

# United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

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The **United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs** has jurisdiction over matters related to the Department of Homeland Security and other homeland security concerns, as well as the functioning of the government itself, including the National Archives, budget and accounting measures other than appropriations, the Census, the federal civil service, the affairs of the District of Columbia, and the United States Postal Service. The committee's name was formerly the **United States Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs**, prior to homeland security being added to its responsibilities.

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## Members, 111th Congress

The Committee is chaired by Independent Democrat Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, and the Ranking Minority Member is Republican Senator Susan Collins of Maine.

Majority	Minority
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Joe Lieberman<sup>[1]</sup>, <i>Chairman</i>, Connecticut</li><li>■ Carl Levin, Michigan</li><li>■ Daniel Akaka, Hawaii</li><li>■ Thomas R. Carper, Delaware</li><li>■ Mark Pryor, Arkansas</li><li>■ Mary Landrieu, Louisiana</li><li>■ Claire McCaskill, Missouri</li><li>■ Jon Tester, Montana</li><li>■ Roland Burris, Illinois</li><li>■ Michael Bennet, Colorado</li></ul></div>	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Susan Collins, <i>Ranking Member</i>, Maine</li><li>■ George Voinovich, Ohio</li><li>■ Tom Coburn, Oklahoma</li><li>■ John McCain, Arizona</li><li>■ John Ensign, Nevada</li><li>■ Lindsey Graham, South Carolina</li><li>■ <i>Vacancy</i><sup>[2]</sup></li></ul></div>

Source: 2009 *Congressional Record*, Vol. 155, Page S729 ([http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2009\\_record&position=all&page=S729](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getpage.cgi?dbname=2009_record&position=all&page=S729)), S730, S879

## Subcommittees

Subcommittee	Chair	Ranking Member
Federal Financial Management, Government Information and International Security	Thomas Carper (D-DE)	John McCain (R-AZ)
Oversight of Government Management, the Federal Workforce and the District of Columbia	Daniel Akaka (D-HI)	George Voinovich (R-OH)
Investigations (Permanent)	Carl Levin (D-MI)	Tom Coburn (R-OK)
State, Local, and Private Sector Preparedness and Integration (Ad Hoc)	Mark Pryor (D-AR)	John Ensign (R-NV)
Disaster Recovery (Ad Hoc)	Mary Landrieu (D-LA)	Lindsey Graham (R-SC)
Contracting Oversight (Ad Hoc)	Claire McCaskill (D-MO)	Susan Collins (R-ME)

## Chairmen

### Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments, 1921-1952

- Medill McCormick (R-Ill.) 1921-1925
- David A. Reed (R-Pa.) 1925-1927
- Frederic M. Sackett (R-Ky.) 1927-1930
- Guy D. Goff (R-W.Va.) 1930-1931
- Frederick Steiwer (R-Ore.) 1931-1933
- J. Hamilton Lewis (D-Ill.) 1933-1939
- Frederick Van Nuys (D-Ind.) 1939-1942
- Lister Hill (D-Ala.) 1942-1947
- George D. Aiken (R-Vt.) 1947-1949
- John L. McClellan (D-Ark.) 1949-1952

### Committee on Government Operations, 1952-1977

- John L. McClellan (D-Ark.) 1952-1953
- Joseph R. McCarthy (R-Wis.) 1953-1955
- John L. McClellan (D-Ark.) 1955-1972
- Samuel J. Ervin Jr. (D-N.C.) 1972-1974
- Abraham A. Ribicoff (D-Conn.) 1974-1977

### Committee on Governmental Affairs, 1977-2005

- Abraham A. Ribicoff (D-Conn.) 1977-1981
- William V. Roth Jr. (R-Del.) 1981-1987
- John H. Glenn Jr. (D-Ohio) 1987-1995
- William V. Roth Jr. (R-Del.) 1995
- Theodore F. Stevens (R-Alaska) 1995-1997
- Fred D. Thompson (R-Tenn.) 1997-2001
- Joseph I. Lieberman (D-Conn.) 2001
- Fred D. Thompson (R-Tenn.) 2001

- Joseph I. Lieberman (D-Conn.) 2001-2003
- Susan M. Collins (R-Maine) 2003-2005

### **Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, 2005-present**

- Susan M. Collins (R-Maine) 2005-2007
- Joseph I. Lieberman (I/D-Conn.) 2007-Present

