

Senate Committee on
**Homeland Security &
Governmental Affairs**

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Chairman Joe Lieberman and Ranking Member Susan Collins


[Plum Book](#)

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HEARINGS & NOMINATIONS

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[Where Were the Watchdogs? Financial Regulatory Lessons
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[Public Health Challenges in Our Nation's Capital \(view\)](#)

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PRESS RELEASES

JOSEPH LIEBERMAN, CONNECTICUT - CHAIRMAN

May 26, 2009:
[LIEBERMAN COMMENTS ON WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCEMENT ON
NEW STRUCTURE FOR HOMELAND AND NATIONAL SECURITY
COUNCILS](#)

May 21, 2009:
[LIEBERMAN COMMENTS ON THWARTED NEW YORK
HOMEGROWN TERROR ATTACK](#)

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SUSAN COLLINS, MAINE - RANKING MEMBER

May 07, 2009:
[SENATOR COLLINS RESPONDS TO PROPOSED HOMELAND
SECURITY BUDGET](#)

May 07, 2009:
[STATE INSURANCE COMMISSIONERS PRAISE SENATOR
COLLINS' FINANCIAL REGULATORY REFORM LEGISLATION](#)

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COMMITTEE INFORMATION

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House Committee on Agriculture

House Committee on Agriculture
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House Committee on Agriculture

agriculture.house.gov

- **NEW:** On October 9, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin C. Peterson released discussion draft legislation to regulate the market for over-the-counter derivatives.
 - [Legislative Text](#)
 - [Comparison of Recent Proposals](#)
- House Financial Services Committee Chairman Barney Frank and House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin C. Peterson released a concept paper on July 30 that will guide the two committees as they develop legislation to regulate derivatives. The text of the concept paper can be viewed by clicking [here](#).
- On June 26, the House passed H.R. 2454, the American Clean Energy and Security Act of 2009. The press release about the bill's passage and its agricultural provisions is available [here](#). Legislative language for the agricultural amendment that was incorporated into the House-passed bill is available by clicking [here](#).
- The compilation of responses to the House Agriculture Committee's Climate Change Questionnaire have been published. the compilation is broken in two parts and they can be accessed on the [Publications](#) page.
- On February 12, the House Agriculture Committee passed H.R. 977, the Derivatives Markets Transparency and Accountability Act of 2009, by voice vote. Information about the bill, including bill language and summaries, can be found on the [Legislation](#) page.
- More info about the Farm Bill, including complete conference report language and fact sheets, can be found on the [Farm Bill Homepage](#).



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A Message from Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin C. Peterson

In 2008, The U.S. House of Representatives and the United States Senate overrode the President's veto for 14 of the 15 titles of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008, a groundbreaking bill that invests in improved nutrition, conservation, renewable energy and farm programs and includes significant reforms. The new Farm Bill garnered the support of more than one thousand farm, specialty crop, conservation, nutrition, consumer and religious organizations.

The [Farm Bill Homepage](#) on the House Agriculture Committee

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website has detailed the development of the Farm Bill from the beginning of the legislative process. This page contains information about the new law, legislative language, fact sheets on each title, and additional information about how the new Farm Bill will impact farm, nutrition, conservation, and energy policy.

Every American who eats should recognize the importance of farm and nutrition policy in everyday life. The Farm Bill ensures that all Americans have access to a safe, secure and inexpensive food supply and provides a safety net for farmers and ranchers. It also authorizes important nutrition programs, encourages environmentally friendly conservation programs, and supports the development of agriculturally based renewable energy, which will help to reduce our dependence on foreign oil.

Live audio and video access to all public hearings and business meetings held by the House Agriculture Committee will be streamed online [here](#).

Most Recent News

- Subcommittee Reviews Implementation of Farm Bill Conservation Programs [...read more](#)
- Subcommittee Reviews Implementation of Agricultural Research Programs [...read more](#)

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Chairman's Welcome

House Committee on Agriculture



Inside the Committee

From House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin C. Peterson, (D-MN):

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Welcome, and thank you for visiting the House Committee on Agriculture's website. We hope that you will find the information available here to be useful and interesting.

For more than 185 years, the House Committee on Agriculture has established farm policy for agriculture and rural America in the nation's capital. Our nation was founded on the strength of agriculture production, which helped to establish us among the world's most powerful and prosperous nations. The importance of agriculture in the United States has only grown, as our nation's farmers and ranchers produce the food, fiber and products that keep our nation strong and bountiful and that help feed a hungry world.

The responsibilities and goals of the House Committee on Agriculture are as diverse as the needs of American agriculture. We face issues as varied as renewable energy, rural development, disaster assistance, nutrition, crop insurance, conservation, international trade, futures market regulation, animal and plant health, agricultural research and development, bioterrorism, forestry and many others.

Our challenge is to find ways to address the diverse needs of agriculture in regions with very different products, climates and experiences. We must continue to work together to find ways to not only support our nation's agricultural production but also to ensure that American consumers continue to have access to the world's safest, most abundant food and agriculture products.

This is no small challenge, but there are diverse and strong voices that are helping us shape the future of farm policy in the United States. I am committed to leading the committee with openness and accessibility to all ideas. We will hold public hearings and open meetings to discuss farm policy and specific legislation, and the public is welcome to attend these meetings or listen in real time on our website (Live Audio). If you would like to sign up for news updates or receive an e-mail when we update the Committee's schedule, you can do that on our web site as well (E-mail Updates).

This is an exciting time for American agriculture, and we on the Committee are dedicated to creating federal policy that will facilitate the great work of our nation's farmers and ranchers.

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Committee Members

House Committee on Agriculture

*Last Updated February 5, 2009**

Democratic Majority



- [Collin C. Peterson, MN,](#)
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- [Tim Holden, PA,](#) *Vice Chairman*
- [Mike McIntyre, NC](#)
- [Leonard L. Boswell, IA](#)
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- [Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, SD](#)
- [Henry Cuellar, TX](#)
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- [Earl Pomeroy, ND](#)
- [Travis W. Childers, MS](#)
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Ranking Minority Member
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- [Sam Graves, MO](#)
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- [Steve King, IA](#)
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Farm Bill

House Committee on Agriculture

On June 18, Congress overrode the President's veto on H.R. 6124, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, ensuring that all parts of the Farm Bill are enacted into law. Previously, Congress had passed H.R. 2419 over the President's veto, containing 14 of 15 Farm Bill titles.

