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## **House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct: A Brief History of Its Evolution and Jurisdiction**

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# House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct: A Brief History of Its Evolution and Jurisdiction

## Summary

This report provides a history of the creation and evolution of the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. Also known as the House Ethics Committee and the Committee on Standards, it was first established as a select committee in 1966. It became a standing committee in 1967. Since that time, it has undergone two major reorganizations, first in 1989, and again in 1997.

This 10-member, bipartisan committee is authorized to (1) recommend to the House of Representatives actions that would establish or enforce standards of official conduct; and (2) investigate alleged violations by House Members, officers, and employees of any law, rule, regulation, or standard of official conduct relating to their official duties. The committee may, after several stages in an investigative process, recommend any appropriate sanction, including expulsion of a Member.

The majority of the committee's work, however, is advisory and done by its Office of Advice and Education, which was established to provide information and guidance to House Members, officers, and employees on standards of conduct applicable in their official capacities. This office also conducts periodic educational briefings on standards of conduct rules and laws, and responds to requests for advisory opinions and interpretations of applicable laws, rules, and statutes.

In addition, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has jurisdiction over the House Code of Official Conduct and is assigned responsibility for administering the gift, outside earned income, and financial disclosure requirements established by House rules, the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, and the Ethics Reform Act of 1989.

The first announced disciplinary case considered by the committee was in 1975. Since then, the committee has taken some form of public action on cases involving some 67 other Representatives, including two Speakers of the House and a Majority Leader. The results have ranged from public acknowledgment from the Committee on Standards (or in some cases Members of the House) that it had considered, but dismissed, a complaint against a Member, to the noting of infractions not meriting sanctions, to the issuance of a formal, public "Letter of Reproval," or a "Letter of Admonition" or a public admonishment from the committee, to the recommendation of censure, reprimand, or expulsion by the House. Twenty Members have left the House after court convictions were returned, after Ethics Committee inquiries were initiated, or after charges were brought by the committee, but before House action could be completed. Departure from the House ended their cases because the committee does not have jurisdiction over former Members.

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# House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct: A Brief History of Its Evolution and Jurisdiction

## Introduction

The House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct was established on April 13, 1967, by the 90<sup>th</sup> Congress. It has been designated by the House of Representatives to meet the key elements of its responsibility for self-discipline authorized by Article I, Section 5 of the Constitution, which states in part that “Each House may determine the Rules of its proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behavior, and, with the concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.”

This 10-member, bipartisan committee, often referred to as the House Ethics Committee or House Standards Committee, is authorized to (1) recommend actions that would establish or enforce standards of official conduct; and (2) investigate alleged violations by House Members, officers, and employees of any law, rule, regulation, or standard of official conduct relating to their official duties.<sup>1</sup> After several stages in an investigative process, the committee may recommend to the House any appropriate sanction, including the expulsion of a Member.<sup>2</sup>

The majority of its work, however, is advisory and done by the Office of Advice and Education, which was established within the committee in January 1990 by the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 (P.L. 101-194). This office is responsible for providing information and guidance to House Members, officers, and employees on standards of conduct applicable in their official capacities. The office also conducts periodic

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<sup>1</sup> The members of the committee are appointed by the leaders of their respective parties. The size of the committee was reduced from 14 to 10 on Sept. 18, 1997, with the adoption of H.Res. 168, which revised the committee’s operation and procedures. When first created, the committee had 12 Members. In the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, the committee was not organized until Sept. 1997 because of a comprehensive review of its procedures by special task force. On Jan. 7, 1997, a Select Committee on Ethics was established to complete an investigation begun by the committee created by the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress. Most of the committee members from the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress were appointed to the new select committee, which was to cease to exist upon the final disposition of its investigation or by Jan. 21, 1997. See Rep. Richard, Arme y, “Rules of the House,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 143, Jan. 7, 1997, p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> See “Dear Colleague” letter posted on the committee website at [[http://www.house.gov/ethics/m\\_Committee\\_work\\_DC\\_letter\\_3-04.htm](http://www.house.gov/ethics/m_Committee_work_DC_letter_3-04.htm)], visited Feb. 3, 2005, for a discussion of the committee’s responsibilities. This letter can also be found at U.S. Congress, Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *Summary of Activities One Hundred Eighth Congress*, 108<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., H.Rept. 108-806 (Washington: GPO, 2005), pp. 56-60.

educational briefings on relevant standards of conduct and responds to requests for advisory opinions and interpretations of applicable laws, rules, and statutes.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, the committee has jurisdiction over the House Code of Official Conduct and is assigned responsibility for administering the gift, outside earned income, and financial disclosure requirements established by House rules, the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-521), and the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 (P.L. 101-194).<sup>4</sup>

## Recent Developments

During the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, an impasse over procedural matters, including the hiring of staff, delayed the committee's organization.<sup>5</sup> In November 2005, the committee hired a Chief Counsel/Staff Director. On March 30, 2006, it voted to move forward with an investigation that began in the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress. On May 17, 2006, the committee announced the beginning of three new investigations.<sup>6</sup>

Also in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, particularly in connection with lobbying, travel, and gift reform legislation, there have been discussions and several proposals affecting the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. On June 7, 2006, the committee held an open hearing on changes in the House travel rules.<sup>7</sup> Other recent proposals address the committee's rules of procedure and suggest replacing the

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<sup>3</sup> Useful information about the committee's activities and advisory opinions can be found on its website at [<http://www.house.gov/ethics>].

<sup>4</sup> The committee periodically publishes a comprehensive *Ethics Manual* and issues supplementary memoranda to assist Members, officers, and employees in interpreting the various ethics laws, rules, and regulations. The appendices in this *Manual* contain the text of selected House rules covering the committee's jurisdiction and procedure as well as the rules, regulations, and statutes relating to standards of conduct applicable to House Members, officers, and employees. The most recent manual was published in 1992, U.S. Congress, House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *Ethics Manual for Members, Officers, and Employees of the U.S. House of Representatives*, 102<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess. (Washington: GPO, 1992), 493p. For the most recent information on House rules of conduct, visit the Standard Committee's website at [<http://www.house.gov/ethics>].

<sup>5</sup> Susan Ferrechio, "Ethics Dispute Ends: Panel Ready to Hire Staff and Prepare for Investigations," *CQ Today*, July 1, 2005, p. 3; John Bresnahan and Ben Persing, "Ethics Panel Finally Ready to Hire Staff," *Roll Call*, July 5, 2005, pp. 1, 13; John Bresnahan, "Ethics Staffing Slow As Panel's Caseload Mounts," *Roll Call*, Sept. 7, 2005, p. 3; and Ben Pershing, "Ethics Quickly Hits Deadlock," *Roll Call*, Apr. 3, 2006, pp. 1, 18.

<sup>6</sup> See the announcement from the chairman and ranking member posted on the committee's website at [[http://www.house.gov/ethics/Link\\_Other\\_Publications.html](http://www.house.gov/ethics/Link_Other_Publications.html)], visited May 30, 2006; and Jonathan Weisman, "Ethics Panel Starts 3 Probes," *Washington Post*, May 18, 2006, pp. A1, A11.