## **References**

1. ^ Joe Lieberman is an Independent who caucues with the Democrats, and counts as a Democrat for committee purposes.
2. ^ S.Res. 19 (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.111sres19>)

## **External links**

- Official Committee Website (<http://hsgac.senate.gov/>)

Retrieved from

"[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_Senate\\_Committee\\_on\\_Homeland\\_Security\\_and\\_Governmental\\_Affairs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senate_Committee_on_Homeland_Security_and_Governmental_Affairs)"

Categories: Committees of the United States Senate | Disaster preparedness in the United States

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# United States Senate Homeland Security Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (PSI)** is the oldest subcommittee of the U.S. Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (formerly the Committee on Government Operations).

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## History

The Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations was created at the same time as the Committee on Government Operations in 1952.

According to Ruth Young Watt, chief clerk of the subcommittee for more than 30 years, the subcommittee calls itself "permanent" but it really is not; nor is it independent of the full Government Operations (now Governmental Affairs) Committee. The PSI has, however, been a useful and powerful tool for several of the chairmen of the committee because it has a broad mandate to investigate inefficiency, mismanagement, and corruption in government.

### Truman Committee

The PSI is sometimes thought of as the successor to the U.S. Senate Special Committee to Investigate the National Defense Program, 1941-1948, also known as the "Truman Committee". The Truman Committee under then Senator Harry S. Truman established a process and precedent whereby investigators could obtain copies of an individual or corporate tax return.

### Senate War Investigating Committee

When the Truman Committee was terminated in 1948, the Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments continued that committee's investigation of war contracts and procurement of the Hughes XF-11 reconnaissance aircraft, and the H-4 Hercules flying boat (*Spruce Goose*). The subcommittee also assumed responsibility for the records of the Truman Committee.

Under the chairmanship of Homer S. Ferguson of Michigan (1948) and Clyde R. Hoey of North Carolina (1949-1952), the Investigations Subcommittee of the Committee on Expenditures in Executive Departments held hearings on such matters as export control violations, for which Soviet spy William Remington was called in to testify; the trial of Nazi war criminal Ilse Koch; and the Mississippi Democratic Party's sale of postal jobs, which Mississippians from rural areas attested to purchasing. A much larger scandal erupted with the "*5 percenters*," so-called because these men, including Presidential aide Harry Vaughan, were accused of charging a 5-percent commission for their influence in securing government contracts. A legislative reform as a result of the hearings was a restriction of one year after leaving government employment before an attorney could practice law again before the government.

## Korean War Atrocities

As news of war crimes during the Korean War unfolded, the Subcommittee on Korean War Atrocities was headed by Charles Potter, and began an investigation of forced marches, maltreatments of prisoners, and shooting and killing of prisoners shortly after capture.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Joseph McCarthy

In the 83rd Congress, under its new chairman, Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin, the subcommittee (now known as the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations or PSI) greatly increased the number of investigations and number of witnesses called. His subcommittee held 169 hearings throughout 1953 and 1954. Of the 653 people called by the Committee during a 15 month period, 83 refused to answer questions about espionage and subversive activities on constitutional grounds and their names were made public. Nine additional witnesses invoked the Fifth Amendment in executive session, and their names were not made public. Some of the 83 were working or had worked for the U.S. Army, the U.S. Navy, the Government Printing Office, the Treasury Department, the Office of War Information, the Office of Strategic Services, and the Veterans Administration. Others were or had been employed at the Federal Telecommunications Laboratories in New Jersey, the secret radar laboratories of the Army Signal Corps in New Jersey, and General Electric defense plants in Massachusetts and New York. Nineteen of the 83, including well known communist party members James S. Allen, Herbert Aptheker, and Earl Browder, were summoned because their writings were being carried in U.S. Information Service libraries around the world.

The hearings also investigated such matters as communist infiltration of the United Nations; Korean War atrocities; and the transfer to the Soviet Union of occupation currency plates.

In April 1954, McCarthy's exchange of charges with Secretary of the Army Robert T. Stevens led to the appointment of a special subcommittee of the PSI to investigate the charges. Chaired by Karl Mundt of South Dakota, the proceedings became known as the Army-McCarthy Hearings.

