

have the approval of the minority leader the minority whip—in order to seek recognition for that purpose? Is that correct?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair would state that the Speaker's announced guidelines on making a unanimous-consent request to consider an unreported measure, regardless of what committee is involved, require that it be cleared on both sides of the aisle, floor and committee leadership, including the chairman. In this case it would be the chairman of the Rules Committee. That is why the Chair was stating to the gentleman, in response to his inquiry, that all of the Speaker's guidelines must be followed by contacting both the minority leader and the majority leader and the chairman and ranking minority member of the Rules Committee. The Chair could then recognize a Member for that purpose once it had been cleared.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the latter comment. The Chair has indicated that once I have gotten the permission essentially or had gotten the approval of the Speaker, the chairman of the Rules Committee, the majority leader, and the majority whip to request withdrawal of House Resolution 501, which would bring this issue of a Pledge of Allegiance to us, then unanimous consent could be requested for that item to come to the floor and to be debated and voted upon?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman has stated the situation accurately. It would be handled in the ordinary fashion that we handle resolutions here on the floor that have been cleared on both sides with the floor leadership and the leadership of the committee. The gentleman states it correctly.

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I might mention to the Members of the House that the Speaker has helped us a lot by, first of all, indicating that he was going to call upon a Member to lead the Pledge of Allegiance on the first legislative day of next week, and then upon myself for the second legislative day. I presume that means Tuesday and Wednesday of next week.

Beyond that point, let it be said that it is my intention to seek their approval for a request to withdraw House Resolution 501 from the Rules Committee so that we can bring this issue to the floor and have a full-scale debate on the question of a Pledge of Allegiance and a vote up or down on the measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman knows that this body has that right.

## § 7. Party Whips

Each party organization in the House elects an official known as the “whip”—the Majority Whip (for the majority party) and the Minority Whip (for the minority party). Like the floor leaders, these officials are not officers of the House but are party officials responsible to their respective caucuses. Thus, the whips are not elected by the House, but their election (by their party organizations) is customarily announced to the membership on the floor.<sup>(1)</sup> A vacancy in the office of whip is filled by the respective caucus and the selection typically announced to the House.<sup>(2)</sup> The whip organization of

1. See, e.g., 163 CONG. REC. H6 [Daily Ed.], 115th Cong. 1st Sess. (Jan. 3, 2017). See also Deschler's Precedents Ch. 3 §§ 3.7, 6.6, 23.1, and 23.3.

2. See §§ 7.3, 7.4, *infra*.

each caucus may employ subsidiary officials such as deputy whips, assistant whips, floor whips, or regional whips.<sup>(3)</sup>

The primary function of a whip operation is to gauge the attitudes of members of the party caucus and attempt to unify the party behind legislative measures. The whips are thus conduits between the rank-and-file members of the caucus and the caucus's leadership—informing leadership as to the sentiments of the caucus as a whole, and conveying leadership strategies and goals to caucus members. Much of the whip's operation thus involves communicating information and ideas within the caucus and keeping members of the caucus abreast of the legislative schedule and other developments in the House. As party leaders, the whips may also take on special responsibilities on the floor of the House (such as offering certain resolutions or motions, or making announcements),<sup>(4)</sup> or serve as Speaker pro tempore.<sup>(5)</sup> The whips are frequently included in ceremonial delegations.<sup>(6)</sup>

**§ 7.1 The party selections of the Majority and Minority Leaders and Whips (and one other minority position) were announced to the House by the chairs of the respective party caucuses.**

On January 3, 2013,<sup>(7)</sup> the following announcements were made:

MAJORITY LEADER

Mrs. [Cathy] McMORRIS RODGERS [of Washington]. Mr. Speaker, as chair of the Republican Conference, I am directed by that conference to notify the House officially that the Republican Members have selected as majority leader the gentleman from California, the Honorable KEVIN MCCARTHY.

MINORITY LEADER

Mr. [Xavier] BECERRA [of California]. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Democratic Caucus, I have been directed to report to the House that the Democratic Members have selected as minority leader the gentlewoman from California, the Honorable NANCY PELOSI.

MAJORITY WHIP

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, as chair of the Republican Conference, I am directed by that conference to notify the House officially that the Republican Members have selected as majority whip the gentleman from Louisiana, the Honorable STEVE SCALISE.

3. Rules Committee Print 115-37, Democratic Caucus, 115th Cong., Rule 11. See § 7.2, *infra*. See also Deschler's Precedents Ch. 3 §§ 23.2, 23.4.