<sup>7</sup> Elana Schor, "The House Ethics Committee Solicits Input in Rare Hearing," *The Hill*, June 8, 2006, p. 4.

committee with an ethics commission, office of public integrity, or other independent entity that could include former Members of Congress and judges.<sup>8</sup>

## Evolution and Background

Prior to the creation of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and the first House Code of Official Conduct and financial disclosure rule in the 90<sup>th</sup> Congress (1967-1969), there was no uniform or consistent mechanism for congressional self-discipline.<sup>9</sup> Some allegations of misconduct were investigated by the House Administration Committee, or, more often, in an ad hoc manner by special or select committees. Election disputes and charges of election fraud were also investigated by special ad hoc committees or other committee and subcommittees.<sup>10</sup> Other allegations were considered by the House without prior committee action. The creation of the Ethics Committee responded to a need for systematizing House responses to questions of official misconduct and Members' need for a reliable, accessible source of information about potential conflicts of interest and other ethical dilemmas that are inherent to serving in Congress.

Ethics committees and standards of conduct for the House as well as the Senate had been suggested since at least the mid-1950s, but it was not until a decade later that these proposals gained sufficient support for enactment.

During hearings before the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress in 1965, considerable testimony was presented on the ethical conduct of Members; and the need for House and Senate codes of conduct, financial disclosure regulations, and a House Ethics Committee (the Senate had created one in 1964). In its final report, the Joint Committee called for the creation of a Committee on Standards and Conduct in the House.<sup>11</sup>

In October 1966, shortly after the Joint Committee issued its report, and following publicized allegations of misconduct by former House Education and

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<sup>8</sup> See as examples: S. 2349, S. 2259, H.R. 4799, H.R. 4948, and H.R. 4988. See also CRS Report RS22034, *House Ethics Rules Changes in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress*, by Mildred Amer.

<sup>9</sup> In 1958, Congress adopted the Code of Ethics for Government Service, which articulated broad ethical guidelines for all government officers and employees, including Members of Congress and congressional staff. The Code was adopted as a concurrent resolution (H.Con.Res. 175, July 11, 1958; 72 Stat., Part 2, § B12), rather than a statute. Through the years, however, its impact has been strengthened by the House and Senate Ethics Committees, which have included it as a standard for discipline in several cases.

<sup>10</sup> The Committee on House Administration still investigates contested and other congressional election cases, as did its predecessor.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, *Organization of Congress*, final report pursuant to S.Res. 2, 89<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., S.Rept. 89-1414 (Washington: GPO, 1966), p. 48.

Labor Committee Chairman Adam Clayton Powell, the House created the Select Committee on Standards and Conduct (H.Res. 1013).<sup>12</sup>

As reported, H.Res. 1013 granted the select committee powers similar to those ultimately given the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.<sup>13</sup> The resolution was amended on the floor, however, and the select committee's powers were limited to (1) recommending additional House rules or regulations necessary to insure proper standards of conduct by House Members, officers, and employees; and (2) reporting violations of law, by majority vote, to the proper federal and state authorities. Like the current committee, the select committee's membership was to be bipartisan.

Because of the brevity of the select committee's existence (October 1966 to January 1967), the members of the committee concluded that they could not "prudently recommend changes in existing provisions of law or recommend new ones at this time."<sup>14</sup> Instead, they recommended that (1) the Committee be continued as a select committee in the 90<sup>th</sup> Congress; (2) legislation introduced in the 90<sup>th</sup> Congress on standards and conduct should be referred to the select committee; and (3) Members of the House should be asked for suggested changes in existing statutes. Included in the report was a draft resolution for continuation of the select committee.

During the first session of the 90<sup>th</sup> Congress, numerous resolutions were introduced to provide for the establishment of a Select Committee on Standards and Conduct. The House Rules Committee held hearings on these proposals early in 1967, and subsequently reported H.Res. 418, which provided for the creation of a standing committee to be known as the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.<sup>15</sup>

H.Res. 418, which was adopted on April 13, 1967, established a 12-member, bipartisan Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.<sup>16</sup> Its sole function was to recommend changes in laws, rules, and regulations that were needed to establish and enforce House standards of official conduct. The first members of the committee were appointed shortly thereafter.

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<sup>12</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 112, Oct. 19, 1966, pp. 27713-27730.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Congress, House Committee on Rules, *Creating a Select Committee on Standards and Conduct*, report to accompany H.Res. 1013, 89<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., H.Rept. 89-2012 (Washington: GPO, 1966), 1p.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Congress, House Select Committee on Standards and Conduct, *Report Under the Authority of H.Res. 1013*, 89<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., H.Rept. 89-2338 (Washington: GPO, 1966), 10p.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Congress, House Committee on Rules, *Establishment of a Standing Committee to be Known as the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, and for Other Purposes*, report to accompany H.Res. 418, 90<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., H.Rept. 90-178 (Washington: GPO, 1967), 1p.

<sup>16</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 113, April 13, 1967, pp. 9426-9448.

The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct held its first hearings in the summer of 1967.<sup>17</sup> Subsequently, it issued a report recommending

- continuation of the committee as a select committee;
- changes in the committee's jurisdiction and powers;
- creation of a Code of Official Conduct and financial disclosure rules for Members, officers, and employees of the House;
- establishment of standardized controls by the House Administration Committee over committees using counterpart funds (foreign currencies held by U.S. embassies that can only be spent in the country of origin);
- a prompt review of the Federal Corrupt Practices Act (reporting of campaign expenditures) by the House; and
- compliance by House candidates with applicable provisions of the Code of Official Conduct.<sup>18</sup>

Pursuant to this report, the House Rules Committee reported H.Res. 1099, which contained many of these recommendations.<sup>19</sup> That resolution was amended and adopted by the House on April 3, 1968.<sup>20</sup> It provided for (1) continuation of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct as a permanent standing House committee; (2) enumeration of the committee's jurisdiction and powers; (3) the first House Code of Official Conduct (Rule XLIII); and (4) the first financial disclosure requirements for Members, officers, and designated employees (Rule XLIV).<sup>21</sup>

## Jurisdiction

H.Res. 1099 authorized the committee to (1) recommend to the House legislative or administrative actions deemed necessary for establishing or enforcing standards of conduct; (2) investigate allegations of violations of the Code of Official Conduct

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<sup>17</sup> U.S. Congress, House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *Standards of Official Conduct*, hearings, 90<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., Aug. 16-17, 23-24, 1967, and Sept. 14, 21, 27, 1967 (Washington: GPO, 1967), 310p.

<sup>18</sup> U.S. Congress, House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *Code of Conduct for Members and Employees of the House*, report under the authority of H.Res. 418, 90<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., H.Rept. 90-1176 (Washington: GPO, 1968), 45p.

<sup>19</sup> U.S. Congress, House Committee on Rules, *Amending H.Res. 418, 90<sup>th</sup> Congress, to Continue the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct as a Permanent Standing Committee of the House of Representatives, and for Other Purposes*, report to accompany H.Res. 1099, 90<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., H.Rept. 90-1248 (Washington: GPO, 1968), 1p.