## Labor racketeering

From 1955 until 1972, John L. McClellan of Arkansas chaired the PSI. McClellan continued extensive hearings of the Army Signal Corps at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, and added new inquiries relating to communist activities in the United States and to business activities and alleged improper activities by Eisenhower Administration appointees and political associates. In the 86th Congress (1957), members of the Subcommittee were joined by Members of the Committee on Labor and Public Welfare on a special committee (the Select Committee on Improper Activities in Labor and Management) to investigate labor racketeering. Chaired by Senator McClellan and staffed by Robert F. Kennedy, the Subcommittee's chief counsel, and other staff members, this special committee directed much of its attention to criminal influence over the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, most famously calling Teamsters' leaders Dave Beck and Jimmy Hoffa to testify. The televised hearings of the special committee also introduced Senators Barry Goldwater and John F. Kennedy to the nation, as well as leading to passage of the Landrum-Griffin Act.

After the select committee expired in 1960, the PSI continued to investigate labor racketeering and other labor-related matters. From 1961 through 1968, it also investigated gambling and organized crime in which Joe Valachi testified about the activities of the "Cosa Nostra", the Billie Sol Estes case, irregularities in missile procurement, procurement of the TFX fighter plane, excessive risks in underwriting Federal Housing Administration mortgages, riots, and civil disorders, the Agency for International Development commodity import program, and procurement of railway bridges for South Vietnam under the counterinsurgency program. The Subcommittee's investigations also led to passage of major legislation against organized crime, most notably the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations (RICO) provision of the Crime Control Act of 1970.

In 1973, Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson, a Democrat from Washington, replaced McClellan as the Subcommittee's chairman and Senator Charles Percy, an Illinois Republican, became the Ranking Minority Member. During Senator Jackson's chairmanship, the Subcommittee conducted landmark hearings into energy shortages and the operation of the oil industry.

## **Nunn-Roth era**

The regular reversals of political fortunes in the Senate of the 1980s and 1990s saw Senator Sam Nunn trade chairmanship three times with Delaware Republican William Roth. Nunn served from 1979 to 1980 and again from 1987 to 1995, while Roth served from 1981 to 1986, and again from 1995 to 1996. Senator Roth led a wide range of investigations into commodity investment fraud, off-shore banking schemes, money laundering, and child pornography. Senator Nunn inquired into federal drug policy, the global spread of chemical and biological weapons, abuses in federal student aid programs, computer security, airline safety, and health care fraud.

## **Tenures of Collins, Levin, and Coleman**

In January 1997 Republican Senator Susan Collins of Maine became the first woman to chair the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations. Her Chairmanship was also notable in that she held the Senate seat of former Maine Senator Margaret Chase Smith, an opponent of Senator McCarthy. Senator John Glenn of Ohio became Ranking Member. Upon Senator Glenn's retirement from the Senate, Senator Carl Levin became Ranking Member in 1999. In June 2001, when the Democrats resumed control of the Senate, Senator Levin assumed the chairmanship of the Subcommittee until January 2003 when Senator Norm Coleman assumed the Chairmanship. When the Democrats took control of the Senate in January 2007, the chairmanship reverted back to Senator Levin.

## **Oil-for-Food Program Hearings**

In December 2004, Coleman called for United Nations Secretary-general Kofi Annan to resign because of the "UN's utter failure to detect or stop Saddam's abuses" in the UN's Oil-for-Food program and because of fraud allegations against Annan's son relating to the same program. In May 2005 the subcommittee held hearings on their investigation of abuses of the UN Oil-for-Food program, including oil smuggling, illegal kickbacks and use of surcharges, and Saddam Hussein's use of oil vouchers for the purpose of buying influence abroad. These hearings covered certain corporations, including Bayoil Inc., and several well-known political figures, including Russian politician Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, but received significant media attention for the combative appearance of British Member of Parliament George Galloway, a member of the RESPECT The Unity Coalition (Respect), a then-new British political party, in which the MP forcefully rejected the allegations.<sup>[2]</sup><sup>[3]</sup>

## **Members, 111th Congress**

The Subcommittee is chaired by Democrat Carl Levin of Michigan, and the Acting Ranking Minority member is

Republican Tom Coburn of Oklahoma.

