

HOUSE AND CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES

Members may send through the mails, under their frank, certain documents and materials as provided by 39 U.S.C. 3210, subject to the limitations prescribed in rule XXIV, § 1113. **House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards.** *supra*. The House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards, composed of six Members, provides advice in connection with franking privileges (sec. 5, P.L. 93–191).

Rooms in the House Office Buildings are assigned pursuant to the Act of May 28, 1908 (2 U.S.C. 2004–2011) and pursuant to regulations of the House Office Building Commission (see regulations promulgated Oct. 7, 1996). The commission also issues regulations governing the House Office Buildings, House garages, and the Capitol Power Plant (see regulations promulgated December, 1995). The commission is composed of the Speaker and two Members of the House (traditionally the Majority and Minority Leaders) (2 U.S.C. 2001).

The preparation, utilization, and distribution (to committees and Members) of reports by the Government Accountability Office, and its authority to assign its employees to duty with congressional committees, are regulated by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, §§ 231–236 (84 Stat. 1140; 31 U.S.C. 711–720). This office was formerly known as the General Accounting Office (31 U.S.C. 702 note).

The Office of Compliance was established by the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1381). The office is composed of five individuals appointed jointly by the Speaker, the Majority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leaders of the House and the Senate. The office has regulatory, enforcement, and educational responsibilities under the Act. The office replaced the Review Panel of the Office of Fair Employment Practices at the beginning of the 105th Congress (see § 1101, *supra*). However, the review panel was reconstituted in the same form as at the end of the 104th Congress to provide for the completion of ongoing proceedings in the 105th Congress (Feb. 25, 1997, p. 2439).

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The organization of the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress and its responsibilities to assist Members and committees were provided in the Legislative Reorganization Acts of 1946 and 1970 (60 Stat. 836; 84 Stat. 1140; 2 U.S.C. 166).

§ 1117. **Congressional Research Service.**

The Office of the Legislative Counsel of the House of Representatives evolved from a Legislative Drafting Service established for the Congress by the Act of February 24, 1919 (40 Stat. 1057, 1141). The provisions of law setting forth the purpose and functions of the current office and providing for its administration are contained in title V of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 (P.L. 91–510; 2 U.S.C. 281) as amended by the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1972 (P.L. 92–51). As stated in section 502 of such title V, the purpose of the office is to advise and assist the House, and its committees and Members, in the achievement of a clear, faithful, and coherent expression of legislative policies.

§ 1118. **Legislative Counsel.**

The Congressional Budget Office was established by the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 601). The office is headed by a director, who is appointed by the Speaker and the President pro tempore. Section 202 of the Act (2 U.S.C. 602) outlines the functions of the office, which include providing assistance to the House and Senate Committees on the Budget and Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance in the discharge of matters within their jurisdiction and to other committees to assist them in complying with the provisions of the Act.

§ 1119. **Congressional Budget Office.**

The Office of the Law Revision Counsel, to develop a codification of the laws of the United States, was authorized in the 93d Congress by the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974 (sec. 205, H. Res. 988, Oct. 8, 1974, p. 34470, made permanent law by P.L. 93–544 (2 U.S.C. 285)).

§ 1120. **Law Revision Counsel.**

The Office of Technology Assessment, to assist the Congress in indicating the beneficial and adverse impacts of the application of technology, was authorized by the Technology Assessment Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 472). The office received funding for 1996 to conduct an orderly shutdown (tit. I, P.L. 104–53) and has not received funding since then.

§ 1121. **Technology Assessment.**

A Parliamentarian has been appointed by the Speaker in every Congress since 1927. Before 1927 the “Clerk at the Speaker’s Table” performed the function of the Parliamentarian. In the 95th Congress the House formally and permanently established an Office of the Parliamentarian to be managed, supervised, and administered by a nonpartisan Parliamentarian appointed by the Speaker (H. Res. 502, Apr. 20, 1977, p. 11415, made permanent law by sec. 115 of P.L. 95–94; see 2 U.S.C. 287). The compilation and preparation of the precedents of the House of Representatives were authorized

§ 1122. **Office of the Parliamentarian.**

in the 93d Congress by the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974 (sec. 208, H. Res. 988, Oct. 8, 1974, p. 34470, made permanent law by P.L. 93–554, 2 U.S.C. 28a), and the printing and distribution of the precedents were authorized by Public Law 94–551 (2 U.S.C. 28b–e). See also 2 U.S.C. 28, 29.

