

## RULE II

### OTHER OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

#### *Elections*

1. There shall be elected at the commencement of each Congress, to continue in office until their successors are chosen and qualified, a Clerk, a Sergeant-at-Arms, a Chief Administrative Officer, and a Chaplain. Each of these officers shall take an oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and for the true and faithful exercise of the duties of the office to the best of the knowledge and ability of the officer, and to keep the secrets of the House. Each of these officers shall appoint all of the employees of the department concerned provided for by law. The Clerk, Sergeant-at-Arms, and Chief Administrative Officer may be removed by the House or by the Speaker.

§ 640. Election, oath,  
and removal of  
officers.

When the House recodified its rules, it consolidated former rules II through VII, former clauses 10 and 11 of rule I, former clause 6 of rule XIII, and former clause 5 of rule XVI under rule II (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). A rudimentary form of this clause was adopted in 1789, and was amended several times before 1880, when it assumed the form it retained for more than a century (I, 187). During the 102d Congress, the House Administrative Reform Resolution of 1992 amended the clause to abolish the Office of the Postmaster (see § 668, *infra*) and to empower the Speaker to remove certain elected officers (H. Res. 423, Apr. 9, 1992, p. 9039). The 104th Congress made conforming changes to the clause to reflect the abolishment of the Office of the Doorkeeper and the establishment of an elected Chief Administrative Officer (sec. 201(a), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463). Clerical and stylistic changes were effected when the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). Gender-based references were eliminated in the 111th Congress (sec. 2(l), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7). For a discussion of the former Office of the Doorkeeper, see § 663b, *infra*; and for a discussion of the evolution of the Chief Administrative Officer (an elected officer) from the former

Director of Non-legislative and Financial Services (an officer appointed jointly by the Speaker and the Majority and Minority Leaders under clause 1 of rule VI of the 103d Congress), see § 664, *infra*.

The House having discarded a theory that the rules might be imposed by one House on its successor (V, 6743–6745), it follows that this clause is not operative at the organization before the rules are adopted. Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, the House was required under former rule II to elect its Speaker and other officers by a viva voce vote following nominations (I, 204, 208). However, the officers mentioned in the rule, other than Speaker, were, even then, usually chosen by resolution, which is not a viva voce election (I, 193, 194). A majority vote is required for the election of officers of both Houses of Congress (VI, 23). The oath is administered by the Speaker to the officers (I, 81; § 198, *supra*). The requirement that the officers be sworn to keep the secrets of the House had become obsolete (I, 187), but the 104th Congress adopted a requirement that Members, officers, and employees subscribe an oath of secrecy regarding classified information (clause 13 of rule XXIII). Clause 4(d)(1)(A) of rule X requires the Committee on House Administration to provide policy direction for, and oversight of, the Chief Administrative Officer and the Inspector General, and oversight of the Clerk and Sergeant-at-Arms (see § 752, *infra*).

The Speaker has removed an officer prospectively (Speaker Ryan, Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 17.5). The House has declined to interfere with the Clerk's power of removing subordinates (I, 249). Employees under the Clerk and other officers are to be assigned only the duties for which they are appointed (V, 7232). The Sergeant-at-Arms having died, the Clerk was elected by the House to serve temporarily also as Sergeant-at-Arms without additional compensation (July 8, 1953, p. 8242). The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (2 U.S.C. 5501) authorizes the Speaker to fill temporary vacancies in the offices of Clerk, Sergeant-at-Arms, Chief Administrative Officer, and Chaplain, and the Speaker has relied on this authority to fill temporary vacancies immediately following the election of the other officers and prior to the adoption of rules at the beginning of a Congress (Jan. 6, 2023, p. \_\_; Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_). A former version of the Act also permitted temporary appointments to the former offices of Doorkeeper and Postmaster. The Speaker has exercised the authority to fill temporary vacancies in the offices of Sergeant-at-Arms (Jan. 6, 1954, p. 8; June 30, 1972, p. 23665; Feb. 28, 1980, p. 4350; Mar. 12, 1992, p. 5519; Jan. 11, 2021, p. \_\_; Jan. 6, 2023, p. \_\_), Clerk (Nov. 15, 1975, p. 36901; Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 14.6; Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 14.4; June 22, 2023, p. \_\_), Chaplain (Mar. 14, 1966, p. 5712; Mar. 23, 2000, p. 3481; Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 16.3; Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_), Doorkeeper (Dec. 20, 1974, p. 41855), and Chief Administrative Officer (Jan. 9, 1997, p. 279; Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 17.6; Dec. 16, 2015, p. 20274).