Majority	Minority
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Carl Levin, <i>Chairman</i>, Michigan</li><li>■ Thomas R. Carper, Delaware</li><li>■ Mark Pryor, Arkansas</li><li>■ Claire McCaskill, Missouri</li><li>■ Jon Tester, Montana</li><li>■ Michael Bennet, Colorado</li></ul></div>	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Tom Coburn, <i>Acting Ranking Member</i>, Oklahoma</li><li>■ John McCain, Arizona</li><li>■ John Ensign, Nevada</li></ul></div>

References

1.

^

Potter, Charles (December 3, 1953). "Korean War Atrocities ([http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military\\_Law/pdf/KW-atrocities-part2.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/KW-atrocities-part2.pdf))" (PDF, online). *United States Senate Subcommittee on Korean War Atrocities of the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations*. (US GPO). [http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military\\_Law/pdf/KW-atrocities-part2.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/Military_Law/pdf/KW-atrocities-part2.pdf). Retrieved on 2008-01-18. "We marched 2 days. The first night we got some hay and we slept in the hay cuddling together to keep warm. The second night we slept in pigpens, about 6 inches space between the logs. That night I froze my feet. Starting out again the next morning after bypassing the co:~voy I picked up two rubber boots, what we call snow packs. They was both for the left foot. I put those on. After starting out the second morning, I didn't have time to massage my feet to get them thawed out. I got marching the next 16 days after that. During that march all the meat had worn off my feet, all the skin had dropped off, nothing but the bones showing. After arriving in Kanggye they put us up there in mud huts, Korean mud huts. We stayed there- all sick and wounded most of us was-stayed there in -the first part of January 1951. Then the Chinese come around in the night about 12 o'clock and told ns those who was sick and wounded they was going to move us out to the hospital, which we knew better. There could have been such a thing but we didn't think so. --Sgt. Wendell Treffery, RA- 115660."

2.

^

*Galloway tongue-lashes Coleman; committee documents show Bush political friends and family paid Oil-for-Food kickbacks to Saddam Hussein* — Online Journal 5/21/05 ([http://www.onlinejournal.org/Special\\_Reports/052105Madsen/052105madsen.html](http://www.onlinejournal.org/Special_Reports/052105Madsen/052105madsen.html))

3.

^

*Media react to blistering hearing* — BBC News 5/17/05 ([http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk\\_politics/4557369.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk_politics/4557369.stm))

■

Anthony Baltakis; "On the Defensive: Walter Reuther's Testimony before the McClellan Labor Rackets Committee." *Michigan Historical Review*. Volume: 25. Issue: 2. 1999. pp 47+.

■

John L. McClellan; *Crime without Punishment* (1962) (<http://www.questia.com/PM.qst?a=o&d=154328>)

■

Schlesinger Jr. Arthur M. *Robert Kennedy and His Times* (1978). Kennedy was a Committee staff member 1952-1959, and Chief Counsel 1955-59.

External links

- Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations (<http://hsgac.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?Fuseaction=Subcommittees.Home&SubcommitteeID=88ed6460-02ee-40a9-84a9-e278af44313c&Initials=PSI>), Official site
- Executive Sessions of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Government Operations, Eighty-third Congress, First Session (1953): Volume 1 (<http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/mccarthy/hearingsvol1.pdf>) [PDF 950 pages], Volume 2 (<http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/mccarthy/hearingsvol2.pdf>) [PDF 900 pages], Volume 3 (<http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/mccarthy/hearingsvol3.pdf>) [PDF 927 pages], Volume 4 (<http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/mccarthy/hearingsvol4.pdf>) [PDF 920 pages], Volume 5 (<http://news.findlaw.com/hdocs/docs/mccarthy/hearingsvol5.pdf>) [PDF 619 pages]

# United States House Committee on Agriculture

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **U.S. House Committee on Agriculture**, or Agriculture Committee is a standing committee of the United States House of Representatives. The House Committee on Agriculture has general jurisdiction over federal agriculture policy and oversight of some federal agencies, and it can recommend funding appropriations for various governmental agencies, programs, and activities, as defined by House rules. Since 2007, the committee has been chaired by Representative Collin C. Peterson of Minnesota.

