

**RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
FOR THE 115TH CONGRESS**

JURISDICTION OF THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS

Rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives establishes the standing committees of the House and their jurisdiction. Under that rule, all bills, resolutions, and other matters relating to the subjects within the jurisdiction of any standing committee shall be referred to such committee. Clause 1(s) of Rule X establishes the jurisdiction of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs as follows:

- (1) Veterans' measures generally.
- (2) Cemeteries of the United States in which veterans of any war or conflict are or may be buried, whether in the United States or abroad (except cemeteries administered by the Secretary of the Interior).
- (3) Compensation, vocational rehabilitation, and education of veterans.
- (4) Life insurance issued by the Government on account of service in the Armed Forces.
- (5) Pensions of all the wars of the United States, general and special.
- (6) Readjustment of servicemembers to civil life.
- (7) Servicemembers' civil relief.
- (8) Veterans' hospitals, medical care, and treatment of veterans.

RULE 1 – GENERAL PROVISIONS

(a) **APPLICABILITY OF HOUSE RULES** – The Rules of the House are the rules of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and its subcommittees so far as applicable, except that a motion to recess from day to day, and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution, if printed copies are available, are non-debatable privileged motions in Committees and subcommittees.

(b) **SUBCOMMITTEES** – Each subcommittee of the Committee is a part of the Committee and is subject to the authority and direction of the Committee and to its rules so far as applicable.

(c) **INCORPORATION OF HOUSE RULE ON COMMITTEE PROCEDURE** – Rule XI of the Rules of the House, which pertains entirely to Committee procedure, is incorporated and made part of the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable. Pursuant to clause 2(a)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the full Committee is directed to offer a motion under clause 1 of Rule XXII of the Rules of the House whenever the Chairman considers it appropriate.

(d) VICE CHAIRMAN – Pursuant to clause 2(d) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Chairman of the full Committee shall designate the Vice Chairman of the Committee.

RULE 2 – REGULAR AND ADDITIONAL MEETINGS

(a) REGULAR MEETINGS – The regular meeting day for the Committee shall be at 10 a.m. on the second Wednesday of each month in such place as the Chairman may designate. However, the Chairman may dispense with a regular Wednesday meeting of the Committee.

(b) ADDITIONAL MEETINGS – The Chairman of the Committee may call and convene, as he considers necessary, additional meetings of the Committee for the consideration of any bill or resolution pending before the Committee or for the conduct of other Committee business. The Committee shall meet for such purpose pursuant to the call of the Chairman.

(c) NOTICE – The Chairman shall notify each Member of the Committee of the agenda of each regular and additional meeting of the Committee at least 24 hours before the time of the meeting, except under circumstances the Chairman determines to be of an emergency nature. Under such circumstances, the Chairman shall make an effort to consult the Ranking Minority Member, or in such Member's absence, the next ranking minority party member of the Committee.

RULE 3 – MEETINGS AND HEARINGS GENERALLY

(a) OPEN MEETINGS AND HEARINGS – Meetings and hearings of the Committee and each of its subcommittees shall be open to the public unless closed in accordance with clause 2(g) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House.

(b) ANNOUNCEMENT OF HEARING – The Chairman, in the case of a hearing to be conducted by the Committee, and the subcommittee Chairman, in the case of a hearing to be conducted by a subcommittee, shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of any hearing to be conducted on any measure or matter at least one week before the commencement of that hearing unless the Committee or the subcommittee determines that there is good cause to begin the hearing at an earlier date, in accordance with Rule XI, clause 2(g)(3)(B) of the Rules of the House of Representatives. In the latter event, the Chairman or the subcommittee Chairman, as the case may be, shall consult with the Ranking Minority Member and make such public announcement at the earliest possible date. The clerk of the Committee shall promptly notify the Daily Clerk of the Congressional Record and the Committee scheduling service of the House Information Resources as soon as possible after such public announcement is made.

(c) WIRELESS TELEPHONE USE PROHIBITED – No person may use a wireless telephone during a Committee or subcommittee meeting or hearing.

(d) MEDIA COVERAGE – Any meeting of the Committee or its subcommittees that is open to the public shall be open to coverage by radio, television, and still photography in accordance with the provisions of clause 4(f) of House rule XI as follows:

(1) If audio or visual coverage of the hearing or meeting is to be presented to the public as live coverage, that coverage shall be conducted and presented without commercial sponsorship.