At its organization the 104th Congress established an office to assist the Speaker in the management of legislative activity on the floor of the House (Sec. 223(b), H. Res. 6, 104th Cong., Jan. 4, 1995, p. 469, enacted into permanent law by the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1996 (sec. 103, P.L. 104–53)).

§ 1123. Office of Floor Assistants. This office is responsible for responding to inquiries from, and coordinating visits with, foreign legislative bodies; providing assistance to delegations of Members on official visits to foreign nations; coordinating the activities and responsibilities of the House in connection with participation in various interparliamentary exchanges and organizations; and enabling the House to host meetings with senior government officials and other dignitaries in order to discuss matters relevant to United States relations with other nations (2 U.S.C. 130–2).

§ 1124. Office of Interparliamentary Affairs. The House Recording Studio was established by the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1957 (2 U.S.C. 123b) and provides Members with audio and video recording services. The studio is under the direction and control of the Committee on the House Recording Studio, which consists of three Members appointed by the Speaker (2 U.S.C. 123b(c)).

§ 1125. House Recording Studio. The United States Capitol Preservation Commission was established in 1988 (2 U.S.C. 2081) to provide improvements in, preservation of, and acquisitions for the Capitol and to provide works of fine art and other property for display in the Capitol. In the 106th Congress the Commission was given responsibility for the planning, engineering, design, and construction of the Capitol Visitor Center (sec. 310, Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2000). Membership on the Commission consists of the Speaker, the President pro tempore (co-chairs), the chair and vice chair of the Joint Committee on the Library, the chairs and ranking minority members of the Committee on Rules and Administration and the Committee on House Administration, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the House and Senate, three Members of the Senate, and three Members of the House.

§ 1125a. United States Capitol Preservation Commission. The General Counsel appointed under clause 8 of rule II is authorized by law to appear in any proceeding before a State or Federal court (except the United States Supreme Court) without compliance with admission requirements of such court (2 U.S.C. 130f(a)). Furthermore, the law requires the

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Attorney General to notify the General Counsel of various decisions and policies (2 U.S.C. 130f(b)).

This office, responsible for mitigation and preparedness operations, crisis management and response, resource services, and recovery operations (sec. 905, P.L. 107–117), was established in the 107th Congress and abolished in the 112th Congress, when its functions were transferred to the Sergeant-at-Arms (sec. 105, P.L. 112–74).

§ 1125c. Former Office of Emergency Planning, Preparedness, and Operations.

This office was established in the 70th Congress when the House requested the Secretary of the Navy to detail a medical officer to be in attendance at the Hall of the House during sessions of the House (H. Res. 253, Dec. 5, 1928, p. 101). Currently, the office provides primary care and emergency, environmental, and occupational health services in direct support of Members of Congress and the Supreme Court, staff, pages, visiting dignitaries, and tourists (*Office of Attending Physician in the U.S. Congress*, CRS, Dec. 12, 2001).

§ 1125d. Office of Attending Physician.

This office, which dates from 1793, operates and maintains the buildings and grounds of the Capitol complex. For further information on the office, see *Architect of the Capitol: Appointment Process and Current Legislation*, CRS, June 4, 2010. Section 6701 of Public Law 110–28 established within the office a Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services with responsibility for the operation and management of the Capitol Visitor Center.

§ 1125e. Office of Architect of the Capitol.

Established for the 109th (H. Res. 135, Mar. 14, 2005, p. 4527), 110th (H. Res. 24, Jan. 30, 2007, p. 2626), 111th (sec. 4(b), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 9), 112th (which changed its name from the House Democracy Assistance Commission) (sec. 4(a), H. Res. 5, Jan. 5, 2011, p. __), and 113th Congresses (sec. 4(b), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2013, p. __), the partnership provides advice and consultation to selected countries. The partnership consists of 20 Members appointed by the Speaker and Minority Leader.