- The bipartisan House vote on H.R. 6124 was 317-109. The Committee press release can be read [here](#).
 - [House roll call vote](#) (Roll Call 417)
 - [Senate roll call vote](#) (Vote Number 151)
- The House vote on H.R. 2419, which took place on May 21, was 316-108. The Senate vote of May 22 was 82-13. The Committee press release can be read [here](#).
 - [House roll call vote](#) (Roll Call 346)
 - [Senate roll call vote](#) (Vote Number 140)
- On May 20, 2008, Congress sent H.R. 2419, the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 to President Bush. The bill passed the House of Representatives with a vote of 318-106 on May 14, and passed the Senate with a vote of 81-15 the following day. You can read the Committee press release [here](#). (*Correction: Previously listed as May 21*)
- A [letter](#) from more than 1,000 farm, conservation, nutrition, consumer and religious groups urging a YES vote to override the President's veto.

H.R. 2419, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008

- [Complete Legal Language of Conference Reports](#) (Title I - Title XV)
- [Joint Statement of Managers](#) (Title I - Title XV)
- A [one-page fact sheet](#) on the conference agreement (Updated May 13)

Title-by-Title Fact Sheets for the Conference Report:

- [Title I - Commodity Programs](#)
- [Title II - Conservation](#)
- [Title III - Trade](#)
- [Title IV - Nutrition](#)
- [Title V - Credit](#)
- [Title VI - Rural Development](#)
- [Title VII - Research](#)
- [Title VIII - Forestry](#)
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- [Title X - Horticulture and Organic Agriculture](#)

- [Title XI - Livestock](#)
- [Title XII - Crop Insurance](#)
- [Title XIII - Commodity Futures](#)
- [Title XIV - Miscellaneous](#)

(All documents are in .pdf format)

Farm Bill Conference

- [Archived May 14, 2008, Farm Bill press conference](#): On Wednesday, May 14, House Agriculture Committee Chairman Collin Peterson and Ranking Member Bob Goodlatte were joined by members of the Farm Bill Conference Committee and members of the House Agriculture Committee to discuss passage of the 2008 Farm Bill conference report.
 - [Audio only stream](#)
 - [Video stream](#)
- [Archived May 8, 2008, Farm Bill press conference](#): Congressional negotiators announced a final farm bill conference agreement at a press conference on May 8, 2008. A bipartisan, bicameral group discussed the details of the final bill, which makes investments in conservation, energy, nutrition and rural development while continuing and strengthening farm income protection. *(Over 70 minutes in length)*
 - [Audio only stream](#)
 - [Video stream](#)
- On Thursday, May 1, the House of Representatives and the Senate each passed by unanimous consent, S. 2954, a bill to temporarily extend farm programs through May 16, 2008. Additional details on this extension and previous extensions can be found on the Library of Congress [Legislative Information](#) page.
- On Friday, April 25, the President signed into law S. 2903, a bill to temporarily extend farm programs through May 2, 2008.
- On April 16, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 5813, a bill to extend farm programs until April 25, 2008, in order to give conferees time to resolve remaining issues.
- [House Framework](#) presented to conferees at the April 10, 2008, Farm Bill conference meeting. (.pdf format)
- On April 9, the Speaker of the House of Representatives appointed conferees to participate in the conference committee to negotiate the 2008 Farm Bill. You can read the news release with the full list of conferees [here](#).
- On March 12, the House and Senate both approved S. 2745, a bill to extend agricultural programs to April 18, 2008.

[House-Senate Conference Side-by-Side Documents:](#)

Title I - Commodity Programs	Section-by-Section
Title II - Conservation	Section-by-Section
Title III - Trade	Section-by-Section
Title IV - Nutrition Programs	Section-by-Section
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Title X - Horticulture and Organic Agriculture (House Bill) and applicable Senate Amendment provisions	Section-by-Section
Title XI - Miscellaneous Provisions	Section-by-Section
Title XII and House Title XIII - Tax & Disaster Provisions	Section-by-Section
Senate Amendment Title XIII - CEA Reauthorization and applicable House provisions	Section-by-Section

Farm Bill Framework released by Chairman Peterson and Ranking Member Goodlatte - Feb. 14, 2008

Peterson-Goodlatte Letter to the Senate - Feb. 12, 2008

Open Letter to the Farm Bill Community - Feb. 9, 2008

(All documents are in .pdf format)

House Passage

On July 27, 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a Farm Bill that makes historic investments in fruit and vegetable production, conservation, nutrition and renewable energy while maintaining a strong safety net for America's farmers. The bill passed by a vote of 231-191.

You can read the House Agriculture Committee news release about House passage [here](#).

The legislative progress of the 2007 Farm Bill from Subcommittee consideration to the House floor is below, with the most recent legislative activity placed at the top. You can keep track of the status of H.R. 2419, as passed by the House, at the Library of Congress website [here](#).

This page will be updated as necessary.

Full Committee Passage

H.R. 2419 as Reported by the House Agriculture Committee

- [Bill Text](#) (Posted July 23, 2007 - 1MB file)
- [House Report 110-256](#) accompanying H.R. 2419 (Posted July 24, 2007 - 13MB file)

Chairman's Mark for Full Committee Consideration

- [Section-by-Section Analysis of Chairman's Mark](#) - Titles I through XI (Posted July 17, 2007)
- [Manager's Amendment to Chairman's Mark](#) (Posted July 17, 2007)
 - [Summary of Manager's Amendment](#) (Posted July 17, 2007)
 - Amendments Adopted: (Posted July 20, 2007)
 - [Adopted Amendments File 1](#)
 - [Adopted Amendments File 2](#)
 - [Adopted Amendments File 3](#)
 - [Adopted Amendments File 4](#)
 - [Adopted Amendments File 5](#)
- [Title I - Commodity Programs](#)
 - Adopted Amendments:
 - Conaway Amendment as amended, by voice vote, regarding de minimis payments
 - Graves Amendment, by voice vote, regarding permanent debarment authority
 - Lampson Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Healthy Oils Incentive Program
 - Costa Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Federal Milk Marketing Order Review Commission
 - Everett Amendment, by voice vote, amending peanut loan repayments
 - Pomeroy Amendment, by voice vote, on the Federal crop insurance 508(h) process
- [Title II - Conservation](#)
 - Adopted Amendments:
 - Goodlatte Amendments considered en bloc, by voice vote, regarding 1)EQIP and pest management and 2) priorities and evaluation criteria under the Conservation Title
 - Etheridge Amendment, by voice vote, regarding gasifier technology
 - Costa Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Regional Water Enhancement Program
 - Musgrave Amendment, by voice vote, regarding "in stream flows" under EQIP
 - Walz Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Conservation Security Program evaluation and ranking process, and application