A resolution electing a House officer is presented as a question of privilege (Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 17.1; Speaker Hastert, Dec. 6, 2005,

p. 27569; May 25, 2011, p. 7885; Jan. 7, 2014, p. 449) even when prospective (Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 14.2; Speaker Ryan, Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 17.2; Speaker Pelosi, Feb. 25, 2019, p. \_\_; Apr. 21, 2021, p. \_\_). The Speaker may administer the oath to an officer elected prospectively (Speaker Albert, June 26, 1972, p. 22387; Speaker Ryan, Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 17.2), and administers the oath for a second time to an officer elected following a period of temporary appointment (Sept. 20, 2023, p. \_\_). The resignation of an elected officer of the House is subject to acceptance by the House (Mar. 23, 2000, p. 3480; Feb. 6, 2007, p. 3156; Jan. 11, 2021, p. \_\_) and may be prospective (Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 17.3; Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 16.3; June 22, 2023, p. \_\_) or retroactive (Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 16.5).

**Clerk**

2. (a) At the commencement of the first session of each Congress, the Clerk shall call the Members, Delegates, and Resident Commissioner to order and proceed to record their presence by States in alphabetical order, either by call of the roll or by use of the electronic voting system. Pending the election of a Speaker or Speaker pro tempore, and in the absence of a Member acting as Speaker pro tempore pursuant to clause 8(b)(3)(A) of rule I, the Clerk shall preserve order and decorum and decide all questions of order, subject to appeal by a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner.

§ 641. Clerk; commencement of first session.

In 1880 several rules, adopted at different periods from 1794 to 1846, were consolidated into this clause, which, before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, was found in rule III (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). Paragraph (a) was initially framed in 1880, on a basis furnished by a rule of 1860 (I, 64), and amended in 1911. It was amended in the 115th Congress to clarify that the authority of the Clerk to preside is subordinate to a Member serving as Speaker pro tempore under clause 8(b)(3)(A) of rule I (sec. 2(g), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2017, p. 37).

Various administrative duties, similar to those specified in this clause, are imposed on the Clerk by law (I, 253; Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, 60 Stat. 812), such as: furnishing stationery, blank books, etc., to the committees

§ 642. Other duties of the Clerk.

RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

§ 643–§ 645

Rule II, clause 2

and officers of the House (V, 7322); exercising discretionary authority as to reprinting of bills and documents (V, 7319); and receiving testimony taken in election contests (I, 703, 705; see also Federal Contested Election Act, P.L. 91–138, 83 Stat. 284). The Clerk has served temporarily also as Sergeant-at-Arms (July 8, 1953, p. 8242).

As rules are not usually adopted until after the election of the Speaker, this paragraph is not in force at the time of organization of a new House. The procedure at organization does, however, follow a practice conforming to the terms of the paragraph (I, 81), although the House may depart from it. For a discussion of procedure in the House before the adoption of rules, including the procedure by which the Clerk conducts the election of the Speaker, see §§ 27, 60, *supra*. The Clerk, in presiding before the election of the Speaker, recognizes Members-elect (I, 74). The Members-elect have on one occasion, before the election of the Speaker or adoption of rules, authorized the Clerk and Sergeant-at-Arms of the last House to preserve order (I, 101).

Although the Speaker ceases to be an officer of the House with the expiration of a Congress, the Clerk, by old usage, continues in a new Congress (I, 187, 188, 235, 244).

The roll of Members is made up by the Clerk from the credentials, in accordance with a provision of law (I, 14–62; VI, 2; 2 U.S.C. 26). A certificate of election in due form having been filed, the Clerk placed the name of the Member-elect on the roll, although he was subsequently advised that a State Supreme Court had issued a writ restraining the Secretary of State from issuing such certificate (Jan. 3, 1949, p. 8). As part of the announcement prior to the call of the roll, the Clerk announces any district for which the Clerk has not received a certificate of election (Jan. 3, 2019, p. \_\_; Jan. 3, 2021, p. \_\_). The call of the roll may not be interrupted, especially by one not on that roll (I, 84), and a person not on the roll may not be recognized (I, 86). A motion to proceed to the election of the Speaker is of higher privilege than a motion to correct the roll (I, 19–24). The House has declined to permit enrollment by the Clerk to be final as to prima facie right (I, 376, 589, 592).