§ 1125f. House Democracy Partnership.

Established for the 110th Congress (H. Res. 1451, Sept. 24, 2008, p. 20250), and the 111th, 112th, and 113th Congresses with modifications to its authority (sec. 4(c), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 9; sec. 4(b), H. Res. 5, Jan. 5, 2011, p. __; sec. 4(c), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2013, p. __), the commission promotes internationally recognized human rights. Any Member may join the commission, which is led by co-chairs appointed by the Speaker and Minority Leader, respectively.

§ 1125g. Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission.

Established for the 110th Congress (H. Res. 895, Mar. 11, 2008, p. 3741), and the 111th and 112th Congresses with a modification of its authority to engage consultants (sec. 4(d), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 9; sec. 4(c), H. Res. 5, Jan. 5, 2011, p. __), and the 113th Congress with a further modification to the

§ 1125h. Office of Congressional Ethics.

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term limits of the governing board (sec. 4(d), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2013, p. ___), the office investigates “self-initiated” alleged ethics violations and reports its recommendations to the Committee on Ethics.

EARLY ORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE

[2 U.S.C. 29a]

(a) Caucus or conference for incumbent Members reelected to and Members-elect of ensuing Congress; time and procedure for calling

(1) The majority leader or minority leader of the House of Representatives after consultation with the Speaker may at any time during any even-numbered year call a caucus or conference of all incumbent Members of his or her political party who have been reelected to the ensuing Congress and all other Members-elect of such party, for the purpose of taking all steps necessary to achieve the prompt organization of the Members and Members-elect of such party for the ensuing Congress.

§ 1126. Organizing caucuses.

(2) If the majority leader or minority leader calls an organizational caucus or conference under paragraph (1), he or she shall file with the Clerk of the House a written notice designating the date upon which the caucus or conference is to convene. As soon as possible after the election of Members to the ensuing Congress, the Clerk shall furnish each Member-elect of the party involved with appropriate written notification of the caucus or conference.

(3) If a vacancy occurs in the office of majority leader or minority leader during any even-numbered year (and has not been filled), the chairman of the caucus or conference of the party involved for the current Congress may call an organizational caucus or conference under paragraph (1) by filing written notice thereof as provided by paragraph (2).

(b) Payment and reimbursement for travel and per diem expenses for Members attending caucus or conference; exceptions; regulations governing payments and reimbursements; reimbursement vouchers

(1)(A) Each Member-elect (other than an incumbent Member reelected to the ensuing Congress) who attends a caucus or conference called under subsection (a) of this

section, and each incumbent Member reelected to the ensuing Congress who attends any such caucus or conference convening after the adjournment sine die of the Congress in the year involved, shall be paid for one round trip between his or her place of residence in the district which he or she represents and Washington, District of Columbia, for the purpose of attending such caucus or conference. Payment shall be made through the issuance of a transportation request form to each such Member-elect or incumbent Member by the Finance Office of the House before such caucus or conference.

(B) Each Member-elect (other than an incumbent Member reelected to the ensuing Congress) who attends a caucus or conference called under subsection (a) of this section shall in addition be reimbursed on a per diem or other basis for expenses incurred in connection with his or her attendance at such caucus or conference.

(2) Payments and reimbursements to Members-elect under paragraph (1) shall be made as provided (with respect to Members) in the regulations prescribed by the Committee on House Administration with respect to travel and other expenses of committees and Members. Reimbursements shall be paid on special voucher forms prescribed by the Committee on House Administration.

(c) Availability of applicable accounts of House

The applicable accounts of the House of Representatives are made available to carry out the purposes of this section.

(d) Orientation programs for new Members

With the approval of the majority leader (in the case of a Member or Member-elect of the majority party) or the minority leader (in the case of a Member or Member-elect of the minority party), subsections (b) and (c) of this section shall apply with respect to the attendance of a Member or Member-elect at a program conducted by the Committee on House Administration for the orientation of new Members in the same manner as such provisions apply to the attendance of the Member or Member-elect at the organizational caucus or conference.

