambers and be ratified by 3/4 of the States. In the case that an amendment is passed with 2/3 majority in both chambers, the Amendment is sent to the states for ratification.

18. Amendments: Amendments may be submitted once they receive signatures from the Chair and 2 Senators or 8 Representatives. In the House, amendments must be germane to the bill and the section being amended; amendments in the Senate need not be germane. Members may not directly amend an amendment that is on the floor of the Committee. Only bills may be amended. Therefore, if an amendment is incorporated into a bill, then the new section of the

bill can be further amended. Or, Members may table the original amendment and draft a new amendment.

Points

19. Point of Personal Privilege: At any time, a Member may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege to correct conditions adversely affecting the rights and personal comfort of the Members. Questions of privilege shall have precedence over all other questions and shall be resolved by the Chair.

20. Point of Order: At any time, a Member may rise to a Point of Order if he or she feels that the rules are not being followed. Questions of order shall be decided by the Chair without debate, subject to appeal.

21. Point of Information: When the floor is open, a Member may rise to ask a question relating to the Committee's business, excluding parliamentary and substantive issues.

22. Point of Parliamentary Inquiry: When the floor is open, a Member may rise to ask a question of the Chair regarding parliamentary procedure.

Motions

23. Precedence: Motions shall be considered in the order of precedence listed on the chart entitled Table of Points and Motions. Motions at the same level of precedence shall be decided in the order in which they were introduced.

24. Consider a Different Issue: A motion to change the stated topic shall require the approval of the Chair and the second of a majority of the Members and shall be debatable with one speaker in favor and one opposed. It shall require a 2/3 majority to pass. It shall have the effect of tabling discussion on the current topic and any bill or amendment currently on the floor. Following the passage of this motion, House committees will once more set the agenda and Senate committees will move directly to the second topic.

25. Testimony: When the floor is open, a Chair or Member may rise to ask that the Committee hear the testimony of an expert on the issue being discussed. The motion requires a second, is not debatable, and requires a 1/3 vote to pass.

26. Appeal: A Member may appeal the decisions of the Chair. If a decision is appealed, then the Chair may speak briefly in defense of the ruling. The appeal shall then be put to a vote, and the decision of the Chair shall stand, unless overruled by a majority of the Members voting. Decisions that cannot be appealed are decisions of the Chair regarding (1) dilatory questions or motions, (2) adjournment or recess, (3) signature or distribution of bills, amendments, working papers or other proposals, and (4) motions requiring the Chair's approval.

27. Caucusing: When the floor is open, a Member may move to caucus for a stated reason and a stated period of time, not to exceed twenty minutes. The motion is not debatable and requires a majority to pass. There are two different forms of caucus which a Member may propose. An

unmoderated caucus opens the floor for Members to discuss issues related to the topic or bill in question. During an unmoderated caucus, Members may also draft bills and resolutions. Unmoderated caucuses can be either partisan, in which Members may only speak to other Members of their party, or bipartisan, in which Members may speak to anyone. The other form of caucus which a member may propose is a moderated caucus, in which the Chair shall call upon individual Members to speak for a time not to exceed 30 seconds in order for the chamber to ask questions and to discuss the topic in question and ideas for legislation.

28. Introduction of a Bill: Once a bill has been submitted to the Chair with proper signatures and has been copied and distributed to the Committee, a Member may rise to introduce it for consideration. If the motion is seconded, then the Chair shall allow one speaker in favor and one opposed. If the motion passes with support from at least 1/3 of the Members voting, then a new Speakers' List shall be drawn up with the Member who made the motion placed first, and the bill shall be debated until a Motion for the Previous Question or for Laying on the Table passes.

29. Introduction of an Amendment: Once an amendment is submitted and the Chair has either distributed copies or publicized the amendment in some fashion, a Member may rise to introduce the amendment. Upon receiving a second, the amendment shall be immediately placed on the floor. If there is absolutely no objection to the amendment, then it shall pass by Acclamation. Otherwise, the amendment shall be debated with a new Speakers' List until there is a Motion for Previous Question or for Laying on the Table. Although there is no vote as to whether or not an amendment may be introduced, a Member may Object to Consideration of the motion.

30. Objection to Consideration: The Objection to Consideration of any bill, amendment, or motion requiring debate may be made immediately following introduction of the motion and before debate has commenced. Objection to Consideration is not debatable and requires the support of 2/3 of the Members voting to prevent consideration of the bill, amendment, or motion in question.

31. Suspension of a Rule: A Motion to Suspend a Rule is in order if it receives the approval of the Chair. The motion must be seconded by a majority of the Members present. The motion may then be debated by one speaker in favor and one opposed and shall require the support of more than 2/3 of the Members voting.

32. Laying on/Taking From the Table: A Motion to Lay a Bill, Amendment, or Motion on the Table removes an item from the floor and from immediate consideration by the Committee. It is not debatable and requires the support of 2/3 of the Members voting. A motion to resume debate on any tabled motion (to "Take from the Table") is not debatable and requires a majority to pass.

33. Previous Question: If a motion for Previous Question passes, then all debate shall end and the Committee shall move to a direct vote on the proposal in question. When the floor is open and a bill or amendment is under discussion, a Member may move the Previous Question. If the motion is seconded, the Chair will recognize one speaker against the motion. The motion

requires a 2/3 majority to pass; if Note that if an amendment is on the floor, a Motion for Previous Question on a bill or resolution is out of order.