In early years the authority of the Clerk to decide questions of order pending the election of a Speaker was questioned (I, 65). The Clerks often declined to make decisions (I, 68–72; V, 5325). However, in 1855 and 1997 the Clerk decided a question of order; and in 1997 the Clerk was sustained on appeal (I, 91; Jan. 7, 1997, pp. 115, 116). In 2023, the Clerk admonished Members to abide by established standards of decorum during nominations for Speaker (Jan. 4, 2023, p. \_\_), and provided a general reminder to Members of her authority to preserve order and decorum under this clause as incorporated into general parliamentary law (Jan. 5, 2023, p. \_\_). During the existence of a rule that applied the rules of a prior House to a successor House (1860 through 1890) (I, 64; V, 6743–6747)

§ 643. Clerk's duties at organization.

§ 644. The roll of Members-elect.

§ 645. Clerk as presiding officer at organizations.

the Clerks made several rulings (I, 76, 77; VI, 623). The Clerk has announced the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair by unanimous consent after the call of the roll and before the election of the Speaker (Jan. 3, 2021, p. \_\_).

Before clause 8(b)(3) of rule I, this clause operated also in the case of a vacancy in the Office of Speaker arising during a Congress. For example, upon the death of the Speaker during an adjournment sine die of the first session of the 87th Congress, the Clerk called the House to order on the first day of the second session (Jan. 10, 1962, p. 5). However, clause 8(b)(3) of rule I now requires the Speaker to deliver to the Clerk a list of Members in the order in which each shall act as Speaker pro tempore in the case of a vacancy, and the Member acting as Speaker pro tempore pursuant to such clause presides over the election of a new Speaker (Oct. 25, 2023, p. \_\_).

The Clerk having died, and in the absence of the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Doorkeeper of the 79th Congress presided at organization of the 80th Congress (Jan. 3, 1947, p. 33). A Clerk appointed pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 5501 during the previous Congress to fill a vacancy caused by resignation of the Clerk elected for that Congress has presided at the organization of the 106th Congress (Jan. 6, 1999, p. 41; Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_).

(b) At the commencement of every regular session of Congress, the Clerk shall make and cause to be delivered to each Member, Delegate, and the Resident Commissioner a list of the reports that any officer or Department is required to make to Congress, citing the law or resolution in which the requirement may be contained and placing under the name of each officer the list of reports required to be made by such officer.

§ 646. Clerk furnishes a list of reports.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found in former clause 2 of rule II (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). The paragraph was initially adopted in 1822 (I, 252). It was amended in the 107th Congress to permit the Clerk to publish the list in a form other than printed (sec. 2(a), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2001, p. 25). A gender-based reference was eliminated in the 111th Congress (sec. 2(l), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7).

(c) The Clerk shall—

- § 647. Clerk's duty as to Journal and documents.
- (1) note all questions of order, with the decisions thereon, the record of which shall be appended to the Journal of each session;
  - (2) enter on the Journal the hour at which the House adjourns;
  - (3) complete the distribution of the Journal to Members, Delegates, and the Resident Commissioner, together with an accurate and complete index, as soon as possible after the close of a session; and
  - (4) send a copy of the Journal to the executive of and to each branch of the legislature of every State as may be requested by such State officials.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this paragraph (except subparagraph (2)) was found in former clause 3 of rule III (I, 251); and subparagraph (2) was found in former clause 5 of rule XVI (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). Subparagraph (2) was adopted initially in 1837 and amended in 1880 (V, 6740). Former provisions directing the Clerk to make all contracts, keep contingent and stationery accounts, and pay officers and employees were stricken by the House Administrative Reform Resolution of 1992 (H. Res. 423, Apr. 9, 1992, p. 9050) to relieve the Clerk of functions to be transferred to the Director of Non-legislative and Financial Services pursuant to that resolution (see § 664, *infra*). Clerical corrections were effected at the beginning of the 104th Congress (sec. 223(f), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 469) and the 106th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). During the 104th Congress the requirement to send a printed copy of the Journal to each branch of every State legislature was changed to an authorization to send such copies on request (H. Res. 254, Nov. 30, 1995, p. 35077). Subparagraphs (3) and (4) were amended in the 107th Congress to permit the Clerk to publish the Journal in a form other than printed (sec. 2(a), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2001, p. 25).

(d)(1) The Clerk shall attest and affix the seal of the House to all writs, warrants, and subpoenas issued by order of the House and certify the passage of all bills and joint resolutions.