<sup>20</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 114, Apr. 3, 1968, pp. 8776-8812.

<sup>21</sup> Only a portion of the disclosures required by this two-part rule was to be available to the public.



or any law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to Members, officers, and employees in the performance of official duties, and after notice and a hearing, recommend to the House appropriate action; (3) report to appropriate state and federal authorities, subject to House approval, evidence of violations of law by Members, officers, and employees in the performance of official duties;<sup>22</sup> and (4) issue and publish advisory opinions for the guidance of Members, officers, and employees.

The committee was also given jurisdiction over measures relating to the House Code of Official Conduct and financial disclosure. In addition, H.Res. 1099 imposed several limitations on the Ethics Committee. These limits, except where noted, are still in effect in House Rule XI, clause 3(a). They stipulate that

- there must be an affirmative vote of seven out of 12 committee members for the issuance of any report, resolution, recommendation, or advisory opinion relating to the official conduct of a Member, officer, or employee or the investigation of such conduct;<sup>23</sup>
- investigations, other than those initiated by the committee, can be undertaken only upon receipt of a complaint, in writing and under oath, from a Member of the House, or an individual not a Member if the committee finds that such complaint has been submitted by the individual to no fewer than three Members who have refused in writing to transmit the complaint to the committee;<sup>24</sup>
- investigations of alleged violations of any law, rule, etc., that was not in effect at the time of the alleged violation are prohibited;<sup>25</sup> and

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<sup>22</sup> With the adoption of H.Res. 168 (105<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess.) on Sept. 18, 1997, the House voted to permit an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the full Standards Committee or the approval of the House for the referral of evidence of violations of law to the appropriate law enforcement authorities. Previously, this referral authority had been granted only to the Select Committee on Ethics for one year (1966) and later to only the full House, although reformers for many years had advocated giving it back to the committee.

<sup>23</sup> This seven Member requirement was replaced in 1974 with “an affirmative vote by a majority of the members of the committee” to accommodate any subsequent changes in the committee’s size. In 1991, pursuant to the Ethics Reform Act of 1989, the membership was increased to 14. However, in 1997, with the adoption of the recommendation of the Ethics Reform Task Force (H.Res. 168), the membership was reduced to 10.

<sup>24</sup> H.Res. 168, adopted Sept. 18, 1997, changed the requirements for the filing of complaints by non-Members to require that such complaints be transmitted by a Member who “certifies in writing to the committee that he or she believes the information is submitted in good faith and warrants the review and consideration of the Committee.”

<sup>25</sup> This rule was expanded by the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 to include a statute of limitations of three previous Congresses for investigations of alleged violations.

- members of the committee are not eligible to participate in any committee proceeding relating to their official conduct.<sup>26</sup>

H.Res. 1099 also empowered the committee to hold hearings, receive testimony, and issue subpoenas in the course of conducting an investigation.

## Changes in Jurisdiction

On July 8, 1970, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct was given jurisdiction over lobbying activities as well as those involving the raising, reporting, and use of campaign funds.<sup>27</sup> Subsequently, pursuant to the adoption of the House rules for the 94<sup>th</sup> Congress (1975-1977), jurisdiction over campaign contributions was transferred to the House Administration Committee.<sup>28</sup> With the adoption of the House rules for the 95<sup>th</sup> Congress (1977-1979), jurisdiction<sup>29</sup> over lobbying was transferred to the House Judiciary Committee, and its jurisdiction over measures relating to financial disclosure was transferred to the House Rules Committee.<sup>30</sup>

On March 2, 1977, in the 95<sup>th</sup> Congress, the House adopted H.Res. 287, which contained several amendments and additions to the House rules of conduct.<sup>31</sup> Included were the first House public financial disclosure rule and limits on outside earned income and unofficial office accounts as well as limitations on gifts, the franking privilege, and foreign travel. Pursuant to H.Res. 287, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct assumed jurisdiction over these additional rules of conduct and was authorized to maintain the public financial disclosure reports filed by Members, officers, and designated employees.<sup>32</sup> In addition, a Select Committee on Ethics, chaired by Representative Richardson Preyer (D-NC), was established to assist in the implementation of the new rules.

On July 14, 1977, a resolution establishing the House Intelligence Committee authorized the Committee on Standards to investigate any unauthorized disclosure

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<sup>26</sup> Provisions were made for the Speaker to replace the Member for the duration of any such case. In 1977, the House rules were amended to provide also a mechanism for a committee member to disqualify himself/herself from participating in an investigation in which he/she states in writing and under oath that he/she cannot render an impartial decision.

<sup>27</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 116, July 8, 1970, pp. 23136-23141.

<sup>28</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 121, Jan. 14, 1975, p. 20.

<sup>29</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 123, Mar. 9, 1977, pp. 6811-6817.

<sup>30</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 123, Jan. 4, 1977, p. 53. Note, the committee still has substantive jurisdiction over financial disclosure pursuant to the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (P.L. 95-521).

<sup>31</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 123, Mar. 2, 1977, pp. 5885-5953.

<sup>32</sup> In 1989, the office of the Clerk of the House became the repository for House public financial disclosure reports.

of intelligence or intelligence-related information by a House Member, officer, or employee and report to the House on any substantiated allegations.<sup>33</sup>

In August 1977, with the enactment of P.L. 95-105, which amended the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act of 1966, the committee was designated as the “employing agency” for the House and authorized to issue regulations governing the acceptance by House Members and personnel of gifts, trips, and decorations from foreign governments.

In 1978, government-wide public financial disclosure requirements were mandated with the enactment of the Ethics in Government Act (P.L. 95-521). Subsequently, with the adoption of the House rules for the 96<sup>th</sup> Congress (1979-1981), the provisions of the House financial disclosure rule were replaced by those of the Ethics Act and incorporated into House rules.<sup>34</sup> This act delegated to the Committee on Standards review, interpretation, and compliance responsibilities for the public financial disclosure reports that henceforth were to be filed with the Clerk of the House.

Subsequently, the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 (P.L. 101-194), which amended the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, included a variety of ethics and pay reforms for the three branches of government that further expanded the responsibilities of the House Committee on Standards.<sup>35</sup> These included enforcement of the act’s ban on honoraria, limits on outside earned income, and restrictions on the acceptance of gifts. The committee was also given the responsibility for consideration of any requests for a written waiver of the limits imposed by the House gift ban rule.

On November 16, 1995, the House passed H.Res. 250 and adopted a new rule banning most gifts to Members, officers, and employees.<sup>36</sup> On the opening day of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, the House amended its gift rule (Rule XXVI) to conform to the Senate gift rule which has been in effect since 1996.<sup>37</sup> The amended rule allows Members, officers, and employees of the House to accept any gift of \$50 or less in a calendar year or a gift with a cumulative value of \$100 from any one source in a calendar year. Gifts of \$10 or less do not count towards the \$100 annual limit.

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<sup>33</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 123, July 14, 1977, pp. 22932-22949.

<sup>34</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 125, Jan. 15, 1979, p. 9.