These provisions were originated by a resolution of the 93d Congress (sec. 202, H. Res. 988, Oct. 8, 1974), which was enacted into permanent law (effective Jan. 2, 1975) shortly thereafter (P.L. 93-554, Dec. 27, 1974, 88 Stat. 1777). Amendments were effected in the 104th Congress (sec. 202, P.L. 104-186, Aug. 20, 1996, 110 Stat. 1725), when the House renamed the committee concerned and converted references to its "contingent fund"

to “applicable accounts of the House.” Further amendments were effected at the end of the 108th Congress (to apply beginning in the One Hundred Tenth Congress) to permit organizational activity to be scheduled for any period after the general election and before the onset of the new Congress and to include orientation programs (sec. 107, div. G, P.L. 108–447, Dec. 8, 2004, 118 Stat. 3176).

Under the former form of the statute, contemplating organizational activity in the month of December, the House occasionally adopted resolutions allowing earlier convening of an organizational caucus or conference (*e.g.*, H. Res. 666, 106th Cong., Nov. 3, 2000, p. 25993; H. Res. 590, 107th Cong., Oct. 16, 2002, p. 20812; H. Res. 824, 108th Cong., Oct. 6, 2004, pp. 21212, 21213).

[2 U.S.C. 43b-2]

Staff expenses for House Members attending organizational caucus or conference

(a) In general

Each Member-elect (other than an incumbent Member reelected to the ensuing Congress) who attends a caucus or conference called under section 29a(a) of this title, and each incumbent Member reelected to the ensuing Congress who attends any such caucus or conference convening after the adjournment sine die of the Congress in the year involved, shall be entitled to designate one staff person to be paid for one round trip between that person’s place of residence, provided such place of residence is in the district which the Member-elect or incumbent Member represents, and Washington, District of Columbia, for the purpose of accompanying that Member-elect or incumbent Member to such caucus or conference.

(b) Per diem expenses of staff person

Each Member-elect (other than an incumbent Member reelected to the ensuing Congress) who attends a caucus or conference called under such section 29a(a) of this title shall be entitled to designate one staff person who shall in addition be reimbursed on a per diem or other basis for expenses incurred in accompanying the Member-elect at the time of such caucus or conference.

(c) Orientation programs for new Members

With the approval of the majority leader (in the case of a Member or Member-elect of the majority party) or the minority leader (in the case of a Member or Member-elect of the minority party), subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall apply with respect to the attendance of a Member or Member-elect at a program conducted by the Com-

mittee on House Administration for the orientation of new Members in the same manner as such provisions apply to the attendance of the Member or Member-elect at the organizational caucus or conference.

These provisions were originated by a resolution of the 94th Congress (H. Res. 10, Jan. 14, 1975), which was then enacted into permanent law (sec. 201, P.L. 94-59, July 25, 1975, 89 Stat. 282). They are codified in section 43b-2 of title 2, United States Code. Amendments were effected at the end of the 108th Congress (to apply with respect to the One Hundred Tenth Congress and each succeeding Congress) to conform to the permissible scheduling of organizational activity for any period after the general election and before the onset of the new Congress and to include orientation programs (sec. 107, div. G, P.L. 108-447, Dec. 8, 2004, 118 Stat. 3176).

[2 U.S.C. 43b-3]

Payments and reimbursements for certain House staff expenses

(a) Payments and reimbursements to staff persons under section 43b-2 of this title shall be made as provided (with respect to staff) in the regulations prescribed by the Committee on House Administration with respect to travel and other expenses of staff. Reimbursements shall be paid on special voucher forms prescribed by the Committee on House Administration.

(b) Additional funds, if any, for staff allowances and office space for use by Members-elect (other than an incumbent Member reelected to the ensuing Congress) shall be authorized by the Committee on House Administration.

These provisions were originated by a resolution of the 94th Congress (H. Res. 10, Jan. 14, 1975), which was then enacted into permanent law (sec. 201, P.L. 94-59, July 25, 1975, 89 Stat. 282). They are codified in section 43b-3 of title 2, United States Code. Amendments were effected in the 104th Congress (sec. 202, P.L. 104-186, Aug. 20, 1996, 110 Stat. 1725), when the House renamed the committee concerned as the Committee on House Oversight. (The committee has since been returned to its earlier name).