



**Congressional
Research Service**

Informing the legislative debate since 1914

Publications of Congressional Committees: A Summary

name redacted

Analyst on the Congress

May 21, 2014

Congressional Research Service

7-....

www.crs.gov

98-673

House and Senate committees publish a variety of documents dealing with legislative and other policy issues, investigations, and internal committee matters. These include committee hearings; legislative, investigative, conference committee, and committee activity reports; calendars; and committee prints. These publications are usually available from the issuing committee, the House or Senate document rooms, and increasingly, from committee websites as well. For more information on the legislative process, see <http://crs.gov/analysis/Pages/CongressionalOperations.aspx>.

Hearings

Printed hearings contain the edited transcripts of testimony given during committee consideration of proposed legislation, investigative or oversight activities, or Senate confirmation proceedings. Also included are questions from committee members and responses by witnesses; prepared statements by committee members, the witnesses, and other interested parties; and supporting documents submitted to the committee.

Although hearings are often not printed for months after testimony is given, witness statements, and sometimes Member questions and answers, may appear on a committee's website within days. Senate Rule XVII, paragraph 5 provides that, if hearings have been held on a measure, the "committee reporting the measure or matter shall make every reasonable effort" to make printed hearings available prior to floor consideration. House Rule XIII, clause 4(c) stipulates that a general appropriation bill reported by the Committee on Appropriations may not be considered unless printed hearings have been available to members for three calendar days.

Reports

There are four main types of committee reports: (1) reports that accompany a legislative measure when it is reported for chamber action; (2) reports resulting from oversight or investigative activities; (3) reports of conference committees; and (4) committee activity reports, published at the conclusion of a Congress.

Legislative reports provide an explanation of a measure, the committee's actions in considering it, and arguments why the House or Senate should approve the committee's position on the bill or legislative matter, as reported. House Rule XIII, clause 2(a) requires a committee to prepare a printed report when forwarding a measure for floor action. Most Senate bills sent to the floor are accompanied by a written report, although Senate rules do not require it. Chamber and committee rules require certain provisions in committee reports. For example, both the House and the Senate require committees to allow for minority, supplemental, or additional views of committee members to be included in legislative or investigative reports. Chamber rules also impose certain other content requirements for committee reports. (See CRS Report 98-169, *House Committee Reports: Required Contents*, by (name redacted), and CRS Report 98-305, *Senate Committee Reports: Required Contents*, by (name redacted).)

An oversight or investigative report describes a committee's effort to evaluate federal agency and program performance, and inform Congress and the public of alleged governmental waste, inefficiency, or public or private wrongdoing. Committees have broad latitude in deciding the contents and structure of these reports.

The report of a conference committee states in legislative language how the House and Senate propose to resolve the differences between each chamber's version of a measure. The report is accompanied by a joint explanatory statement that describes the reconciliation of differences in nonstatutory language. Under Senate Rule XXVIII, paragraph 4, conference reports are required to be printed as Senate reports. When a conference report has already been printed by the House, however, the Senate routinely dispenses with this requirement.

Activity reports published after the conclusion of a Congress provide a narrative description of a committee's actions over the course of that Congress. These reports may include summaries of legislation, investigations, hearings, and oversight activities, and the titles of documents issued by the committee. Committee activity reports are mandated by the 1970 Legislative Reorganization Act and subsequent chamber rules.

Committee Calendars

Committee calendars are a comprehensive record of a committee's actions in summary or tabular format. They typically include committee rules, membership, and subcommittees; a brief legislative history of each measure referred to the committee; lists of hearings, business meetings and markups, and conference reports; legislation indexed by sponsor and short title; and lists of other committee publications.

All House and Senate committees except for the ethics and Appropriations committees in each chamber (and, since the 103rd Congress, the House Administration Committee) publish calendars. Although neither statutes nor chamber rules require the publication of committee calendars, the practice has been common for more than 50 years. Most committees publish their calendars at the conclusion of each session. The information is cumulative so that the final calendar for each Congress identifies all activities of a committee. Final committee calendars are often not available in printed form for several months after the conclusion of a Congress.

Committee Prints

Committees also publish a variety of other information as "committee prints." These documents may include committee rules, full committee and subcommittee memberships, draft legislation, and reports on policy issues and other matters deemed of interest to a committee. At the discretion of each committee, some prints are numbered; others are not.

Author Contact Information

(name redacted)
Analyst on the Congress
/redacted/@crs.loc.gov, 7-....

EveryCRSReport.com

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) is a federal legislative branch agency, housed inside the Library of Congress, charged with providing the United States Congress non-partisan advice on issues that may come before Congress.

EveryCRSReport.com republishes CRS reports that are available to all Congressional staff. The reports are not classified, and Members of Congress routinely make individual reports available to the public.

Prior to our republication, we redacted names, phone numbers and email addresses of analysts who produced the reports. We also added this page to the report. We have not intentionally made any other changes to any report published on EveryCRSReport.com.

CRS reports, as a work of the United States government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.

Information in a CRS report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to members of Congress in connection with CRS' institutional role.

EveryCRSReport.com is not a government website and is not affiliated with CRS. We do not claim copyright on any CRS report we have republished.