<sup>35</sup> The Ethics Reform Act, which passed the House on November 16, 1989, and was signed into law (P.L. 101-194) on November, 30, 1989, also mandated certain changes in the committee’s procedures, *infra*. See U.S. Congress, House, *Report of the Bipartisan Task Force on Ethics on H.R. 3360*, committee print, 101<sup>st</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (Washington: GPO, 1989), pp. 9-11, 16-21. See also *Congressional Record*, vol. 135, Nov. 16, 1989, pp. 29469-29509.

<sup>36</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 141, Nov. 16, 1995, pp. 33419-33441.

<sup>37</sup> Rep. James Hansen, “House Gift Rule Amendment,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, Jan. 6, 1999, pp. 237-240.

All provisions of the gift rule are interpreted and enforced by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, which is authorized to issue guidance on any matter contained in the rule.

## Changes in Procedures

**2005 Changes.** On January 4, 2005, when the House adopted H.Res. 5, its rules for the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, it included several provisions affecting the committee's procedures in handling allegations against a House Member, officer, or employee as well as procedures to be followed when the conduct of Member, officer, or employee might be referenced in the course of an investigation against someone else.<sup>38</sup> Subsequently, on April 27, 2005, the changes were dropped when the House deleted all amendments to the committee's procedures that had been adopted earlier in the year.<sup>39</sup>

Other major changes in the composition and rules of procedure of the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct occurred in 1989 and 1997.<sup>40</sup>

**1997 Changes.** On September 18, 1997, after some seven months of study, the House adopted, with amendments, the recommendations of the Ethics Reform Task Force, which had been established in February 1997.<sup>41</sup> The 10-member task force was mandated to review the existing House ethics process and recommend reforms of that process.<sup>42</sup> It was chaired by Representatives Bob Livingston (R-LA) and Ben Cardin (D-MD). At the same time that the House approved the establishment of the task force on February 12, it also approved a 65-day moratorium on the filing of new ethics complaints to enable the Task Force to conduct its work

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<sup>38</sup> "Rules of the House," *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 151, Jan. 4, 2005, pp. H7-H31.

<sup>39</sup> "Amending the Rules of the House," *Congressional Record*, daily edition, vol. 151, Apr. 27, 2005, pp. H2616-H2626. See also CRS Report RS22034, *House Ethics Rules Changes in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress*, by Mildred Amer.

<sup>40</sup> During the 103<sup>rd</sup> Congress, the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress held two hearings on reform of the congressional ethics process. The most discussed topics included streamlining the ethics process and including non-Members as part of that process. No action, however, was taken on any of the committee's recommendations relating to the ethics process. See U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, *Organization of the Congress*, Final Report of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., S.Rept. 103-215, vol. II (Washington: GPO, 1993), pp. 123-129; and U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, *Organization of Congress*, Final Report of the House Members of the Joint Committee on the Organization of Congress, 103<sup>rd</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess., H.Rept. 103-413, vol. I (Washington: GPO, 1993), pp. 3-4.

<sup>41</sup> "Implementing the Recommendations of Bipartisan House Ethics Task Force," *Congressional Record*, vol. 143, Sept. 18, 1997, pp. 19302-19340.

<sup>42</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 143, Feb. 12, 1997, pp. 2058-2059.

“in a climate free from specific questions of ethical propriety.”<sup>43</sup> That moratorium was extended several times prior to adoption of the task force’s recommendations.

During the course of its deliberations, the task force conducted several days of hearings, the majority of which were held in closed session. Testimony was received from experts in the ethics process, attorneys who had represented respondents before the House Ethics Committee, and Members of the House, some of whom had served on the Ethics Committee.

The major changes in the ethics process adopted by the House on September 18, 1997, included

- changing the way non-Members file complaints with the committee by requiring them to have a Member of the House certify in writing that the information is submitted in good faith and warrants consideration by the committee;<sup>44</sup>
- decreasing the size of the committee from 14 members to 10;
- establishing a 20-person pool of Members (10 from each party) to supplement the work of the Ethics Committee as potential appointees to investigative subcommittees that might be established by the committee;<sup>45</sup>
- requiring the chairman and ranking member of the committee to determine within 14 calendar days or five legislative days, whichever ever comes first, if the information offered as a complaint meets the committee’s requirements;<sup>46</sup>
- allowing an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the committee or approval of the full House to refer evidence of law violations disclosed in a committee investigation to the appropriate state or federal law enforcement authorities;<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 143, Feb. 12, 1997, p. 2059.

<sup>44</sup> This procedure replaces the requirement that non-Members could file complaints with the Ethics Committee only after they had submitted allegations to at least three House Members who had refused in writing to transmit the complaint to the committee.

<sup>45</sup> The first pool of 20 Members selected to serve on investigative committees of the Standards Committee was appointed on Nov. 13, 1997. See The Speaker Pro Tempore [Rep. Ray La Hood], “List of Republican and Democratic Members Selected to Serve As ‘Pool’ For Purposed Relating To The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct,” *Congressional Record*, vol. 143, Nov. 13, 1997, p. 26569. The House leadership has appointed a 20-person pool of Members in each Congress since then.

<sup>46</sup> Previously, there was no specific time limit for this determination.

<sup>47</sup> With the exception of a brief period in 1966, previously only a vote by the full House permitted referrals of possible violations of law to the appropriate authorities.

- providing for a nonpartisan, professional Ethics Committee staff;
- allowing the ranking member to have an equal opportunity to place matters on the committee's agenda; and
- decreasing the maximum service on the committee from six years to four years during any three successive Congresses and requiring at least four members to be rotated off the committee at the end of each Congress.<sup>48</sup>

These changes took effect in the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress. Moreover, after the members of the committee were appointed for the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress in September 1997, they voted to carry over three pending cases from the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress and apply the new procedures to each of those cases.

**1989 Changes.** The Ethics Reform Act of 1989 (P.L. 101-194) contained provisions affecting the three branches of government and also mandated changes in the House Ethics Committee.<sup>49</sup> It established the Office of Advice and Education, effective January 1, 1990. This office is part of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, but separate from its enforcement functions. Its staff provides guidance and recommendations to Members, officers, and employees of the House on standards of conduct applicable to their official duties.

Other changes implemented by the 1989 act that are still applicable include

- “bifurcation” (separation) within the committee of its investigative and adjudicative functions;<sup>50</sup>
- a requirement that the committee report to the House on any case it has voted to investigate and that any Letter of Reprimand or other committee administrative action may be issued only as part of a final report to the House;
- a statute of limitation prohibiting the committee from initiating or undertaking an investigation of alleged violations occurring prior to the third previous Congress unless they are related to a continuous course of conduct in recent years;

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<sup>48</sup> When the House adopted its rules for the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress (1999-2001), it changed the committee service rule and also voted to eliminate the rule requiring four members of the Standards Committee to rotate off the committee every Congress. This action returned the committee's service requirement to what it had been after the adoption of the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 (no more than three Congresses in any period of five successive Congresses). See *Congressional Record*, vol. 145, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 54.

<sup>49</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 135, Nov. 16, 1989, pp. 29469-29509.

<sup>50</sup> Bifurcation has thus far been implemented in seven committee investigations.