- process
- Holden second-degree Amendment to a Goodlatte Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program
- Moran Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program

○ Title III - Trade

- Adopted Amendments:
 - Etheridge/Hayes Amendment, by division of the question, regarding tobacco leaf eligibility for the Market Access Program
 - Cardoza Amendment, by voice vote, regarding germplasm conservation
 - Moran Amendment, by voice vote, regarding non-emergency food assistance

○ Title IV - Nutrition

- Adopted Amendments:
 - Kagen/Fortenberry Amendment, by voice vote, regarding geographic preference on food procurement
 - King Amendment, by voice vote, regarding residential drug treatment programs
 - Schmidt Amendment, by voice vote, regarding nutrition education

○ Title V - Credit

- Adopted Amendment:
 - Goodlatte Amendment regarding rural development and farm loan program sourcing

○ Title VI - Rural Development

- Adopted Amendments:
 - Peterson Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the manager's amendment language on broadband
 - Boswell Amendment, by voice vote, regarding historic barn preservation
 - Boswell Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Rural Strategic Investment Program
 - Gillibrand Amendment, by voice vote, regarding local purchase preferences
 - Space Amendment as amended, by voice vote, regarding the USDA broadband loan program
 - Pomeroy Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Rural Cooperative Development Program
 - Herseth Sandlin Amendment, by voice vote, regarding rural public television stations
 - Walz Amendment as amended, by voice vote, regarding a rail study

○ Title VII - Research

- Adopted Amendments:
 - Smith Amendment, by voice vote, regarding ethanol by-products
 - Conaway Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Foreign Agriculture Service Grant overhead limitation
 - Kagen Amendment, by voice vote, expressing the sense of Congress on organic research

○ Title VIII - Forestry

○ Title IX - Energy

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- Adopted Amendments:
 - Herseth Sandlin Amendment, by voice vote, regarding biomass enzyme research
 - Conaway Amendment, by unanimous consent, expressing a sense of Congress on alternative fuels
 - Barrow Amendment, by voice vote, regarding a Future Farmsteads Program
 - Herseth Sandlin Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Biomass Advisory Committee
 - Lampson Amendment, by voice vote, regarding biobased procurement guidelines
- Title X - Horticulture and Organic Agriculture
 - Adopted Amendments:
 - Kagen Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the Farmer's Market Promotion Program
 - Cardoza Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the definition of speciality crops
 - Gillibrand Amendment, by voice vote, regarding organic conversion
- Title XI - Miscellaneous Provisions
 - Adopted Amendments:
 - Herseth Sandlin Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the closing of Farm Service Agency offices
 - Conaway Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the mandatory Country of Origin Labeling program
 - Herseth Sandlin Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the crop insurance access for native grassland
 - McCarthy Amendment, by voice vote, regarding regulation of exports of plants, plant products, biological control organisms, and noxious weeds
 - Etheridge/Neugebauer Amendment, by voice vote, relating to cotton classification services
 - Boswell Amendment, by voice vote, regarding a methamphetamine inhibitor grant program
 - King Amendment, as amended by unanimous consent, expressing a sense of the Committee regarding the classification of hazardous substances
 - Goodlatte Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the USDA Graduate School
 - Rogers Amendment, by roll call vote (26-Y, 17-N), regarding arbitration clauses contained in livestock and poultry contracts

Reserve Fund En Bloc amendment

The Congressional Budget Resolution for FY 2008 includes a reserve fund for agriculture. Under the terms of the resolution, up to \$20 billion in additional budget authority over 5 years may be allocated to the farm bill to the extent that other legislation is passed to offset the additional amount. The Reserve Fund En Bloc

amendment includes proposals which will be presented for consideration by the House as offsets are obtained.

- En Bloc Amendment
- Section-by-Section Analysis of En Bloc Amendment (Posted July 16, 2007)
- Manager's Amendment to Reserve Fund En Bloc Amendment (Posted July 17, 2007)
 - Summary of Manager's Amendment to En Bloc (Posted July 17, 2007)
- Summary of Technical Changes (Updated July 15, 2007)
- Approved Amendments:
 - Goodlatte Amendment, by voice vote, regarding the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program
 - Herseth Sandlin Amendment as amended, by voice vote, regarding non-recourse loans for honey

Subcommittee Action:

- **Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management**
 - Title I - Commodity Programs (Updated. Posted June 15, 2007)
 - Title I - Outline (Posted June 15, 2007)
 - Title I - Section-by-Section Analysis (Posted June 19, 2007)
 - Adopted Amendments: (Posted June 20, 2007)
 - Etheridge Amendment to substitute an extension of the 2002 Farm Bill language in place of the discussion draft
 - Etheridge Extension Substitute Summary
 - Marshall Amendment to adjust premiums and discounts associated with cotton under loan and to recalculate the adjusted world price of cotton basen on Far East markets
 - Boustany Amendment, a second-degree amendment to the Marshall Amendment, to separate marketing loans, loan rates, and target prices for long grain and medium/short grain rice
 - Boustany Amendment to make technical corrections to the target price and loan rate for rice
 - Boyda Amendment to establish a single corn and sorghum loan rate in each county
 - Ellsworth Amendment to create a pilot program in Indiana to allow for the the planting of tomatoes grown and contracted for processing on up to 10,000 base acres
 - Moran Amendment expressing the sense of Congress that money used to fund programs under the Subcommittee's jurisdiction should not be transferred to fund programs under other Farm Bill titles
 - Title I -Crop Insurance (Posted June 18, 2007)
 - Title I - Crop Insurance Section-by-Section Analysis (Posted June 19, 2007)
 - Adopted Amendments: (June 19, 2007)
 - Neugebauer Amendment on supplemental crop insurance coverage