§ 648. Attests and seals process and certifies passage of bills; oversees engrossment and enrollment process.

(2) The Clerk shall examine all bills, amendments, and joint resolutions after passage by the House and, in cooperation with the Senate, examine all bills and joint resolutions that have passed both Houses to see that they are correctly enrolled and forthwith present those bills and joint resolutions that originated in the House to the President in person after their signature by the Speaker and the President of the Senate, and report to the House the fact and date of their presentment.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, subparagraph (1) was found in former clause 3 of rule III (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). When the House issues an order or warrant, the Speaker must issue the summons under the Speaker’s hand and seal, and it must be attested by the Clerk; but when the power is granted to a committee to send for persons and papers under clause 2(m) of rule XI, a summons signed by the chair of the committee is sufficient (III, 1668).

The enrollment process was originally the responsibility of the Committee on Enrolled Bills, which was created in 1789 by a joint rule of the two Houses (IV, 4350). This joint rule lapsed in 1876 with other joint rules, but in 1880 the Rules of the House were amended to again recognize the Committee on Enrolled Bills (IV, 4350, 4416; VII, 2099). Responsibility for the engrossment and enrollment process was given to the Committee on House Administration when that committee was created effective January 2, 1947 as part of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 (60 Stat. 812) as an enumerated subject of legislative jurisdiction. That responsibility was transferred from the committee’s legislative jurisdiction to its special oversight jurisdiction (see former clause 4(d)(1)(A) of rule X) by the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974, effective January 3, 1975 (H. Res. 988, 93d Cong., Oct. 8, 1974, p. 34470) and was transferred to the Clerk in the 107th Congress (sec. 2(b), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2001, p. 28).

A special order of business reported by the Committee on Rules directing the Clerk to refrain from certifying an enrollment pending the resolution

of a given contingency does not violate subparagraph (2) (Apr. 13, 2011, p. 5873).

(e) The Clerk shall cause the calendars of the House to be distributed each legislative day.

§ 649. Calendars distributed.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, paragraph (e) was found in former clause 6 of rule XIII (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). This paragraph was adopted initially in the 62d Congress, April 5, 1911 (VI, 743), and amended December 8, 1931 (pp. 10, 83). It was amended in the 107th Congress to permit the Clerk to publish the calendars in a form other than printed (sec. 2(a), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2001, p. 25).

(f) The Clerk shall—

(1) retain in the library at the Office of the Clerk for the use of the Members, Delegates, Resident Commissioner, and officers of the House, and not to be withdrawn therefrom, two copies of all the books and printed documents deposited there; and

§ 650. Documents.

(2) deliver to any Member, Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner an extra copy of each document requested by that Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner that has been printed by order of either House of Congress in any Congress in which the Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner served.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, paragraphs (c) and (f) were found in former clause 3 of rule III (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). They were amended in the 92d Congress to include Delegates and the Resident Commissioner among those entitled to the listed services (H. Res. 5, Jan. 22, 1971, pp. 140–44; H. Res. 1153, Oct. 13, 1972, pp. 36013–15). Paragraph (f) was amended in the 107th Congress to permit the Clerk to distribute documents by a method other than mail and in a form other than bound (sec. 2(a), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2001, p. 25).

(g) The Clerk shall provide for the temporary absence or disability of the Clerk by designating an official in the Office of the Clerk to sign all papers that may require the official signature of the Clerk and to perform all other official acts that the Clerk may be required to perform under the rules and practices of the House, except such official acts as are provided for by statute. Official acts performed by the designated official shall be under the name of the Clerk. The designation shall be in writing and shall be laid before the House and entered on the Journal.

§ 651. Official to act as Clerk upon designation.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this paragraph was found in former clause 4 of rule III (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially on January 18, 1912 (VI, 25) and was amended January 3, 1953 (p. 16). Form of designation of a Clerk pro tempore (VI, 26). Technical corrections were effected in the 108th Congress (sec. 2(u), H. Res. 5, Jan. 7, 2003, p. 7). A gender-based reference was eliminated in the 111th Congress (sec. 2(l), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7).

(h) The Clerk may receive messages from the President and from the Senate at any time when the House is in recess or adjournment.