(2) The allocation among the television media of the positions or the number of television cameras permitted by a committee or subcommittee chair in a hearing or meeting room shall be in accordance with fair and equitable procedures devised by the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(3) Television cameras shall be placed so as not to obstruct in any way the space between a witness giving evidence or testimony and any Member of the Committee or the visibility of that witness and that Member to each other.

(4) Television cameras shall operate from fixed positions but may not be placed in positions that obstruct unnecessarily the coverage of the hearing or meeting by the other media.

(5) Equipment necessary for coverage by the television and radio media may not be installed in, or removed from, the hearing or meeting room while the committee is in session.

(6)(A) Except as provided in subdivision (B), floodlights, spotlights, strobe lights, and flashguns may not be used in providing any method of coverage of the hearing or meeting.

(B) The television media may install additional lighting in a hearing or meeting room, without cost to the Government, in order to raise the ambient lighting level in a hearing or meeting room to the lowest level necessary to provide adequate television coverage of a hearing or meeting at the current state of the art of television coverage.

(7) If requests are made by more of the media than will be permitted by a committee or subcommittee chair for coverage of a hearing or meeting by still photography, that coverage shall be permitted on the basis of a fair and equitable pool arrangement devised by the Standing Committee of Press Photographers.

(8) Photographers may not position themselves between the witness table and the Members of the Committee at any time during the course of a hearing or meeting.

(9) Photographers may not place themselves in positions that obstruct unnecessarily the coverage of the hearing by the other media.

(10) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media shall be currently accredited to the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.

(11) Personnel providing coverage by still photography shall be currently accredited to the Press Photographers' Gallery.

(12) Personnel providing coverage by the television and radio media and by still photography shall conduct themselves and their coverage activities in an orderly and unobtrusive manner.

(e) REQUIREMENTS FOR TESTIMONY

(1) Each witness who is to appear before the Committee or a subcommittee shall file with the clerk of the Committee, at least 48 hours (exclusive of weekends and holidays) in advance of his or her appearance, or at such other time as designated by the Chairman after consultation with the Ranking Member, a written statement of his or her proposed testimony. Each witness shall, to the greatest extent practicable, also provide a copy of such written testimony in an electronic format prescribed by the Chairman. Each witness shall limit any oral presentation to a summary of the written statement.

(2) Pursuant to clause 2(g)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House:

(A) In the case of a witness appearing in a non-governmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of any Federal grants or contracts, or contracts or payments originating with a foreign government, received during the current calendar year or either of the two previous calendar years by the witness and related to the subject matter of the hearing.

(B) The disclosure required by this Rule shall include the amount and source of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) related to the subject matter of the hearing and the amount and country of origin of any payment or contract related to the subject matter of the hearing originating with a foreign government.

(f) CALLING AND QUESTIONING WITNESSES

(1) Committee and subcommittee members may question witnesses only when they have been recognized by the Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee for that purpose, and only for a 5-minute period until all members present have had an opportunity to question a witness. The 5-minute period for questioning a witness by any one member may be extended only with the unanimous consent of all members present. The questioning of witnesses in both Committee and subcommittee hearings shall be initiated by the Chairman, followed by the ranking minority party member and all other members alternating between the majority and minority. Except as otherwise announced by the Chairman at the beginning of a hearing, members who are present at the start of

the hearing will be recognized before other members who arrive after the hearing has begun. In recognizing members to question witnesses in this fashion, the Chairman shall take into consideration the ratio of the majority to minority members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in such a manner as not to disadvantage the members of the majority.

(2) Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (1) regarding the 5-minute rule, the Chairman after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member may designate an equal number of members of the Committee or subcommittee majority and minority party to question a witness for a period not longer than 30 minutes. In no event shall the Chairman allow a member to question a witness for an extended period under this rule until all members present have had the opportunity to ask questions under the 5-minute rule. The Chairman after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member may permit Committee staff for its majority and minority party members to question a witness for equal specified periods of time.

(3) Non-Committee Members may be invited to sit at the dais for and participate in Committee hearings with the unanimous consent of all Members present. Further, non-Committee Members may be recognized for questioning of witnesses but only after all Committee Members have first been recognized.