- **Subcommittee on Department Operations, Oversight, Nutrition, and Forestry**

- Title IV - Nutrition (Updated. Posted June 13, 2007)
- Nutrition Title Section-by-Section Analysis (Posted June 13, 2007)
- Summary of Nutrition Title Changes (Posted June 14, 2007)
 - Adopted Amendments: (June 14, 2007)
 - Kagen Amendment on strategies to target obesity
 - Baca Amendment on Federal Buy American requirements
 - Baca/Bonner Amendment on renaming the Food Stamp Program
 - Baca/Boustany Amendment on Food Stamp Nutrition Education
- Title VIII - Forestry (Posted June 12, 2007)
- Forestry Title Section-by-Section Analysis (Posted June 13, 2007)

● **Subcommittee on Specialty Crops, Rural Development, and Foreign Agriculture**

- Title VI - Rural Development (Revised. Posted June 5, 2007)
 - Rural Development Section-by-Section Analysis (Posted June 5, 2007)
 - Adopted Amendments: (June 6, 2007)
 - McIntyre Amendment on criteria to be applied in considering applications for rural development projects
 - Salazar Amendment on comprehensive rural broadband strategy
 - Barrow Amendment on technology transfer for rural areas
- Title I - Sugar (Posted June 4, 2007)
 - Sugar Section-by-Section Analysis (Posted June 5, 2007)
- Title I - Peanuts (Posted June 5, 2007)
 - Peanuts Section-by-Section Analysis (Posted June 5, 2007)

● **Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture**

- Provisions Under Jurisdiction of Horticulture and Organic Agriculture Subcommittee (Posted June 5, 2007)
 - Horticulture and Organic Agriculture Section-by-Section Analysis (Posted June 6, 2007)
 - Adopted Amendments: (June 7, 2007)
 - Cardoza Amendment on evaluation of USDA commodity purchasing process
 - Foxx Amendment to redirect funds for USDA to collect organic production and market data
 - McCarthy Amendment to establish a Fresh Produce Education Initiative
 - Kuhl Amendment to establish a National Clean Plant Network
 - Kuhl Amendment on payment limitation cap for Tree Assistance Program

● **Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry**

- Title I - Provisions Under Jurisdiction of Livestock, Dairy, and Poultry Subcommittee (Posted May 23, 2007)

- [Title I - Section-by-Section Analysis](#) (Posted May 23, 2007)
- Adopted Amendments: (Posted May 24, 2007)
 - [Boswell Amendment](#) on voluntary arbitration for livestock and poultry producers
 - [Kagen Amendment](#) on federal support for veal producers

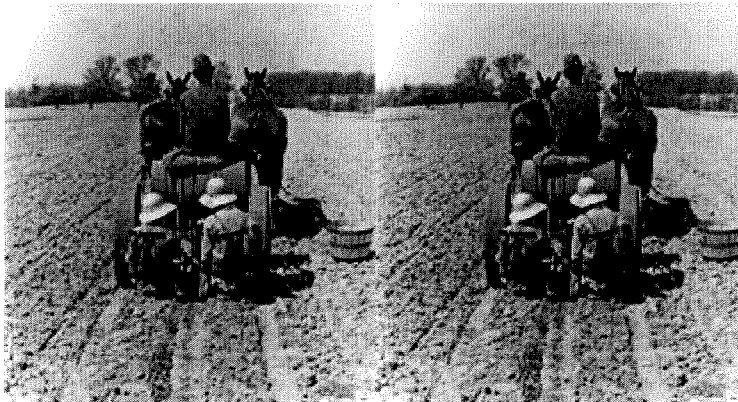
- **Subcommittee on Conservation, Credit, Energy, and Research**

- **[Conservation](#)** (Posted May 22, 2007)
 - [Conservation Title Section-by-Section Analysis](#) (Posted May 21, 2007)
 - Adopted Amendments: (all posted May 23, 2007)
 - [Costa Amendment](#) on GRP Priority for Long-term Contracts and Easements
 - [Walz Amendment](#) on Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative
 - [Graves Amendment](#) on Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative
 - [Cardoza Amendment](#) on Adjusted Gross Income Limitation on Conservation Programs
 - [Herseth Sandlin Amendment](#) on Bison and Livestock Definitions
 - [Cardoza Amendment](#) on Voluntary Sustainability Practices
- **[Credit](#)** (Posted May 22, 2007)
 - [Credit Title Section-by-Section Analysis](#) (Posted May 21, 2007)
- **[Energy](#)** (Posted May 21, 2007)
 - [Energy Title Technical Changes](#) (Posted May 21, 2007)
 - [Energy Title Section-by-Section Analysis](#) (Posted May 21, 2007)
 - Adopted Amendments: (All Posted May 23, 2007)
 - [Kagen Amendment](#) on Energy Independent Farm Pilot Program
 - [Herseth Sandlin Amendment](#) on Renewable Energy Systems
 - [Salazar Amendment](#) on Agricultural Cellulosic biomass
 - [Fortenberry Amendment](#) on Rural Energy Self Sufficiency Initiative
 - [Cardoza Amendment](#) on Agricultural Biofuels Internship Program
- **[Research](#)** (Posted May 21, 2007)
 - [Research Title Section-by-Section Analysis](#) (Posted May 22, 2007)

Committee History

House Committee on Agriculture

Establishment of the Committee



May 3, 1820:

Committee on Agriculture established with 7 Members from the states of Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia.

First Chairman:

U.S. Rep. Thomas Forrest (PA)

The Committee today:

46 Members

Current Chairman, 110th Congress:

U.S. Rep. Collin C. Peterson (MN)

More Chairmen have hailed from the State of New York than any other state.

Longest serving Chairman:

U.S. Rep. Harold Cooley (NC), 16 years (1949—53 & 1955—67)

Complete List of Past Chairmen

For more information about these and other records of the U.S. Congress, visit The National Archives and Records Administration's [Center for Legislative Archives website](#).

On motion of Mr. Williams of North Carolina, the House took up and proceeded to consider the resolution submitted by him on the 29th ultimo, for the appointment of a standing committee to be denominated "The Committee on Agriculture"; and the resolution was agreed to by the House, and ordered that the committee consist of seven members.¹

Thus the Committee on Agriculture was created on May 3, 1820. The population of the country was about 9 million and there were 213 Representatives in the House. Seven of these Representatives, under the chairmanship of Thomas Forrest, of Pennsylvania, were assigned to the new committee. Six other States were represented in this group: Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, South Carolina, Vermont, and Virginia. (The Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry was founded December 9, 1825.)