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- 1 History of the Agriculture Committee
- 2 Role of the Agriculture Committee
  - 2.1 Jurisdiction
- 3 Members, 111th Congress
- 4 Subcommittees
- 5 References
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The main hearing room for the House Agriculture Committee in 1300 Longworth House Office Building in Washington, D.C.

## History of the Agriculture Committee

The Agriculture Committee was created on May 3, 1820, after Lewis Williams of North Carolina sponsored a resolution to create the committee and give agricultural issues equal weight with commercial and manufacturing interests. The committee originally consisted of seven members, from the states of Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia. Thomas Forrest of Pennsylvania was the first chairman. The Agriculture Committee remained a seven-member body until 1835, when two more members were added. It was not until 1871 that the next two members were added. Since then it has gradually grown to its current size of 46 members.

The U.S. Senate counterpart to the House Agriculture Committee, the U.S. Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry, was created on December 9, 1825.

## Role of the Agriculture Committee

The Agriculture Committee is not generally considered to be a particularly powerful one. However, it is an important committee to be on for Representatives from many rural areas where agriculture is the main industry. The committee has jurisdiction over agriculture, forestry, nutrition, water conservation, and other agriculture-related fields.

## Jurisdiction

As prescribed by House Rules, the Committee on Agriculture's jurisdiction includes the following:



- Adulteration of seeds, insect pests, and protection of birds and animals in forest reserves
- Agriculture generally
- Agricultural and industrial chemistry
- Agricultural colleges and experiment stations
- Agricultural economics and research
- Agricultural education extension services
- Agricultural production, marketing and stabilization of prices of agricultural products, and commodities (excluding foreign distribution)
- Animal industry and diseases of animals
- Commodity exchanges
- Crop insurance and soil conservation
- Dairy industry
- Entomology and plant quarantine
- Extension of farm credit and farm security
- Inspection of livestock, poultry, meat products, and seafood and seafood products
- Forestry in general and forest reserves other than those created from the public domain
- Human nutrition and home economics
- Plant industry, soils, and agricultural engineering
- Rural electrification
- Rural development
- Water conservation related to activities of the Department of Agriculture

## Members, 111th Congress

The committee chairman is Collin Peterson of Minnesota, and the Ranking Member is Frank Lucas of Oklahoma. (what is order of listing? seniority?)

Democracts (Majority)	Republicans (Minority)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Collin C. Peterson, <i>Chairman</i>, Minnesota</li> <li>■ Tim Holden, <i>Vice Chair</i>, Pennsylvania</li> <li>■ Mike McIntyre, North Carolina</li> <li>■ Leonard Boswell, Iowa</li> <li>■ Joe Baca, California</li> <li>■ Dennis Cardoza, California</li> <li>■ David Scott, Georgia</li> <li>■ Jim Marshall, Georgia</li> <li>■ Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, South Dakota</li> <li>■ Henry Cuellar, Texas</li> <li>■ Jim Costa, California</li> <li>■ Brad Ellsworth, Indiana</li> <li>■ Tim Walz, Minnesota</li> <li>■ Steve Kagen, Wisconsin</li> <li>■ Kurt Schrader, Oregon<sup>[1]</sup></li> <li>■ Debbie Halvorson, Illinois</li> <li>■ Kathy Dahlkemper, Pennsylvania</li> <li>■ Eric Massa, New York<sup>[2]</sup></li> <li>■ Bobby Bright, Alabama</li> <li>■ Betsy Markey, Colorado</li> <li>■ Frank Kratovil, Maryland</li> <li>■ Mark Schauer, Michigan</li> <li>■ Larry Kissell, North Carolina</li> <li>■ John Boccieri, Ohio</li> <li>■ Scott Murphy, New York<sup>[3]</sup></li> <li>■ Earl Pomeroy, North Dakota</li> <li>■ Travis Childers, Mississippi</li> <li>■ Walt Minnick, Idaho</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Frank Lucas, <i>Ranking Member</i>, Oklahoma</li> <li>■ Bob Goodlatte, Virginia</li> <li>■ Jerry Moran, Kansas</li> <li>■ Timothy V. Johnson, Illinois</li> <li>■ Sam Graves, Missouri</li> <li>■ Mike Rogers, Alabama</li> <li>■ Steve King, Iowa</li> <li>■ Randy Neugebauer, Texas</li> <li>■ Virginia Foxx, North Carolina</li> <li>■ Mike Conaway, Texas</li> <li>■ Jeff Fortenberry, Nebraska</li> <li>■ Jean Schmidt, Ohio</li> <li>■ Adrian M. Smith, Nebraska</li> <li>■ Bob Latta, Ohio</li> <li>■ Phil Roe, Tennessee</li> <li>■ Blaine Luetkemeyer, Missouri</li> <li>■ Glenn "G.T." Thompson, Pennsylvania</li> <li>■ Bill Cassidy, Louisiana</li> <li>■ Cynthia Lummis, Wyoming</li> </ul>