(4) When a hearing is conducted by the Committee or a subcommittee on any measure or matter, the minority party members on the Committee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chairman of a majority of those minority members before the completion of the hearing, to call witnesses selected by the minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of the hearing thereon.

(g) SUBPOENAS – Pursuant to clause 2(m) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, subpoenas may be authorized and issued by the Committee or a subcommittee in the conduct of any investigation or series of investigations or activities, only when authorized by a majority of the members voting, a majority being present.

(h) NOTICE REQUIREMENTS –

(1) The text of all bills or resolutions for markup, and any amendments in the nature of a substitute to such bills or resolution to be first recognized by the Chairman, shall be made available, via written or electronic notice, to Committee members at least 48 hours prior to a scheduled markup, except as agreed to by unanimous consent.

(2) Subject to the second sentence of this paragraph, it shall not be in order for the Committee to consider any amendment proposed to a bill or resolution under consideration by the Committee, or proposed to an amendment in the nature of a substitute noticed under paragraph (1), unless a written or electronic copy of such amendment has been delivered to each Member of the Committee (or subcommittee for purposes of subcommittee markups) at least 24 hours before the meeting at which the amendment is to be proposed, and such amendment is in compliance with subsection (i)

of this rule. This paragraph may be waived by unanimous consent and shall apply only when the 48-hour written notice has been provided in accordance with paragraph (1).

(i) **CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE SCORING** -- The Committee shall not include any bill or resolution for consideration during a Committee markup which is not accompanied by an accounting from the Congressional Budget Office of the mandatory and discretionary costs or savings associated with such bill or resolution.

The accounting from the Congressional Budget Office need not be official, but is expected to provide Committee members with an approximation of the budgetary impact a bill or resolution may have prior to any vote to favorably forward or report such bill or resolution. The requirements of this paragraph may be waived by a majority of Committee members, a quorum being present.

RULE 4 – QUORUM AND RECORD VOTES; POSTPONEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS

(a) **WORKING QUORUM** – A majority of the members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for business and a majority of the members of any subcommittee shall constitute a quorum thereof for business, except that two members shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of taking testimony and receiving evidence.

(b) **QUORUM FOR REPORTING** – No measure or recommendation shall be reported to the House of Representatives unless a majority of the Committee was actually present.

(c) **RECORD VOTES** – A record vote may be demanded by one-fifth of the members present or, in the apparent absence of a quorum, by any one member. With respect to any record vote on any motion to amend or report, the total number of votes cast for and against, and the names of those members voting for and against, shall be included in the report of the Committee on the bill or resolution.

(d) **PROHIBITION AGAINST PROXY VOTING** – No vote by any member of the Committee or a subcommittee with respect to any measure or matter may be cast by proxy.

(e) **POSTPONING PROCEEDINGS** – Committee and subcommittee chairmen may postpone further proceedings when a record vote is ordered on the question of approving a measure or matter or on adopting an amendment, and may resume proceedings within two legislative days on a postponed question after reasonable notice. When proceedings resume on a postponed question, notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

RULE 5 – SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) **ESTABLISHMENT AND JURISDICTION** –

(1) There shall be four subcommittees of the Committee as follows:

(A) Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs, which shall have legislative, oversight, and investigative jurisdiction over compensation; general and special pensions of all the wars of the United States; life insurance issued by the Government on account of service in the Armed Forces; cemeteries of the United States in which veterans of any war or conflict are or may be buried, whether in the United States or abroad, except cemeteries administered by the Secretary of the Interior; burial benefits; the Board of Veterans' Appeals; and the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims.

(B) Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity, which shall have legislative, oversight, and investigative jurisdiction over education of veterans, employment and training of veterans, vocational rehabilitation, veterans' housing programs, transition of servicemembers to civilian life, civil service reform and other employee related issues at the Department of Veterans Affairs, and servicemembers civil relief.

(C) Subcommittee on Health, which shall have legislative, oversight, and investigative jurisdiction over the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) including medical services, medical support and compliance, medical facilities, medical and prosthetic research, homeless programs, and major and minor construction.

(D) Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, which shall have oversight and investigative jurisdiction over veterans' matters generally, and over such matters as may be referred to the subcommittee by the Chairman of the full Committee for its oversight or investigation and for its appropriate recommendations. The subcommittee shall have legislative jurisdiction over information technology and procurement generally, and over such bills or resolutions as may be referred to it by the Chairman of the full Committee.