Lewis Williams, a Representative from Surrey County, N.C., elected to the 14th and 13 succeeding Congresses, and known as the "Father of the House," was the sponsor of the resolution proposing a Committee on Agriculture, and at the time of its introduction, April 29, 1820, he had this to say on the floor of the House:

Gentlemen, say that there are, in this country, three interests, the agricultural, commercial, and manufacturing. And how happens it, sir, that the agricultural, the great leading and substantial interest in this country, has no committee; no organized tribunal in this House to hear and determine on their grievances? If the commercial or manufacturing interests are affected, the cry resounds throughout the country; remonstrances flow in upon us; they are referred to committees appointed for the purpose of guarding them, and adequate remedies are provided. But, sir, when agriculture is oppressed, and makes complaint, what tribunal is in this House to hear and determine on the grievances?²

While originally consisting of seven Members, the committee gradually increased in size. In 1835, the 23rd Congress increased the membership to nine, and then not until the 42nd Congress, in 1871, was it again increased, this time to 11. From then on there was a steady increase until the maximum was reached in the 107th Congress, 2001, when 51 Members were assigned to the committee and its five subcommittees.

At the present time the committee, chaired by the Honorable Collin C. Peterson, a Democrat representing the 7th District of Minnesota, consists of 46 Members, 25 Democrats and 21 Republicans.

Hon. Harold D. Cooley, a Democrat from North Carolina, served eight terms as chairman (1949-1953 & 1955-1976), longer than any previous head of the committee. Other chairman who served for long periods include James W. Wadsworth (New York) and Gilbert N. Haugen (Iowa), both Republicans, who served for six terms each. Marvin Jones, a Texas Democrat, and William H. Hatch, a Missouri Democrat, each served as chairman for five terms. Edmund Deberry, a North Carolina Whig, served for four terms.

The jurisdiction of the committee as originally defined covered simply "subjects relating to agriculture." In the revision of the rules of the House in 1880, the Committee on Rules proposed the same simple rule: "subjects relating to agriculture: to the Committee on Agriculture." However, during consideration by the House the words "and forestry" were inserted on motion of Mark H. Dunnell, of Minnesota, who said that bills relating to tree culture had formerly gone to the Public Lands Committee, but more recently had gone to the Agriculture Committee. Thus the broad field of forestry was included in the committee's jurisdiction. More important was an amendment by D. Wyatt Aiken, of South Carolina, adding these words to the description of the committee's jurisdiction: "who shall receive the estimates and report the appropriations for the Agricultural Department." Although there existed an Appropriations Committee, the Committee on Agriculture reported on Department of Agriculture appropriations from 1880 until July 1, 1920, when another revision of the rules of the House returned to the Appropriations Committee all jurisdiction over appropriations.

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The committee has, by direct action of the House,

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secured jurisdiction over agriculturally related subjects. Thus the committee assumed jurisdiction for farm credit when the House referred to it the President's message dealing with the refinancing of farm-mortgage indebtedness on April 4, 1933, 73rd Congress.

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The jurisdiction as presently defined in the Rules of the House of Representatives was made effective January 2, 1947, as a part of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, and is as follows:

1. Adulteration of seeds, insect pests, and protection of birds and animals in forest reserves.
2. Agriculture generally.
3. Agricultural and industrial chemistry.
4. Agricultural colleges and experiment stations.
5. Agricultural economics and research.
6. Agricultural education extension services.
7. Agricultural production and marketing and stabilization of prices of agricultural products, and commodities (not including distribution outside of the United States).
8. Animal industry and diseases of animals.
9. Commodity exchanges.
10. Crop insurance and soil conservation.
11. Dairy industry.
12. Entomology and plant quarantine.
13. Extension of farm credit and farm security.
14. Inspection of livestock, poultry, meat products, and seafood and seafood products.
15. Forestry in general, and forest reserves other than those created from the public domain.
16. Human nutrition and home economics.
17. Plant industry, soils, and agricultural engineering.
18. Rural electrification.
19. Rural development.
20. Water conservation related to activities of the Department of Agriculture.

In carrying out its responsibilities, the committee conducts hearings, some public and some in executive session, to consider various legislative proposals. It affords the general public the opportunity to express its views. Among the witnesses are representatives of farm organizations, consumer groups, and ordinary citizens. The sessions are held to perfect the details of the legislation. As the role of the farmer becomes more technical and industrialized, so will the role of this committee become more complex.

One of the very important functions of any committee is the reporting of legislation to the House. Designed to fully explain each piece of legislation approved by the committee, a "report" takes the form of a formal printed document and accompanies a bill as it goes to the House floor for action. It is also a reflection of the committee's interests. In recent Congresses, the reports of the Committee on Agriculture generally fill one volume of a few hundred pages. By comparison, all of the reports from the Agriculture Committee from the 16th to the 49th Congresses are bound in one volume.³

Of course, there have been many momentous and historical reports on legislation by the committee which have had a profound and lasting effect on the agricultural community and the Nation. The first reference to a Department of Agriculture was in "Ho. of Reps. Rep. No. 595," April 12, 1842:

Report: The Committee on Agriculture, to which was referred the petition of Joseph L. Smith and others, praying for the establishment of a department of agriculture and education, have had the same under consideration, and beg leave to report the following resolution: Resolved. That it is inexpedient to grant the prayer of petitioners.

Proposals for a Department of Agriculture were made many times and in House Report 321 of August 5, 1856, the committee had this to say:

Agriculture is the basis of our national prosperity. It is the substratum of all other interests; and the degree of advancement which marks the progress of our country and its people in wealth, enterprise, education, and substantial independence, is measured by the prosperity of its rural interests. It is one of those arts which, from the earliest periods, have been deservedly held in the highest estimation. One of the first injunctions upon our original progenitor, after his expulsion from the Garden of Eden, was that he should "till the soil"

It was not until 1862 that a favorable report was acted on which led to the establishment of the U.S.