§ 652. Authority to receive messages.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this paragraph was found in former clause 5 of rule III (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted in the 97th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 5, 1981, pp. 98–113) and amended in the 111th Congress to apply to recesses as well as adjournments (sec. 2(m), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 9) to reflect current practice (see Dec. 22, 1987, p. 37966). In the case of *Kennedy v. Sampson*, 511 F.2d 430 (D.C. Cir. 1974) (see § 113, *supra*, accompanying Const., art. I, sec. 7, cl. 2) a United States court of appeals held that a bill could not be pocket-vetoed by the President during an “intrasession” adjournment of Congress to a day certain for more than three days, where the House of origin has made appropriate arrangements for the receipt of Presidential messages during the adjournment.

(i) The Clerk shall supervise the staff and manage the office of a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner who has died, resigned, or been expelled until a successor is elected. The Clerk shall perform similar duties in the event that a vacancy is declared by the House in any congressional district because of the incapacity of the person representing such district or other reason. When acting as a supervisory authority over such staff, the Clerk shall have authority to terminate employees and, with the approval of the Committee on House Administration, may appoint such staff as is required to operate the office until a successor is elected.

§ 653. Administration of vacant Member's office.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this paragraph was found in former clause 6 of rule III (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially in the 98th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 1983, p. 34). It was amended in the 104th and 106th Congresses to reflect changes in the name of the Committee on House Administration (sec. 202(b), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 464; H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). A gender-based reference was eliminated in the 111th Congress (sec. 2(l), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7). Outdated language was removed in the 117th Congress to conform to the repeal of a statutory provision providing for staff assistance to former Speakers (sec. 2(a), H. Res. 8, Jan. 4, 2021, p. \_\_). The Clerk managed the office of a congressional district after the House was notified that a special election had been ordered by the State in said district (where a vacancy existed due to the lack of a certificate of election) (March 14, 2019, p. \_\_). The Chief Administrative Officer provides assistance to the Clerk in carrying out the responsibilities under this paragraph (see § 663b, *infra*).

(j) In addition to any other reports required by the Speaker or the Committee on House Administration, the Clerk shall report to the Committee on House Administration not later than 45 days following the close of each semiannual period ending on June

§ 654. Semi-annual reports.

30 or on December 31 on the financial and operational status of each function under the jurisdiction of the Clerk. Each report shall include financial statements and a description or explanation of current operations, the implementation of new policies and procedures, and future plans for each function.

(k) The Clerk shall fully cooperate with the appropriate offices and persons in the performance of reviews and audits of financial records and administrative operations.

§ 655. Cooperation with others.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, paragraphs (j) and (k) were found in former clauses 7 and 8 of rule III (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). They were adopted initially in the 104th Congress (sec. 201(b), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463). A conforming change was effected at the beginning of the 106th Congress in the name of the Committee on House Administration (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47).

### *Sergeant-at-Arms*

3. (a) The Sergeant-at-Arms shall attend the House during its sittings and maintain order under the direction of the Speaker or other presiding officer. The Sergeant-at-Arms shall execute the commands of the House, and all processes issued by authority thereof, directed to the Sergeant-at-Arms by the Speaker.

§ 656. Sergeant-at-Arms enforces authority of House.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this paragraph was found in former clause 1 of rule IV (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially in 1789, with additions and amendments in 1838, 1877, 1890 (I, 257), 1911 (VI, 29), and 1971. A gender-based reference was eliminated in the 111th Congress (sec. 2(l), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7). Amendments adopted in the 92d Congress to clarify the responsibility of the Sergeant-at-Arms to keep the accounts for the pay and mileage of the Delegates from the District of Columbia, Guam, and the Virgin Islands and the Resident Commissioner from Puerto Rico as

well as for Members (H. Res. 5, Jan. 22, 1971, p. 144; H. Res. 1153, Oct. 13, 1972, pp. 36013–15) were stricken by the House Administrative Reform Resolution of 1992 (H. Res. 423, Apr. 9, 1992, p. 9039) to relieve the Sergeant-at-Arms of functions transferred to the Director of Non-legislative and Financial Services pursuant to that resolution (see § 664, *supra*). In the 94th Congress, the provisions of House Resolution 732, directing the Sergeant-at-Arms to enter into agreements with State officials, with the approval of the Committee on House Administration, to withhold State income taxes from the pay of each Member subject to such State income tax and requesting such withholding, were enacted into permanent law (90 Stat. 1448; 2 U.S.C. 4556). During the 102d Congress, the House adopted a resolution presented by the Majority Leader as a question of the privileges of the House to terminate all bank and check-cashing operations in the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms and direct the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct (now Ethics) to review GAO audits of such operations (Oct. 3, 1991, p. 25435). When former rule IV was rewritten in the 104th Congress, clause 1 was restated without change (sec. 201(c), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463). The Chair may enlist the Sergeant-at-Arms to assist the Chair in maintaining decorum (Sept. 17, 1997, p. 19027; Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 15.7; June 22, 2018, p. \_\_).