(2) Each subcommittee shall have responsibility for such other measures or matters as the Chairman refers to it.

(b) VACANCIES – Any vacancy in the membership of a subcommittee shall not affect the power of the remaining members to execute the functions of that subcommittee.

(c) RATIOS – On each subcommittee, there shall be a ratio of majority party members to minority party members, which shall be consistent with the ratio on the full Committee.

(d) REFERRAL TO SUBCOMMITTEES – The Chairman of the Committee may refer a measure or matter, which is within the general responsibility of more than one of the subcommittees of the Committee, as the Chairman deems appropriate. In referring any measure or matter to a subcommittee, the Chairman of the Committee may specify a date by which the subcommittee shall report thereon to the Committee.

(e) POWERS AND DUTIES –

(1) Each subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence, and report to the full Committee on all matters referred to it or under its jurisdiction. Subcommittee chairmen shall set dates for hearings and meetings of their respective subcommittees after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and other subcommittee chairmen with a view toward avoiding simultaneous scheduling of Committee and subcommittee meetings or hearings whenever possible.

(2) Whenever a subcommittee has ordered a bill, resolution, or other matter to be reported to the Committee, the Chairman of the subcommittee reporting the bill, resolution, or matter to the full Committee, or any member authorized by the subcommittee to do so, shall notify the Chairman and the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee of the subcommittee's action.

(3) A member of the Committee who is not a member of a particular subcommittee may sit with the subcommittee during any of its meetings and hearings, but shall not have authority to vote, cannot be counted for a quorum, and cannot raise a point of order at the meeting or hearing.

(4) Non-Committee Members may be invited to sit at the dais for and participate in subcommittee hearings with the unanimous consent of all Members present. Further, non-Committee Members may be recognized for questioning of witnesses but only after all subcommittee Members have first been recognized for questioning.

(5) Each subcommittee shall provide the Committee with copies of such record votes taken in subcommittee and such other records with respect to the subcommittee as the Chairman of the Committee deems necessary for the Committee to comply with all rules and regulations of the House.

RULE 6 – GENERAL OVERSIGHT RESPONSIBILITY

(a) PURPOSE – Pursuant to clause 2 of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall carry out oversight responsibilities. In order to assist the House in –

(1) Its analysis, appraisal, evaluation of –

(A) The application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of the laws enacted by the Congress, or

(B) Conditions and circumstances, which may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation, and

(2) Its formulation, consideration and enactment of such modifications or changes in those laws, and of such additional legislation, as may be necessary or appropriate, the

Committee and its various subcommittees, consistent with their jurisdiction as set forth in Rule 5, shall have oversight responsibilities as provided in subsection (b).

(b) **REVIEW OF LAWS AND PROGRAMS** – The Committee and its subcommittees shall review and study, on a continuing basis, the applications, administration, execution, and effectiveness of those laws, or parts of laws, the subject matter of which is within the jurisdiction of the Committee or subcommittee, and the organization and operation of the Federal agencies and entities having responsibilities in or for the administration and execution thereof, in order to determine whether such laws and the programs thereunder are being implemented and carried out in accordance with the intent of the Congress and whether such programs should be continued, curtailed, or eliminated. In addition, the Committee and its subcommittees shall review and study any conditions or circumstances which may indicate the necessity or desirability of enacting new or additional legislation within the jurisdiction of the Committee or subcommittee (whether or not any bill or resolution has been introduced with respect thereto), and shall on a continuing basis undertake future research and forecasting on matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee or subcommittee.

(c) **OVERSIGHT PLAN** – Not later than February 15 of the first session of a Congress, the Committee shall meet in open session, with a quorum present, to adopt its oversight plans for that Congress for submission to the Committee on House Administration and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, in accordance with the provisions of clause 2(d) of Rule X of the Rules of the House.

(d) **OVERSIGHT BY SUBCOMMITTEES** – The existence and activities of the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations shall in no way limit the responsibility of the other subcommittees of the Committee on Veterans’ Affairs for carrying out oversight duties.