Sources:

- Resolution (H.Res. 38) (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.111hres38>) electing certain minority members to standing committees.
- Resolution (H.Res. 74) (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.111hres74>) electing certain majority members to standing committees.
- Agriculture Committee Chair Peterson Announces Agriculture Committee Members ([http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/agriculture\\_dem/pr\\_011509\\_NewMembers.html](http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/agriculture_dem/pr_011509_NewMembers.html)) (at May 20, 2009)

## Subcommittees

(*D = Democrat; R = Republican*)

Subcommittee	Chair	Ranking Member
Conservation, Credit, Energy, and Research	Tim Holden (D-Pennsylvania)	Bob Goodlatte (R-Virginia)
Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition and Forestry	Joe Baca (D-California)	Jeff Fortenberry (R-Nebraska)
General Farm Commodities and Risk Management	Leonard Boswell (D-Iowa)	Jerry Moran (R-Kansas)
Horticulture and Organic Agriculture	Dennis Cardoza (D-California)	Jean Schmidt (R-Ohio)
Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry	David Scott (D-Georgia)	Randy Neugebauer (R-Texas)
Specialty Crops, Rural Development and Foreign Agriculture	Mike McIntyre (D-North Carolina)	Mike Conaway (R-Texas)

## References

- ↑ "Pelosi Announces Freshmen and Other Committee Memberships" (<http://speaker.house.gov/newsroom/pressreleases?id=0940>). 2009-01-06. <http://speaker.house.gov/newsroom/pressreleases?id=0940>. Retrieved on 2009-01-07.
- ↑ "Pelosi Announces More Committee Memberships" (<http://speaker.house.gov/newsroom/pressreleases?id=0958>). 2009-01-14. <http://speaker.house.gov/newsroom/pressreleases?id=0958>. Retrieved on 2009-01-14.
- ↑ H.Res. 381 (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.111hres381>) specifies that Scott Murphy ranks after John Boccieri on this committee

## External links

- Agriculture Committee Homepage (<http://agriculture.house.gov/index.html>), official website
- Committee Rules (<http://agriculture.house.gov/inside/pubs/109thRules.pdf>) (PDF), Agriculture Committee, official website
- Past Committee Chairs (<http://agriculture.house.gov/inside/history/chairmen.html>), Agriculture Committee, official website

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# United States House Committee on Rules

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Committee on Rules**, or (more commonly) **Rules Committee**, is a committee of the United States House of Representatives. Rather than being responsible for a specific area of policy, as most other committees are, it is in charge of determining under what *rule* other bills will come to the floor. As such, it is one of the most powerful committees, and often described as "an arm of the leadership" and as the "traffic cop" of Congress. A rule is a simple resolution of the House of Representatives, usually reported by the Committee on Rules, to permit the immediate consideration of a legislative measure, notwithstanding the usual order of business, and to prescribe conditions for its debate and amendment.<sup>[1]</sup>

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## Role of the Rules Committee

When a bill is reported out of one of the other committees, it does not go straight to the House floor, because the House, unlike the United States Senate, does not have unlimited debate and discussion on a bill. Instead, what may be said and done to a bill is strictly limited. This limitation is performed by the Rules Committee.

Technically, when a bill is reported out of another committee with legislative jurisdiction, it is placed on the appropriate House calendar for debate. Common practice, though, is for bills reported from committees to be considered in the Rules Committee, which will decide for how long and under what rules the full body will debate the proposition.