Department of Agriculture on May 15, 1862. But it was not of Cabinet rank. The first Commissioner of Agriculture was Isaac Newton, who inherited the staff of nine employees and facilities of the Agricultural Division of the Patent Office. The embryo department, a year later, had a horticulturist, a chemist, an entomologist, a statistician, an editor, and 24 others. Experimental work was done in a propagating garden bounded by what is now Madison and Adams Drives, and Fourth and Sixth Streets. When no longer needed by the Union Army for a cattle yard, a larger area between Independence and Constitution Avenues, and 12th and 14th Streets was transferred to the Department. The appropriation for the first year was \$80,000.

Although many urged that the Department be an executive department with a secretary who would be a member of the President's Cabinet, it was 27 years before Congress elevated it to a Cabinet status in 1889. At this time, the Department consisted of 488 employees and an had annual appropriation of \$1.1 million.

When the committee was established in 1820 the Nation was in its infancy. The population was 9,618,000, having more than doubled from the first census taken in 1790. By 1862, when the Department of Agriculture was founded, the population was up to 33 million. It had reached almost 107 million in 1920 when the committee marked its centennial, and the Census Bureau estimate for May of 2004 is over 300 million.


So, with a glance back at the growth of the United States, and a look ahead at the continued growth of both our domestic and the global population, it becomes unmistakably clear that nothing is more important to the welfare of Americans than the maintenance of a healthy agriculture, which is the continuing prime objective of the committee.

1: From the Debates and Proceedings in the Congress of the United States," 16th Cong., 1st sess., May 3, 1820.

2: From "Annals of the Congress of the United States," 16th Cong., 1st sess., Saturday, Apr. 29, 1820.


3 Reports of the Committee on Agriculture from the organization of the committee May 3, 1820, to the close of the 49th Congress, 1887, inclusive. Compiled. under the direction of the Joint Committee on Printing, by T. H. McKee, clerk, document room, U.S. Senate.

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Chairwoman
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"Each House may determine the rules of its proceedings."
US Constitution Article I, Section 5, Clause 5

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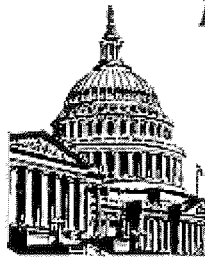
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THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CONGRESSIONAL OVERSIGHT

What is the Basis for Congressional Oversight?

Congressional oversight is one of the most important responsibilities of the United States Congress. Congressional oversight refers to the review, monitoring, and supervision of federal agencies, programs and policy implementation, and it provides the legislative branch with an opportunity to inspect, examine, review and check the executive branch and its agencies. The authority of Congress to do oversight is derived from its implied powers in the U.S. Constitution, various laws, and House rules. In affirming Congress' oversight powers, the Supreme Court in McGrain v. Daugherty stated that "the power of inquiry – with process to enforce it – is an essential and appropriate auxiliary to the legislative function." In Watkins v. United States the Court described Congress' oversight power by stating that the "power of the Congress to conduct investigations is inherent in the legislative process. That power is broad." The Supreme Court also observed that "a legislative body cannot legislate wisely or effectively in the absence of information respecting the conditions which the legislation is intended to affect or change." The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 mandated that House and Senate committees exercise "continuous watchfulness" of the administration of laws and programs under their jurisdiction. The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 permitted House standing committees to "review and study, on a continuing basis, the application, administration and execution of laws" under its jurisdiction.

Why Does Congress Need to Do Oversight?

- Ensure executive compliance with legislative intent.
- Improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of governmental operations.
- Evaluate program performance.
- Prevent executive encroachment on legislative prerogatives and powers.
- Investigate alleged instances of poor administration, arbitrary and capricious behavior, abuse, waste, dishonesty, and fraud.
- Assess an agency or official's ability to manage and carry out program objectives.
- Review and determine federal financial priorities.
- Ensure that executive policies reflect the public interest.
- Protect individual rights and liberties.
- Review agency rule-making processes.
- Acquire information useful in future policymaking.

What Do the Rules of the House Require of Committees With Respect to Oversight?

Clause 2(b)(1) of Rule X - Each standing committee, except Appropriations, shall review and study on a continuing basis the application, administration, and execution of all laws within its legislative jurisdiction.

Clause 2(d) of Rule X - Each standing committee is to submit its oversight plans for the duration of a Congress by February 15 of the first session to the Committees on Government Reform and House Administration. Not later than March 31, the Committee on Government Reform must report an oversight agenda.

Clauses 2(b)(2) and 5(d) of Rule X - Each standing Committee is authorized to require its subcommittees to conduct oversight in their jurisdictional areas or to create an oversight subcommittee.

Clause 1(d)(1) of Rule XI - Each committee must submit to the House, not later than January 2 of each odd-numbered year, a report on the activities of that committee for the Congress.

Clause 1(d)(2) of Rule XI - The survey of activities report must include separate sections summarizing the legislative and oversight activities of that committee during that Congress.

Clause 1(d)(3) of Rule XI - The oversight section of the survey of activities report must include a summary of the oversight plans submitted by the committee at the beginning of the Congress, a summary of the actions taken, recommendations made with respect to each such plan, and a summary of any additional oversight activities undertaken by that committee.

Clause 3(c) of Rule XIII - Committee reports on measures must include oversight findings separately set out and clearly identified.

****For further reference see "Congressional Oversight - A How to Series of Workshops", 106th Congress Rules Committee Print, June 28, July 12, and 26, 1999; "Congressional Oversight" by Frederick M. Kaiser (CRS), updated February 16, 1999 and the "Congressional Oversight Manual" (CRS), updated June 25, 1999.

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Committee on Rules

A History

The Committee on Rules has a long and storied history. Its mandate over “the rules and joint rules . . . and order of business of the House” took almost a century to establish.

In Congresses of the late twentieth century, the Rules Committee has consisted of thirteen members, nine from the majority party and four from the minority party. This heavy majority party ratio of 2 to 1, plus 1 reflects the Committee’s status since the mid-1970’s as an “arm of the leadership” and “legislative gatekeeper.” The Committee principally serves to assist the majority leadership in scheduling bills for floor action. Bills are scheduled by means of special rules from the Rules Committee that bestow upon legislation priority status for consideration in the House and establish procedures for their debate and amendment.

During its first century, however, the Rules Committee exercised a quite different and more limited role, that of recommending changes in the standing rules for the House. At other times, it has acted independently of House leadership. The evolution of the Rules Committee reflects the shifting dynamics between speakers, members of the House, committee chairs, and presidents.

