



CRS Report for Congress

Committee System Rules Changes in the House, 110th Congress

Judy Schneider
Specialist on the Congress
Government and Finance Division

Summary

This fact sheet details changes in the committee system contained in H.Res. 6, the Rules of the House for the 110th Congress, agreed to by the House January 4, 2007. The fact sheet will not be updated unless further rules changes for the 110th Congress are adopted.

Committee Organization and Structure

Committee Names. H.Res. 6 renamed five committees. The name of the Committee on Education and the Workforce was changed to the Committee on Education and Labor. The name of the Committee on International Relations was changed to the Committee on Foreign Affairs. The name of the Committee on Resources was changed to the Committee on Natural Resources. The name of the Committee on Government Reform was changed to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The name of the Committee on Science was changed to the Committee on Science and Technology.

Jurisdiction of the Intelligence Committee. The Rule X, clause 11 jurisdiction of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence was updated to reflect the overhaul of the intelligence community, including the creation of the director of national intelligence.

Other Jurisdictional Policies. Pursuant to a statement inserted in the *Congressional Record* by Rules Committee Chairwoman Louise Slaughter during the debate on H.Res. 6, the jurisdiction of the Committee on Small Business was reaffirmed to include the Small Business Administration and its programs, as well as small business matters related to the Regulatory Flexibility Act and the Paperwork Reduction Act. Other programs and initiatives that address small businesses outside the confines of those acts were referenced as well.

Also inserted in the *Congressional Record* during debate on H.Res. 6 was a memorandum of understanding between the Committee on Homeland Security and the

Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure detailing the jurisdictional agreement related to the Federal Emergency Management Agency and to port security.

Subcommittees. House Rule X, clause 5(d), which generally limits committees to five subcommittees was waived for three committees. The Armed Services Committee was permitted to have seven subcommittees; the Foreign Affairs Committee was permitted to have seven subcommittees; and the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee was permitted to have six subcommittees.

Committee Procedure

Depositions. The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform was authorized to adopt a committee rule that authorized and regulated the taking of depositions by a Member or counsel of the committee, including depositions in response to a subpoena. The rules resolution permitted the new committee rule to require those being deposed to subscribe to an oath. It also required the committee rule to provide the minority with equitable treatment, by providing notice of such a proceeding and a reasonable opportunity to participate.

Rules Committee Reports. The Rules Committee was allowed to publish the record votes taken during committee consideration in committee reports and through other means such as the Internet. The Rules Committee report was shielded from a point of order if the report was filed without a complete list of record votes taken during consideration of a special rule.

Earmark Reform

Committees of jurisdiction were required to publish lists of earmarks, limited tax benefits, and limited tariff benefits contained in any reported bill, unreported bill, manager's amendment, or conference report that comes to the House floor.