Consideration by the full body can be in one of two forums: the Committee of the Whole, or on the floor of the full House of Representatives itself. Different traditions govern whether the Committee of the Whole or the House itself will debate a given resolution, and the Rules Committee generally sets the forum under which a proposition will be debated and the amendment/time limitations for every measure, too. For instance, there might be a limit on the number or types of amendments (proposed changes to the bill). Amendments might only be allowed to specific sections of the bill, or no amendments might be allowed at all. Besides control over amendments, the rule issued by the Rules Committee also determines the amount of speaking time assigned on each bill or resolution. If the leadership wants a bill pushed forward quietly, for instance, there might be no debate time scheduled; if they want attention, they might allow time for lengthy speeches in support of the bill.

Between control over amendments, debate, and when measures will be considered, the Rules Committee exerts vast power in the House. As such, it is very important that the Rules Committee be tightly controlled by the majority party. While most House committees maintain membership in a rough proportion to the full chamber (If the majority party controls 55% of the House, it will tend to have 55% of committee seats), membership on the Rules Committee is disproportionately in favor of the majority party.

# History

The Rules Committee was formed on April 2, 1789, during the first Congress. However, it had nowhere near the powerful role it has today. Instead, it merely proposed general rules for the House to follow when debating bills (rather than passing a special rule for each bill), and was dissolved after proposing these general rules. These general rules still have a great impact on the tone of the House floor today.

The Rules Committee, for a long time, lay dormant. For the first fifty years of its existence, it accomplished little beyond simply reaffirming these rules, and its role was very noncontroversial. On June 16, 1841, it made a major policy change, reducing from 2/3 to 1/2 the fraction of votes needed in the House to close debate and vote on a bill.

In 1880, the modern Rules Committee began to emerge from the reorganization of the House Committees. When the Republican party took over the House in the election of 1880, they quickly realized the power that the Rules Committee possessed. One member, Thomas Brackett Reed (R-Maine), used a seat on the Rules Committee to vault himself to the Speakership, and gained so much power that he was referred to as "Czar Reed".

In the 1890s and 1900s, Reed and his successor, Joseph Gurney Cannon (R-Illinois) used the Rules Committee to centralize the power of the Speakership. Although their power to place members in committees and perform other functions was limited by a forced rule change in 1910, the Rules Committee retained its power. However, it ceased to function as the personal project of the Speaker, as it had originally; instead, as the seniority system took root, it was captured by a coalition of conservative Democrats and Republicans. This state of affairs would continue until the 1960s.

In 1961, Speaker Sam Rayburn (D-Texas), acting on the wishes of the new President John F. Kennedy and the Democratic Study Group, introduced a bill to enlarge the committee from 12 members to 15, to decrease the power of the arch-conservative chairman, Howard W. Smith (D-Virginia). The bill passed, 217 votes to 212. However, it was only partially successful; the Rules Committee continued to block legislation including civil rights and education bills.

In the 1970s, however, the Rules Committee was firmly under the command of the Speaker once again. As before, its primary role is to come up with special rules, to help or hinder the chances of legislation reported to it.

## Committee Members, 111th Congress

Majority	Minority
<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Louise McIntosh Slaughter, <i>Chairwoman</i>, New York</li><li>■ James McGovern, Massachusetts</li><li>■ Alcee Hastings, Florida</li><li>■ Doris Matsui, California</li><li>■ Dennis Cardoza, California</li><li>■ Michael Arcuri, New York</li><li>■ Ed Perlmutter, Colorado</li><li>■ Chellie Pingree, Maine</li><li>■ Jared Polis, Colorado</li></ul></div>	<div><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ David Dreier, <i>Ranking Member</i>, California</li><li>■ Lincoln Diaz-Balart, Florida</li><li>■ Pete Sessions, Texas</li><li>■ Virginia Foxx, North Carolina</li></ul></div>

Sources:

- Resolutions (H.Res. 38) (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.111hres38>) and H.Res. 59 (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.111hres59>) electing minority members to standing committees.
- Resolutions (H.Res. 8) (<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.uscongress/legislation.111hres8>) and H.Res. 51

## Subcommittees

Subcommittee	Chair	Ranking Member
Legislative and Budget Process	Alcee Hastings (D-FL)	Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL)
Rules and the Organization of the House	Jim McGovern (D-MA)	Pete Sessions (R-TX)

## References

- ## External links

- ## See also

Categories: Committees of the United States House of Representatives

- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_House\\_Committee\\_on\\_Rules](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_Committee_on_Rules)