Origin of the Committee

On April 2, 1789, the second day of the First Congress, the House voted to establish a select committee of eleven members “to prepare and report such standing rules and orders of proceedings as may be proper to be observed in the House.” This effectively was the first Committee on Rules. On April 7, the select committee reported back to the House a set of four rules that the House adopted. These rules dealt with the duties of the Speaker, decorum and debate, bill procedure, and procedures for the Committee of the Whole.

On April 13, the select committee reported eight additional rules, which the House adopted over the next two days, relating to committee service, leaves of absence, creation of a standing committee on elections, an oath of office for the clerk, and the appointment and duties of the sergeant at arms. With its final report, the first Rules Committee was dissolved but did not fade into history. In less than two weeks, the Committee had established a set of rules that would endure at the heart of House parliamentary practice for the next two centuries.

Early Role

For ninety years, the Rules Committee remained a temporary select committee, appointed at the beginning of each

Congress for the purpose of recommending changes from the rules of the previous Congress and then going out of existence. Its role was so minor that in five Congresses, it was not even established and in others it issued no reports.

There were hints during this period, though, of a larger role of the Rules Committee, that of reordering the House's legislative business. On June 16, 1841, the House adopted a resolution extending the rules of the previous Congress for the balance of the first session but also giving the Rules Committee "leave to report at all times," rather than once, in the usual single report.

Less than a month later, on July 6, the Rules Committee took advantage of this authority by reporting an amendment to House rules that would permit the House by majority vote, rather than the two-thirds vote otherwise required, to terminate all debate in the Committee of the Whole and thereby bring a bill to a final vote back in the House. The Speaker overruled a point of order against this amendment on grounds that the June 16 resolution had given the Rules Committee authority to make "reports in part at different times, and by piecemeal." The Speaker's ruling was upheld on appeal and the rule was subsequently adopted. A motion was immediately made under the authority of this rule to terminate all debate at 7:00 P.M. that day on a pending public lands bill that for several days had been subject to minority delaying tactics in the Committee of the Whole. The motion was agreed to by majority vote and all debate on amendments was terminated at 7:00 that evening (though the minority continued to offer scores of nondebatable amendments for several more hours before the measure was finally reported back to the House). For the first time, the Rules Committee had exercised its authority to intervene in the consideration of a specific bill.

Other images of the modern Rules Committee were revealed in the 31st and 32nd Congresses (1849-1853), when the House briefly elevated it to standing committee status and, in 1858, when the House created a special rules revision committee that included the Speaker as one of its members. A year later, the Speaker was made the chairman of the select committee on rules.

In 1880, when the House again undertook a comprehensive overhaul of House rules, it reduced the number of rules from 166 to 44, and designated as one of the forty-two House standing committees a Committee on Rules with jurisdiction over "all proposed action touching on the rules and the joint rules." Moreover, the Speaker, then Rep. Samuel J. Randall of Pennsylvania, retained the authority to chair the newly-permanent Rules Committee and to appoint the chairmen and members of other standing and select committees.

The Reed Rules

Between 1880 and 1910, the Rules Committee emerged as the Speaker's committee and the legislative scheduling agent for the House. Its first chairman, in 1880, Speaker Samuel J. Randall (D-PA), used his authority to bolster the influence of the speakership, establishing that all future rules changes should be referred to the Rules Committee and that its reports could be brought to the floor any time.

The powers of the Committee and the speakership continued under Republican control. One of the first Republican leaders to recognize the potential of the Rules Committee was Rep. Thomas B. Reed (R-ME). Appointed to the Rules Committee in January of 1882, Rep. Reed, then in his third term, assumed a leadership position by engineering rules changes and Speaker's rulings designed to eliminate dilatory tactics used by the minority.

The most significant early example of this, and also the first recorded instance of a modern-day special rule reported by the Rules Committee, occurred on February 26, 1883. Rep. Reed called up a resolution reported by the Rules Committee that would allow the House by majority vote, rather than by the two-thirds vote required under the suspension rule, to suspend the rules and request a conference with the Senate on a tariff bill.

Rep. Joseph C.S. Blackburn (D-KY) raised a point of order against the resolution on the grounds that the Rules Committee did not have authority to report the resolution because it was neither a rule nor an amendment to House

rules. Speaker J. Warren Keifer (R-OH), Chairman of the Rules Committee, overruled the point of order on grounds that the resolution was “reported as a rule from the Committee on Rules.” The Speaker went on to explain that, just as the Rules Committee could report a rule to suspend or repeal every rule of the House, subject to approval by the House, it also could report a rule that “may apply to a single great and important measure now pending before the Congress.”

When Republicans again took over the House in the 51st Congress (1889-1891) after a six-year hiatus, Rep. Reed was elected Speaker and thus also became the Chairman of the Rules Committee. He immediately moved to rely on the Rules Committee to control legislative business on the floor through the use of special orders. Reed later would describe the role of the Rules Committee as a steering committee “to arrange the order of business and decide how and in what way certain measures shall be considered.”

Speaker Reed also moved swiftly to eliminate minority obstruction of floor business by issuing rulings from the chair that outlawed dilatory motions. He then directed the codification of his rulings from his position as Rules Committee Chairman. Known as the Reed Rules, the rules changes of 1890 helped to consolidate the power of the Speaker and the Rules Committee and to enable the majority party in the House to establish its legislative agenda without undue minority obstruction.

The Cannon Revolt

The power of the speakership and the Rules Committee continued to grow under Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-IL), who held the position from 1903 to 1910. Speaker Cannon was a strong believer in party discipline and did not hesitate to use his power in appointing committee members and chairmen and in removing those who did not toe the line.

His tactics and conservative philosophy eventually fomented a revolt by progressive Republican insurgents, led by Rep. George W. Norris (R-NE) and minority Democrats. On March 17, 1910, Rep. Norris offered a resolution as a matter of constitutional privilege to change House rules by removing the Speaker as chairmen and a member of the Rules Committee and by expanding its membership from five to fifteen, to be chosen by state groupings.