RULE 7 – BUDGET ACT RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) **BUDGET ACT RESPONSIBILITIES** – Pursuant to clause 4(f)(1) of Rule X of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall submit to the Committee on the Budget not later than six weeks after the President submits his budget, or at such time as the Committee on the Budget may request –

(1) Its views and estimates with respect to all matters to be set forth in the concurrent resolution on the budget for the ensuing fiscal year that are within its jurisdiction or functions; and

(2) An estimate of the total amounts of new budget authority, and budget outlays resulting therefrom, to be provided or authorized in all bills and resolutions within its jurisdiction that it intends to be effective during that fiscal year.

RULE 8 – RECORDS AND OTHER MATTERS

(a) TRANSCRIPTS – There shall be a transcript made of each regular and additional meeting and hearing of the Committee and its subcommittees. Any such transcript shall be a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical, and typographical corrections authorized by the person making the remarks involved.

(b) RECORDS –

(1) The Committee shall keep a record of all actions of the Committee and each of its subcommittees. The record shall contain all information required by clause 2(e)(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House and shall be available for public inspection at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee.

(2) There shall be kept in writing a record of the proceedings of the Committee and each of its subcommittees, including a record of the votes on any question on which a recorded vote is demanded. The result of each such record vote shall be made available by the Committee for inspection by the public at reasonable times in the offices of the Committee. Information so available for public inspection shall include a description of the amendment, motion, order or other proposition and the name of each member voting for and each member voting against such amendment, motion, order, or proposition, and the names of those members present but not voting.

(c) AVAILABILITY OF ARCHIVED RECORDS – The records of the Committee at the National Archives and Records Administration shall be made available for public use in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House. The Chairman shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant to clause 3 or clause 4 of Rule VII of the Rules of the House, to withhold a record otherwise available, and the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination on written request of any member of the Committee.

(d) AVAILABILITY OF PUBLICATIONS – Pursuant to clause 2(e)(4) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House, the Committee shall make its publications available in electronic form to the maximum extent feasible.

RULE 9 - TRAVEL

(a) REQUIREMENTS FOR TRAVEL - All requests for travel, funded by the Committee, for Members and staff in connection with activities or subject matters under the general jurisdiction of the Committee, shall be submitted to the Chair for approval or disapproval. All travel requests should be submitted to the Chair at least five working days in advance of the proposed travel. For all travel funded by any other source, notice shall be given to the Chair at least five working days in advance of the proposed travel. All travel requests shall be submitted to the Chair in writing and include the following:

(1) The purpose of the travel.

(2) The dates during which the travel is to occur.

(3) The names of the locations to be visited and the length of time to be spent in each.

(4) The names of members and staff of the Committee for whom the authorization is sought. Travel by the minority shall be submitted to the Chair via the Ranking Member.

(b) TRIP REPORTS - Members and staff shall make a written report to the Chair within 15 working days on all travel approved under this subsection. Reports shall include a description of their itinerary, expenses, and activities, and pertinent information gained as a result of such travel.

When travel involves majority and minority Members or staff, the majority shall submit the report to the Chair on behalf of the majority and minority. The minority may append additional remarks to the report at their discretion.

(c) APPLICABILITY OF HOUSE RULES - Members and staff of the Committee performing authorized travel on official business shall be governed by applicable laws, resolutions, and regulations of the House and of the Committee on House Administration.

RULE 10 – FACILITY NAMING

(a) FACILITY NAMING -- No Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) facility or property shall be named after any individual by the Committee unless:

(1) Such individual is deceased and was:

(A) A veteran who (i) was instrumental in the construction or the operation of the facility to be named, or (ii) was a recipient of the Medal of Honor or, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, otherwise performed military service of an extraordinarily distinguished character;

(B) A Member of the United States House of Representatives or Senate who had a direct association with such facility;

(C) An Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, a Secretary of Veterans Affairs, a Secretary of Defense or of a service branch, or a military or other Federal civilian official of comparable or higher rank; or

(D) An individual who, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, performed outstanding service for veterans.

(2) Each Member of the Congressional delegation representing the State in which the designated facility is located must indicate in writing such Member's support of the

proposal to name such facility after such individual. Evidence of a Member's support in writing may either be in the form of a letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member or co-sponsorship of legislation proposing to name the particular VA facility in question.

(3) The pertinent State department or chapter of each Congressionally chartered veterans' organization having a national membership of at least 500,000 must indicate in writing its support of such proposal.

(b) The above criteria for naming a VA facility may be waived by unanimous consent.