- a guarantee that any Member who is the respondent in any Ethics Committee investigation may be accompanied by one counsel on the House floor during consideration of his/her case; and
- a time limit of committee service of no more than three out of any five consecutive Congresses.

The act also increased the size of the committee's membership from 12 to 14. That change, however, was superceded by the 1997 reforms that reduced the size of the committee from 14 to 10 members.

**Other Jurisdictional Changes.** Changes in the committee's procedures over the last 30 years that remain in effect include the following: (1) on January 3, 1975, at the commencement of the 94<sup>th</sup> Congress, pursuant to the adoption of the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974, the committee rules were changed to permit a majority vote (instead of 10 of the then-12 members) to approve committee reports, recommendations, advisory opinions, and investigations;<sup>51</sup> (2) on January 4, 1977, the House adopted a rule permitting a member of the committee to disqualify himself/herself from participating in an investigation upon submission of an affidavit of disqualification in writing and under oath;<sup>52</sup> and (3) on January 15, 1979, House rules were amended to prohibit information, testimony, and the contents of a complaint or note of its filing from being publicly disclosed unless specifically authorized by the full committee.<sup>53</sup>

## Disciplinary Cases<sup>54</sup>

The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has operated cautiously through the years in exercising its disciplinary authority and responsibilities. For example, the committee is careful not to discuss publicly allegations received and those under review before determining their merit or deciding to begin a preliminary inquiry. Committee rules prohibit the chairman and ranking member from making public statements about matters before the Ethics Committee unless authorized to do so by the committee, and prohibit members and staff from disclosing any evidence relating to an ongoing investigation unless authorized by the committee. While preserving the authority of the full committee, the ethics reforms adopted September 18, 1997, grant discretion, when appropriate, to the chairman and ranking member to make public statements about matters before the committee.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 120, Oct. 8, 1974, p. 34470.

<sup>52</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 123, Jan. 4, 1977, p. 53.

<sup>53</sup> *Congressional Record*, vol. 125, Jan. 15, 1979, p. 8.

<sup>54</sup> Visit [[http://www.house.gov/ethics/Historical\\_Chart\\_Final\\_Version.htm](http://www.house.gov/ethics/Historical_Chart_Final_Version.htm)], for a historical summary of cases provided by the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

<sup>55</sup> For example, it may be appropriate to respond to unauthorized press accounts of investigations or to respond to misinformation. See U.S. Congress, House Ethics Reform Task Force, *Report of the Ethics Reform Task Force on H.Res. 168*, committee print, 105<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> sess. (Washington: GPO, 1977), pp. 11-12.

As granted by House Rules, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has several options at the conclusion of any formal investigation. It may recommend no further House action, issue a “Letter of Reproval”<sup>56</sup> or a “Letter of Admonition”<sup>57</sup> without recommending action by the full House, or recommend one or more sanctions if it determines a rules violation has occurred. The sanctions that may be recommended include expulsion, censure, reprimand or admonishment;<sup>58</sup> a fine, denial or limitation of any right, privilege, or immunity of the Member that is permitted under the Constitution; or any other sanction deemed appropriate by the Ethics Committee.<sup>59</sup> Typically, the House has supported the committee’s recommendations, although it is not required to do so. In two instances, the House has changed a reprimand to a censure and in once instance, a censure to a reprimand.

Since its inception, published accounts have indicated that the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has taken some form of action on cases involving some 68 Representatives, including two Speakers of the House and a Majority Leader<sup>60</sup> Its actions have ranged from public acknowledgment that it is considering

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<sup>56</sup> A public Letter of Reproval is a sanction created by the committee and first used in 1987. It is an administrative action authorized under the rules of the House and issued as part of a public report from the committee after a formal investigation. It is an expression by the committee that the conduct of a Member, officer, or employee was improper but that no further action is required by the House. Committee rules implemented following the adoption of the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 mandate that any Letter of Reproval or other committee administrative action may only be issued as a final report to the House. The committee has issued five public “Letters of Reproval.”

<sup>57</sup> The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has resolved several complaints by means of a letter to a respondent without a formal investigation. According to the committee, “In the past such letters have not been formally termed ‘letters of admonition,’ but this term accurately describes the substance of these letters.” Unlike a Letter of Reproval, a Letter of Admonishment is not authorized under House rules. Such a letter was sent to a Member of the House in 2004. See [[http://www.house.gov/ethics/Delay\\_memo.htm](http://www.house.gov/ethics/Delay_memo.htm)], p. 2, and U.S. Congress, Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *Summary of Activities One Hundred Eighth Congress*, 108<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., pp. 62-68.

<sup>58</sup> The first admonishments from Committee on Standards of Official Conduct came in 2004 at the conclusion of a formal investigation of allegation related to voting on the Medicare, Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003. In its report, which did not require full House action, the investigative subcommittee noted that “It is the intention of this investigative subcommittee that publication of this report will serve as a public admonishment of ... [the three Members under investigation] regarding their conduct in this matter.” See U.S. Congress, Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *Investigation of Certain Allegations Related to Voting on the Medicare, Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003*, report from the Investigative Subcommittee, 108<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., H.Rept. 108-722 (Washington: GPO, 2004), p. 44.

<sup>59</sup> U.S. Congress, House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *Ethics Manual*, p. 11. See also CRS Report RL31382, *Expulsion, Censure, Reprimand, and Fine: Legislative Discipline in the House of Representatives*, by Jack Maskell.

<sup>60</sup> This number is an approximation based on announcements by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct or House Members who have been the subject of any formal or informal inquiry. See U.S. Congress, Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, *Summary of* (continued...)



the merits of a complaint against a Member, to the dismissal of complaint, to the recommendation of censure or expulsion of a Member to the other punishments discussed above.<sup>61</sup> Four Members of the House have been censured, and two expelled following investigations by the committee.

The first announced disciplinary case considered by the committee was in 1975. After completing its inquiry on this matter in 1976, the committee recommended and the House concurred in the reprimand of a Member for financial wrongdoing. This was the first reprimand of a Member of the House, a sanction now viewed as less severe than a censure. Adoption by the House of the committee's report recommending a reprimand constitutes that punishment, while the censure of a Member involves the Speaker reading the committee's finding and censuring the Member, who is required to stand in the well of the House. Since 1976, seven other Members have been reprimanded.

The committee has also noted infractions not meriting sanctions for 10 Members. Twenty Members of the House have left after court convictions, after inquiries were initiated by the committee, or after charges were brought by the committee but before House action could be completed. In each case, the Members' departure has ended their cases because the Ethics Committee does not have jurisdiction over former Members.

In addition, in the 98<sup>th</sup> Congress, the committee conducted an investigation of alleged improper alterations of House documents. In the 99<sup>th</sup> Congress, it conducted an investigation of allegations of improper political solicitations. No Members of the House were implicated in these cases.

In the 102<sup>nd</sup> Congress, the Ethics Committee considered allegations of impropriety involving the "bank" of the House of Representatives and found 325 current/former Members had overdrafts during the 39-month period of review, but no further action was taken by the House in the "bank" matter. Also in the 102<sup>nd</sup> Congress, on August 11, 1992, the committee formed a task force to review evidence to determine the necessity of an investigation of the operations of the House post office. The committee deferred any action in the post office matter at the request of the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice has prosecuted some Members and former Members of the House as a result of its investigations into the House "bank" and post office.