A point of order was made against the resolution on the grounds that it was not privileged under the Constitution. Speaker Cannon allowed debate on the point of order and resolution to continue until March 19, when he sustained the point of order by citing an 1878 precedent involving a ruling by Democratic Speaker Samuel J. Randall. Speaker Cannon's decision was appealed to the House and was overturned, 182 to 162. The Norris resolution subsequently was adopted, 191 to 156, after he amended it to provide for a ten-member committee elected by the House. Although the Norris resolution did not strip the Speaker of his power to appoint committees, the same effect was achieved in 1911. When Democrats took control of the House that year, they adopted rules requiring the election of committees by the House.

The Rules Committee in a Decentralized Era

Although the Cannon revolt dealt a blow to the speakership, the Rules Committee's powers remained undiminished and, for the next twenty-seven years, it continued to function as an arm of the majority leadership in scheduling legislation for the floor. The revolt did, however, lead to a period of decentralization in the House in which committees came to act as independent power centers, bolstered by the institutionalization of the seniority system. This trend gradually caught up with the Rules Committee, as well.

The committee had played a key role in expediting much of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal legislation during his first term by reporting closed rules on major legislation, particularly during President Roosevelt's famous First Hundred Days. A total of ten closed rules were reported in the 73rd Congress (1933-1935). But a reaction against President Roosevelt's policies began to set in during the 74th Congress (1935-1937); this reaction echoed on the Rules Committee, which Rep. John J. O'Connor (D-NY), a New Deal skeptic, had just taken over as chairman.

By President Roosevelt's second term, beginning in 1937, the Rules Committee had ceased to function as an arm of the majority leadership and instead came under the control of a coalition of conservative Democrats and Republicans, which held sway until 1961. Only during the brief periods of Republican control of the House in the 80th and 83rd Congresses (1947-1949 and 1953-1955) did the Committee revert to its majority-supporting role.

Rearming the Leadership

The first major chink in the conservative coalition's armor was lodged in 1961, when Speaker Sam Rayburn (D-TX), acting in concert with the new administration of President John F. Kennedy, moved to enlarge the committee from twelve to fifteen members, including two additional Democrats and one Republican.

The resolution to enlarge the Rules Committee (H. Res. 127) was reported by the Rules Committee by a vote of 6 to 2 on January 14, 1961, with only committee Democrats in attendance. Chairman Howard W. Smith (D-VA) and Rep. William M. Colmer (D-MS) cast the dissenting votes. Following an hour of debate on the resolution on January 31, which included impassioned pleas from Speaker Rayburn and Chairman Smith on opposing sides, the House adopted the resolution by a vote of 217 to 212. Only two Republicans voted for the resolution, and sixty-four Democrats voted against it.

Despite an increase in the Rules Committee's cooperation with the leadership, it continued to obstruct floor consideration of certain education, labor, and civil rights bills for the duration of the Kennedy administration. By the 90th Congress (1967-1969), the Committee had become much more cooperative with the majority leadership, mainly because of the elevation of Rep. Colmer to the chairmanship following Chairman Smith's electoral defeat in 1966. Although of similar ideological bent to Chairman Smith, Chairman Colmer viewed the role of the Committee in a different way, in part reflecting his own threatened ouster from the Committee and the adoption of committee rules in 1967 permitting a committee majority to circumvent a recalcitrant chairman.

By the mid 1970's, with the reform movement sweeping Congress, the Rules Committee was fully restored as an arm of the leadership. With the departure of Chairman Colmer in 1972, the succeeding Democratic chairmen (Ray J. Madden of Indiana, 1973-1976; James J. Delaney of New York, 1977-1978; Richard W. Bolling of Missouri, 1979-1982; Claude Pepper of Florida, 1983-1989; and John Joseph Moakley of Massachusetts, 1989-1994) reflected the reform-minded orientation of the House.

The reform movement also precipitated decentralization of power in the House, partially because of the growth of semiautonomous subcommittees and the new practice of referring bills to more than one committee. This decentralization in turn posed a challenge to the leadership and the Rules Committee to draw varying policies together for unified legislative action. The Rules Committee's centralizing role under the leadership was most apparent in the growth during the 1980's of special rules that structured the amendment process on major legislation.

Reforms and Original Jurisdiction

The authority of the Rules Committee to amend the standing rules of the House often is referred to as its original jurisdiction. Indeed, this was the sole function of the Committee for most of its first century. But even when it was a select committee between 1789 and 1880, its members were reluctant to propose sweeping House reforms through rules changes. The major rules reforms of 1860 and 1880 were generated by specially-appointed panels.

Even after the Rules Committee became a standing committee, its members' reluctance to make it an agent of reform in the House continued. Following the 1910 revolt against Speaker Cannon came the practice of reporting House rules changes at the beginning of a Congress from the majority party caucus instead of waiting for the Rules Committee to act. This practice continued in the late twentieth century.

Moreover, further rules reforms of any magnitude often are initiated by special entities outside the Rules Committee. This is done not only to ensure broader institutional representation and support but also because so much of the Rules Committee's time is consumed with granting special rules for bills from other committees. For example, the 1946 and 1970 Legislative Reorganization Acts originated from joint House-Senate committees; the 1974 Budget Act from a joint committee on the budget; and the House Committee Reform Amendments of 1974 from a bipartisan select committee. But in most such reform efforts, not only were the Rules Committee members represented on the special panels, but the committee itself retained final review authority and the right to recommend substantive changes. This was especially true with the 1970 Legislative Reorganization Act and the 1974 Budget Act.

After the mid 1970's, the Rules Committee increased its staff resources considerably and created two subcommittees for original jurisdiction matters, giving it still greater potential to play a major role in House reform efforts. These subcommittees are charged with reviewing the budget process and the procedures of the House.

In sum, the great paradox of the Rules Committee is that while it originally was created to develop a set of standing rules and uniform order of business for the House, its principal role now is to devise special rules to manage floor debate on legislation outside of those standing rule. This development, over a two-century period, reflects the growing complexity of the Congress and the issues it confronts, the changing relationships among its internal components, and the ultimate need for a mechanism to assist the leadership in coordinating and processing the business of the Congress in an orderly and expeditious fashion.

As an arm of the leadership, regardless of which party controls the House, the Committee is at the center of both political and legislative battles, performing precarious balancing acts between majority will and minority rights, leadership needs and membership demands, and a wide range of public policy options. The flexibility of the Committee over the years to adapt to changing circumstances and help bring order out of uncertainty is the best measure of its continuing utility and necessity.

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