4. See Deschler's Precedents Ch. 3 §§ 24.3, 24.4.

5. See Deschler's Precedents Ch. 3 § 23.5.

6. See § 3, *supra*. See also Deschler's Precedents Ch. 3 § 24.2.

7. 159 CONG. REC. H5-H6, 113th Cong. 1st Sess.

## MINORITY WHIP AND ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC LEADER

Mr. BECERRA. Mr. Speaker, as chairman of the Democratic Caucus, I have been directed to report to the House that the Democratic Members have selected as minority whip the gentleman from Maryland, the Honorable STENY HOYER, and as assistant Democratic leader, the gentleman from South Carolina, the Honorable JAMES CLYBURN.

**§ 7.2 The Majority Leader announced to the House the selections of the Democratic Caucus<sup>(8)</sup> for the Majority Whip, the Chief Deputy Whip, three Deputy Whips, and three at-large Whips to represent specific constituencies.**

On January 23, 1975,<sup>(9)</sup> the following announcement was made regarding choices for the Democratic Caucus's whip operation:

APPOINTMENT OF MAJORITY WHIP, CHIEF DEPUTY WHIP, DEPUTY WHIPS,  
AND WHIPS AT LARGE

(Mr. O'NEILL asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. [Thomas] O'NEILL [of Massachusetts]. Mr. Speaker, I take this time to announce that after consultation with the Speaker I am appointing John McFall, of California, as majority whip; JOHN BRADEMAS, of Indiana, as chief deputy whip; JIM WRIGHT, of Texas, as deputy whip; RICHARD H. FULTON, of Tennessee, as deputy whip; and SPARK MATSUNAGA, of Hawaii, as deputy whip.

In addition, for the first time, I am appointing three at-large whips to represent women Members, black Members, and freshmen Members. These appointees are BELLA ABZUG, of New York, CARLISS COLLINS, of Illinois, and JOHN JENRETTE, of South Carolina.

**§ 7.3 The Majority Leader having been elected Speaker of the House and the Majority Whip having resigned from the House, the selections of the new Majority Leader and Majority Whip by the Democratic Caucus were announced to the House by the vice chair of that caucus.**

For the *Congressional Record* proceedings of the June 14, 1989,<sup>(10)</sup> announcement, see § 6.3, supra.

**§ 7.4 The party selection of a new Minority Whip was announced to the House by the Minority Leader.**

8. *Parliamentarian's Note*: These proceedings reflect the composition of the Democratic whip organization during the 94th Congress. That composition has changed over the years and many of these positions are no longer in existence.

9. 121 CONG. REC. 1159, 94th Cong. 1st Sess.

10. 135 CONG. REC. 11747, 11748, 101st Cong. 1st Sess. For farewell remarks by the retiring Majority Whip, see 135 CONG. REC. 11952, 101st Cong. 1st Sess. (June 15, 1989).

On January 23, 2002,<sup>(11)</sup> the following announcement was made:

MINORITY WHIP

Mr. [Richard] GEPHARDT [of Missouri]. Mr. Speaker, as leader of the Democratic Caucus, I have been directed to report to the House that the Democratic Members have selected as their minority whip the gentlewoman from California, the Honorable NANCY PELOSI.

As a matter of information to the Members of the House, it is my understanding that this is the highest position to which a woman has been elected in the history of the House of Representatives.

### C. Committee Assignments

## § 8. Electing Members to Committees

For many decades, the party organizations have played a significant role in assigning Members of the House to standing committees. Before the 20th century, the Speaker exercised a great deal of authority in assigning Members to committees. Following the “revolt” against Speaker Joseph Cannon of Illinois in 1910, this authority was taken away from the Speaker.<sup>(1)</sup> Since that time, committee assignments in the House have been made by the adoption of a simple resolution of the House that specifies which Members are to be assigned to which committees, who shall chair such committees, and the rank of each Member on those committee.<sup>(2)</sup>

The content of these committee election resolutions is developed by the party organizations. Essentially, each party is responsible for advancing a slate of nominees to fill open committee seats.<sup>(3)</sup> These committee election resolutions are privileged for consideration pursuant to clause 5(a) of rule

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11. 148 CONG. REC. 16, 107th Cong. 2d Sess.

1. See DE ALVA STANWOOD ALEXANDER, *HISTORY AND PROCEDURE OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES*, 41 (1916). Under the current rules, the Speaker is still authorized to appoint Members to all joint, select, and conference committees. See rule I, clause 11, *House Rules and Manual* § 637 (2017).
2. For more on committee assignments generally, see Deschler’s Precedents Ch. 17 §§ 8–12 and Precedents (Wickham) Ch. 17.
3. For an unusual instance of a bipartisan committee election resolution, see Deschler’s Precedents Ch. 3 § 11.1.