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<sup>60</sup> (...continued)

*Activities One Hundred Eighth Congress*, 108<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess. (Washington: GPO, 2004) pp. 22, 57.

<sup>61</sup> See CRS Report RL30764, *History of Congressional Ethics Enforcement*, by Mildred Amer.

**Table 1. Congressional Committee Assignments  
House Standards of Official Conduct Committee**

Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
<b>90<sup>th</sup> Congress (1967-1969)</b>					
Price, C. Melvin	D	IL	24 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Teague, Olin E.	D	TX	6 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Evins, Joseph L.	D	TN	4 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Abbitt, Watkins M.	D	VA	4 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Aspinall, Wayne N.	D	CO	4 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Kelly, Edna F.	D	NY	12 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Halleck, Charles A.	R	IN	2 <sup>nd</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Arends, Leslie C.	R	IL	17 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Betts, Jackson E.	R	OH	8 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Stafford, Robert T.	R	VT	AL <sup>a</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Quillen, James H.	R	TN	1 <sup>st</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
Williams, Lawrence G.	R	PA	7 <sup>th</sup>	May 1, 1967	January 2, 1969
<b>91<sup>st</sup> Congress (1969-1971)</b>					
Price, C. Melvin	D	IL	24 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Teague, Olin E.	D	TX	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Abbitt, Watkins M.	D	VA	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Aspinall, Wayne N.	D	CO	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Hebert, F. Edward	D	LA	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Holifield, Chet	D	CA	19 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Arends, Leslie C.	R	IL	17 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	July 24, 1969
Betts, Jackson E.	R	OH	8 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Stafford, Robert T.	R	VT	AL <sup>a</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Quillen, James H.	R	TN	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Williams, Lawrence G.	R	PA	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Hutchinson, Edward	R	MI	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 29, 1969	January 2, 1971
Reid, Charlotte T.	R	IL	15 <sup>th</sup>	October 7, 1969	January 2, 1971

Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
<b>92<sup>nd</sup> Congress (1971-1973)</b>					
Price, C. Melvin	D	IL	24 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Teague, Olin E.	D	TX	6 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Abbitt, Watkins M.	D	VA	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Aspinall, Wayne N.	D	CO	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Hebert, F. Edward	D	LA	1 <sup>st</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Holifield, Chet	D	CA	19 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Betts, Jackson E.	R	OH	8 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Stafford, Robert T.	R	VT	AL <sup>a</sup>	February 4, 1971	September 16, 1971
Quillen, James H.	R	TN	1 <sup>st</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Williams, Lawrence G.	R	PA	7 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Hutchinson, Edward	R	MI	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	January 2, 1973
Reid, Charlotte T.	R	IL	15 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1971	October 7, 1971
King, Carleton J.	R	NY	30 <sup>th</sup>	October 27, 1971	January 2, 1973
Spence, Floyd D.	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	October 27, 1971	January 2, 1973
<b>93<sup>rd</sup> Congress (1973-1975)</b>					
Price, C. Melvin	D	IL	23 <sup>rd</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
Teague, Olin E.	D	TX	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
Hebert, F. Edward	D	LA	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
Holifield, Chet	D	CA	19 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1973	December 31, 1974
Flynt, John James Jr.	D	GA	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
Foley, Thomas S.	D	WA	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
Quillen, James H.	R	TN	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
Williams, Lawrence G.	R	PA	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
Hutchinson, Edward	R	MI	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
King, Carleton J.	R	NY	29 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1973	December 31, 1974
Spence, Floyd D.	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975
Hunt, John E.	R	NJ	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 24, 1973	January 2, 1975

Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
<b>94<sup>th</sup> Congress (1975-1977)</b>					
Price, C. Melvin	D	IL	23 <sup>rd</sup>	January 20, 1975	January 2, 1977
Teague, Olin E.	D	TX	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1975	January 2, 1977
Hebert, F. Edward	D	LA	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 20, 1975	January 2, 1977
Flynt, John James Jr.	D	GA	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1975	January 2, 1977
Foley, Thomas S.	D	WA	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1975	January 2, 1977
Bennett, Charles E.	D	FL	3 <sup>rd</sup>	January 20, 1975	January 2, 1977
Spence, Floyd D.	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 28, 1975	January 2, 1977
Quillen, James H.	R	TN	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 28, 1975	January 2, 1977
Hutchinson, Edward	R	MI	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 28, 1975	January 2, 1977
Quie, Albert H.	R	MN	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 28, 1975	January 2, 1977
Mitchell, Donald J.	R	NY	31 <sup>st</sup>	January 28, 1975	January 2, 1977
Cochran, Thad	R	MS	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 28, 1975	January 2, 1977
<b>95<sup>th</sup> Congress (1977-1979)</b>					
Flynt, John James Jr.	D	GA	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Teague, Olin E.	D	TX	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1977	December 31, 1978
Bennett, Charles E	D	FL	3 <sup>rd</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Hamilton, Lee H.	D	IN	9 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Preyer, L. Richardson	D	NC	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Flowers, Walter	D	AL	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Spence, Floyd D.	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Quillen, James H.	R	TN	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Quie, Albert H.	R	MN	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Cochran, Thad	R	MS	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1977	December 26, 1978
Fenwick, Millicent H.	R	NJ	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1977	January 2, 1979
Caputo, Bruce F.	R	NY	23 <sup>rd</sup>	January 26, 1977	January 2, 1979

Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
<b>96<sup>th</sup> Congress (1979-1981)</b>					
Bennett, Charles E.	D	FL	3 <sup>rd</sup>	January 31, 1979	January 2, 1981
Hamilton, Lee H.	D	IN	9 <sup>th</sup>	January 31, 1979	January 2, 1981
Preyer, L. Richardson	D	NC	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 31, 1979	January 2, 1981
Slack, John M. Jr.	D	WV	3 <sup>rd</sup>	January 31, 1979	March 17, 1980
Murphy, Morgan F.	D	IL	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 31, 1979	December 20, 1979
Murtha, John P. Jr.	D	PA	12 <sup>th</sup>	January 31, 1979	January 2, 1981
Spence, Floyd D.	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 24, 1979	January 2, 1981
Hollenbeck, Harold C.	R	NJ	9 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1979	January 2, 1981
Livingston, Robert L.	R	LA	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 24, 1979	January 2, 1981
Thomas, William M.	R	CA	18 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1979	January 2, 1981
Sensenbrenner, F. Jas Jr.	R	WI	9 <sup>th</sup>	January 24, 1979	January 2, 1981
Cheney, Richard B.	R	WY	AL <sup>a</sup>	January 31, 1979	January 2, 1981
Stokes, Louis.	D	OH	21 <sup>st</sup>	February 6, 1980	January 2, 1981
Rahall, Nick J. II	D	WV	4 <sup>th</sup>	March 26, 1980	January 2, 1981
<b>97<sup>th</sup> Congress (1981-1983)</b>					
Stokes, Louis	D	OH	21 <sup>st</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Rahall, Nick J. II	D	WV	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Alexander, William V. Jr.	D	AR	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Wilson, Charles	D	TX	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Holland, Kenneth L.	D	SC	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Bailey, Donald A.	D	PA	21 <sup>st</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Spence, Floyd	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Conable, Barber B. Jr.	R	NY	35 <sup>th</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Myers, John T.	R	IN	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Forsythe, Edwin B.	R	NJ	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Brown, Hank	R	CO	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983
Hansen, James V.	R	UT	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 28, 1981	January 2, 1983