34. Reconsideration: When a substantive question has been decided, any Member that voted with the prevailing side may move to Reconsider. This motion is debatable to the extent of one speaker in favor and requires a majority to pass; it places the decided issue back on the floor for another vote. No question may be reconsidered more than once without unanimous consent. Only decisions regarding bills, amendments, and other substantive proposals may be reconsidered.

35. Recess: When the floor is open, a Member may move to Recess until the next scheduled meeting. The motion is debatable, requires a majority to pass, and suspends all committee functions until the next meeting. The Chair's decision to rule this motion dilatory cannot be appealed.

36. Motion to Rise: This motion is not debatable and requires a simple majority to pass. It is only in order after 3/4 of the time allotted for the last meeting of the Committee has elapsed. When a committee rises, the Committee shall cease to exist, and Members shall rise to enter full session of the chamber.

Voting

37. Taking the Vote: Each Member shall have one vote and shall vote "Aye" or "Nay." Each question shall be decided by voice or placard vote.

Any Member may request a roll call for votes on substantive proposals such as bills and amendments. If more than 1/5 of the Committee seconds the request, then the ayes and nays shall be ordered. The Members shall, without debate, declare their assent or dissent without abstention, unless excused by the Chair. No Members may change or withdraw their votes except with unanimous consent.

38. Division of a Question: Any Member may ask to divide a bill or amendment, in order to vote separately on individual parts of the proposed legislation. A Member would move to Divide the Question if he or she agreed with some, but not all, of a bill. The motion must clearly state which sections are to be divided from the bill (or amendment) and voted on separately. A Member may ask to vote separately on every section of the bill or may ask to vote separately on one clause only. After the divisions have been stated, the Chair shall call a vote on each division.

The parts that pass by simple majority shall remain part of the bill. The parts that do not pass will be omitted from the original bill. A final vote will be taken on the bill as it remains — i.e., on the surviving sections of the bill as a whole. Only this final vote shall be eligible for a Roll Call Vote.

NOTE: If those divisions that do pass form an incomplete or self-contradictory final bill or amendment, then the Chair may, subject to appeal, rule the bill incoherent. This ruling will cause the bill to be removed from the floor without further vote or debate.

Rules of the Full House and Senate Sessions

1. Scope: The rules of procedure for Committee sessions shall be in force for House and Senate sessions as well, except as modified by the following changes.
2. Congressional Staff: The President of the Senate shall be the Presiding Officer of the Senate. The Speaker of the House shall be the Presiding Officer of the House of Representatives. In the event that either cannot fill his or her position as Presiding Officer, he or she shall appoint a congressional staff member to step in. Each body shall have a Majority Leader, Minority Leader, and other party officials who shall organize their parties and coordinate support for or in opposition to a given proposal.
3. Powers of the Chair: The Speaker of the House shall vote at his or her discretion; he or she shall be required to vote in the case of a tie. The President of the Senate shall only vote in the case of a tie.
4. Motions: In the House of Representatives, all motions except Appeals, Points of Privilege, Points of Order, and Points of Parliamentary Inquiry must be submitted in writing to the Presiding Officer.
5. Agenda: The agenda shall be set in advance of the first session by the Presiding Officers in consultation with the Committee Chairs. Motions to Re-order the Agenda must receive the signatures of the Majority or Minority Leader and the Presiding Officer before they may be introduced.
6. Working Papers: There shall be no working papers in full session.
7. Bills: Bills may be introduced in the order specified by the agenda. In order to be introduced, bills not on the agenda must be signed by 90 House Members or 40 Senate Members, the Majority or Minority Leader, and the Presiding Officer.
8. Amendments: Amendments to bills may be proposed once they have received the signatures of 25 Representatives or 10 Senators, the Majority or Minority Leader, and the Presiding Officer. Amendments in the House must be germane to the bill and section being amended; amendments in the Senate need not be germane.
9. Previous Question: Motions for Previous Question in the House of Representatives shall be in order only after two members of each party have spoken. The Senate shall use the Motion for Cloture instead. Cloture is not debatable and requires the support of 3/5 of the Members voting. If Cloture passes, then the President shall recognize one Member to speak in favor of the bill or amendment and one to speak against. A Motion to Re-Open Debate is then in order; it is not debatable and requires the support of a majority to pass. If that motion fails, the Senate shall move to an immediate vote on the bill or amendment.

10. Motion to Adjourn: The Motion to Adjourn is used in full session in place of the Motion to Rise. Following adjournment, the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall submit their reports to the Joint Session of Congress.

11. Voting: There shall be no Roll Call Votes in the House of Representatives. There shall be no Roll Call Votes on amendments in the Senate.

12. Laws: In order to become a law, a bill must receive the approval of both chambers of Congress and the signature of the President. If the President vetoes a bill, then it shall require the support of 2/3 of the Members of each chamber to become law.

13. Constitutional Amendments: Bills to propose Constitutional Amendments shall require the support of 2/3 of the Members of both Houses. Proposed Constitutional Amendments do not require the President's signature and are not submitted to the President. As stipulated in Article V of the Constitution, in order for a proposed Amendment to be ratified, it must receive the endorsement of 3/4 of all the state legislatures.