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Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
<b>98<sup>th</sup> Congress (1983-1985)</b>					
Stokes, Louis	D	OH	21 <sup>st</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Rahall, Nick J. II	D	WV	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Jenkins, Edgar L.	D	GA	9 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Dixon, Julian C.	D	CA	28 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Fazio, Victor H.	D	CA	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Coyne, William J.	D	PA	14 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Spence, Floyd	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Conable, Barber B. Jr.	R	NY	30 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Myers, John T.	R	IN	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Forsythe, Edwin B.	R	NJ	13 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	March 29, 1984
Brown, Hank	R	CO	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Hansen, James V.	R	UT	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 6, 1983	January 2, 1985
Bliley, Thomas J. Jr.	R	VA	3 <sup>rd</sup>	May 9, 1984	January 2, 1985
<b>99<sup>th</sup> Congress (1985-1987)</b>					
Dixon, Julian C.	D	CA	28 <sup>th</sup>	January 7, 1985	January 2, 1987
Jenkins, Edgar L.	D	GA	9 <sup>th</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Fazio, Victor H.	D	CA	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Coyne, William J.	D	PA	14 <sup>th</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Dwyer, Bernard J.	D	NJ	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Mollohan, Alan B.	D	WV	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Spence, Floyd	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Myers, John T.	R	IN	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Hansen, James V.	R	UT	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Whitehurst, G. William	R	VA	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Pursell, Carl D.	R	MI	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987
Wortley, George	R	NY	27 <sup>th</sup>	January 30, 1985	January 2, 1987

Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
<b>100<sup>th</sup> Congress (1987-1989)</b>					
Dixon, Julian C.	D	CA	28 <sup>th</sup>	February 19, 1987	January 2, 1989
Fazio, Victor H.	D	CA	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 19, 1987	January 2, 1989
Dwyer, Bernard J.	D	NJ	6 <sup>th</sup>	February 19, 1987	January 2, 1989
Mollohan, Alan B.	D	WV	1 <sup>st</sup>	February 19, 1987	January 2, 1989
Gaydos, Joseph M.	D	PA	20 <sup>th</sup>	February 19, 1987	January 2, 1989
Atkins, Chester G.	D	MA	5 <sup>th</sup>	February 19, 1987	January 2, 1989
Spence, Floyd	R	SC	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 21, 1987	June 1, 1988
Myers, John T.	R	IN	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 21, 1987	January 2, 1989
Hansen, James V.	R	UT	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 21, 1987	January 2, 1989
Pashayan, Charles S. Jr.	R	CA	17 <sup>th</sup>	January 21, 1987	January 2, 1989
Petri, Thomas E.	R	WI	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 21, 1987	January 2, 1989
Craig, Larry E.	R	ID	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 21, 1987	January 2, 1989
Brown, Hank	R	CO	4 <sup>th</sup>	June 2, 1988	January 2, 1989
<b>101<sup>st</sup> Congress (1989-1991)</b>					
Dixon, Julian C.	D	CA	29 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Fazio, Victor H.	D	CA	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Dwyer, Bernard J.	D	CA	29 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Mollohan, Alan B.	D	NJ	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Gaydos, Joseph M.	D	WV	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Atkins, Chester G.	D	PA	20 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Stokes, Louis <sup>b</sup>	D	OH	21 <sup>st</sup>	September 13, 1989	July 26, 1990
Myers, John T.	R	IN	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Hansen, James V.	R	UT	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Pashayan, Charles S. Jr.	R	CA	17 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Petri, Thomas E.	R	WI	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Craig, Larry E.	R	ID	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991
Grandy, Fred	R	IA	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 3, 1989	January 2, 1991

Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
<b>102<sup>nd</sup> Congress (1991-1993)</b>					
Stokes, Louis	D	OH	21 <sup>st</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Ackerman, Gary L.	D	NY	7 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	July 4, 1992
Darden, George (Buddy)	D	GA	7 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	July 4, 1992
Cardin, Benjamin L.	D	MD	3 <sup>rd</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Pelosi, Nancy	D	CA	5 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
McDermott, Jim	D	WA	7 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Mfume, Kweisi <sup>c</sup>	D	MD	7 <sup>th</sup>	October 9, 1991	January 2, 1993
Hansen, James V.	R	UT	1 <sup>st</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Grandy, Fred	R	IA	6 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Johnson, Nancy	R	CT	6 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Bunning, Jim	R	KY	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Kyl, Jon L.	R	AZ	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Goss, Porter J.	R	FL	13 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
Hobson, David L.	R	OH	7 <sup>th</sup>	February 6, 1991	January 2, 1993
<b>103<sup>rd</sup> Congress (1993-1995)</b>					
McDermott, Jim	D	WA	7 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1993	January 2, 1995
Darden, George (Buddy)	D	GA	7 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1993	January 2, 1995
Cardin, Benjamin L.	D	MD	3 <sup>rd</sup>	February 4, 1993	January 2, 1995
Nancy, Pelosi	D	CA	5 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1993	January 2, 1995
Mfume, Kweisi	D	MD	7 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1993	January 2, 1995
Borski, Robert A.	D	PA	3 <sup>rd</sup>	February 4, 1993	January 2, 1995
Sawyer, Thomas C.	D	OH	14 <sup>th</sup>	February 4, 1993	January 2, 1995
Grandy, Fred	R	IA	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 5, 1993	January 2, 1995
Johnson, Nancy L.	R	CT	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 5, 1993	January 2, 1995
Bunning, Jim	R	KY	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 5, 1993	January 2, 1995
Kyl, Jon L.	R	AZ	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 5, 1993	January 2, 1995
Goss, Porter J.	R	FL	13 <sup>th</sup>	January 5, 1993	January 2, 1995
Hobson, David L.	R	OH	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 5, 1993	January 2, 1995



Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
Schiff, Steven	R	NY	1 <sup>st</sup>	February 4, 1993	January 2, 1995
<b>104<sup>th</sup> Congress (1995-1997)<sup>d</sup></b>					
Johnson, Nancy L.	R	CT	6 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 21, 1997
Bunning, Jim	R	KY	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 9, 1997
Goss, Porter J.	R	FL	13 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 21, 1997
Hobson, David L.	R	OH	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 15, 1997
Schiff, Steven	R	NM	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 21, 1997
Smith, Lamar S. <sup>e</sup>	R	TX	21 <sup>st</sup>	January 9, 1997	January 21, 1997
McDermott, Jim <sup>f</sup>	D	WA	7 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 14, 1997
Cardin, Benjamin L.	D	MD	3 <sup>rd</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 21, 1997
Pelosi, Nancy	D	CA	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 21, 1997
Borski, Robert A.	D	PA	3 <sup>rd</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 21, 1997
Sawyer, Thomas C.	D	OH	14 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 1995	January 21, 1997
<b>105<sup>th</sup> Congress (1997-1999)</b>					
Hansen, James V.	R	UT	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 9, 1997	January 2, 1999
Smith, Lamar S.	R	TX	21 <sup>st</sup>	September 29, 1997	January 2, 1999
Hefley, Joel	R	CO	5 <sup>th</sup>	September 29, 1997	January 2, 1999
Goodlatte, Robert	R	VA	6 <sup>th</sup>	September 29, 1997	January 2, 1999
Knollenbertg, Joe	R	MI	11 <sup>th</sup>	September 29, 1997	January 2, 1999
Berman, Howard L.	D	CA	26 <sup>th</sup>	February 10, 1997	January 2, 1999
Sabo, Martin O.	D	MN	5 <sup>th</sup>	September 29, 1997	January 2, 1999
Pastor, Ed	D	AZ	2 <sup>nd</sup>	September 29, 1997	January 2, 1999
Fatta, Chaka	D	PA	2 <sup>nd</sup>	September 29, 1997	January 2, 1999
Lofgen, Zoe	D	CA	16 <sup>th</sup>	September 29, 1997	January 2, 1999
<b>106<sup>th</sup> Congress (1999-2001)</b>					
Smith, Lamar S.	R	TX	21 <sup>st</sup>	January 6, 1999	January 2, 2001
Hefley, Joel	R	CO	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1999	January 2, 2001
Knollenbertg, Joe	R	MI	11 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1999	January 2, 2001
Portman, Rob	R	OH	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 19, 1999	January 2, 2001

<b>Member</b>	<b>Party</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>Began Assignment</b>	<b>Ended Assignment</b>
Camp, Dave	R	MI	4 <sup>th</sup>	January 19, 1999	January 2, 2001
Berman, Howard L.	D	CA	26 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1999	January 2, 2001
Sabo, Martin O.	D	MN	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1999	January 2, 2001
Pastor, Ed	D	AZ	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 6, 1999	January 2, 2001
Fatta, Chaka	D	PA	2 <sup>nd</sup>	January 6, 1999	January 2, 2001
Lofgen, Zoe	D	CA	16 <sup>th</sup>	January 6, 1999	January 2, 2001
<b>107<sup>th</sup> Congress (2001-2003)</b>					
Hefley, Joel	R	CO	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 2001	January 2, 2003
Portman, Rob	R	OH	2 <sup>nd</sup>	March 6, 2001	July 11, 2001
Hastings, Doc	R	WA	4 <sup>th</sup>	March 6, 2001	January 2, 2003
Hutchison, Asa	R	AR	3 <sup>rd</sup>	March 6, 2001	August 6, 2001
Biggert, Judy	R	IL	13 <sup>th</sup>	March 6, 2001	January 2, 2003
Hulshof, Kenny	R	MO	9 <sup>th</sup>	July 11, 2001	January 2, 2003
LaTourette, Steve	R	OH	19 <sup>th</sup>	October 10, 2001	January 2, 2003
Berman, Howard	D	CA	26 <sup>th</sup>	January 20, 2001	January 2, 2003
Sabo, Martin	D	MN	5 <sup>th</sup>	March 6, 2001	August 1, 2001
Pastor, Ed	D	AZ	2 <sup>nd</sup>	March 6, 2001	January 2, 2003
Lofgen, Zoe	D	CA	16 <sup>th</sup>	March 6, 2001	January 2, 2003
Jones, Stephanie Tubbs	D	OH	11 <sup>th</sup>	March 14, 2001	January 2, 2003
Green, Gene	D	TX	29 <sup>th</sup>	July 11, 2001	January 2, 2003
<b>108<sup>th</sup> Congress (2003-2005)</b>					
Hefley, Joel	R	CO	5 <sup>th</sup>	January 8, 2003	January 2, 2005
Hastings, Doc	R	WA	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 11, 2003	January 2, 2005
Biggert, Judy	R	IL	13 <sup>th</sup>	February 11, 2003	January 2, 2005
Hulshof, Kenny	R	MO	9 <sup>th</sup>	February 11, 2003	January 2, 2005
LaTourette, Steve	R	OH	19 <sup>th</sup>	February 11, 2003	January 2, 2005
Berman, Howard	D	CA	26 <sup>th</sup>	January 8, 2003	February 26, 2003
Mollohan, Alan B.	D	WV	1 <sup>st</sup>	February 5, 2003	January 2, 2005
Jones, Stephanie Tubbs	D	OH	11 <sup>th</sup>	March 6, 2003	January 2, 2005

Member	Party	State	District	Began Assignment	Ended Assignment
Green, Gene	D	TX	29 <sup>th</sup>	March 6, 2003	January 2, 2005
Roybal-Allard, Lucille	D	CA	34 <sup>th</sup>	March 6, 2003	January 2, 2005
Doyle, Michael F.	D	PA	14 <sup>th</sup>	March 6, 2003	January 2, 2005
<b>109<sup>th</sup> Congress (2005-2007)</b>					
Hastings, Doc	R	WA	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 2, 2005	-
Biggert, Judy	R	IL	13 <sup>th</sup>	February 2, 2005	-
Smith, Lamar	R	TX	21 <sup>st</sup>	February 2, 2005	-
Hart, Melissa	R	TX	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 2, 2005	-
Cole, Tom	R	OK	4 <sup>th</sup>	February 2, 2005	-
Mollohan, Alan B.	D	WV	1 <sup>st</sup>	January 26, 2005	April 25, 2006
Berman, Howard <sup>g</sup>	D	CA	28 <sup>th</sup>	April 26, 2006	-
Jones, Stephanie Tubbs	D	OH	11 <sup>th</sup>	February 9, 2005	-
Green, Gene	D	TX	29 <sup>th</sup>	February 9, 2005	-
Roybal-Allard, Lucille	D	CA	34 <sup>th</sup>	February 9, 2005	-
Doyle, Michael F.	D	PA	14 <sup>th</sup>	February 9, 2005	-

- a. Representative At Large, i.e. the State's only Member of the House.
- b. Appointed to serve in place of Representative Chester Atkins.
- c. Appointed to serve in place of Representative Louis Stokes, and appointed to replace Representative Gary L. Ackerman in the 102<sup>nd</sup> Congress on August 11, 1992.
- d. Most of the Members of the Committee from the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress were appointed to the Select Committee on Ethics in the 105<sup>th</sup> Congress, which existed from January 7, 1997, to January 21, 1997. This select committee was established to resolve the Statement of Alleged Violations issued in the 104<sup>th</sup> Congress by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct against the Speaker of the House. This select committee expired on January 21, 1997, with the House approving a reprimand against the Speaker.
- e. Appointed to the Select Committee on Ethics to complete the investigation begun by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.
- f. Representative Jim McDermott was briefly replaced on the committee (July 23, 1996-July 24, 1996) by Representative Louis Stokes (D-OH) during a committee inquiry involving Representative McDermott.
- g. Representative Howard Berman was appointed as the ranking member of the committee after Representative Alan Mollohan resigned from the committee.