The Sergeant-at-Arms is authorized to make payments from the contingent fund of the House (now referred to as “applicable accounts of the House described in clause 1(k)(1) of rule X”), under rules prescribed by the Committee on House Administration, to defray the expenses of the funeral of a deceased Member of the House and the expenses of any delegation of Members of Congress duly appointed to attend (76 Stat. 686; 2 U.S.C. 5606).

The Speaker ordered that documents received in a communication from an independent counsel advising the House of substantial and credible information that may constitute grounds for impeachment of the President be kept under armed guard of the Sergeant-at-Arms until the House determined which documents to make available to the public (Sept. 9, 1998, p. 19769).

At the organization of the House in a new Congress, the Speaker may maintain decorum before adoption of rules by directing the Sergeant-at-Arms to present the mace as the traditional symbol of order (Precedents (Wickham), ch. 1, § 6.5). Before the election of Speaker, a special rule may be adopted conferring the authority of this paragraph, as was done in 1849 and 1859 (I, 101, 102).

Duties imposed on the Sergeant-at-Arms by law (I, 258) include control of the Capitol Police; and the making up of the roll of Members-elect and presiding over the organization of a new Congress in case of vacancy in the Office of the Clerk, or the absence or disability of that officer (2 U.S.C. 26). The death of the Sergeant-at-Arms being announced, the House passed appropriate resolutions and adjourned as a mark of respect (VI, 32; July 8, 1953, p. 8263). The Clerk having died, and in the absence of the Sergeant-

at-Arms, the Doorkeeper of the 79th Congress presided at the organization of the 80th Congress (Jan. 3, 1947, p. 33). In the 83d Congress the Sergeant-at-Arms having died, the Clerk was elected to serve temporarily both as Clerk and Sergeant-at-Arms (July 8, 1953, p. 8242), and upon resignation by the Clerk from the additional position of Sergeant-at-Arms, the Speaker, pursuant to 2 U.S.C. 5501, appointed a temporary Sergeant-at-Arms (Jan. 6, 1954, p. 8). The Sergeant-at-Arms having resigned in the 96th Congress, the Speaker appointed a temporary Sergeant-at-Arms pursuant to the statute (Feb. 28, 1980, pp. 4349–50); and the same occurred in the 102d Congress (Mar. 12, 1992, p. 5519).

(b) The symbol of the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms shall be the mace, which shall be borne by the Sergeant-at-Arms while enforcing order on the floor.

§ 657. The mace is the symbol of Sergeant-at-Arms' office.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this paragraph was found in former clause 2 of rule IV (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially in 1789 (II, 1346). When former rule IV was rewritten entirely in the 104th Congress, the paragraph was restated without change (sec. 201(c), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463). A gender-based reference was eliminated in the 111th Congress (sec. 2(l), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7). Extreme disorder arising on the floor, the Speaker directed the Sergeant-at-Arms to enforce order with the mace (VI, 258; VIII, 2530), but an attempt to enforce order without the mace has been questioned as illegitimate (II, 1347).

(c) The Sergeant-at-Arms shall enforce strictly the rules relating to the privileges of the Hall of the House and be responsible to the House for the official conduct of employees of the Office of the Sergeant-at-Arms.

§ 658. Doorkeeping.

(d) The Sergeant-at-Arms may not allow a person to enter the room over the Hall of the House during its sittings and, from 15 minutes before the hour of the meeting of the House each day until 10 minutes after adjournment, shall see that the floor is cleared of all persons except those privileged to remain.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, paragraphs (c) and (d) were found in former clauses 3 and 4 of rule IV (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). They were adopted initially in the 104th Congress to transfer functions incident to the abolishment of the Office of the Doorkeeper (sec. 201(c), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463). Gender-based references were eliminated in the 111th Congress (sec. 2(1), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7). For the history of the Office of the Doorkeeper, see § 663c, *infra*.

(e) In addition to any other reports required by the Speaker or the Committee on House Administration, the Sergeant-at-Arms shall report to the Committee on House Administration not later than 45 days following the close of each semiannual period ending on June 30 or on December 31 on the financial and operational status of each function under the jurisdiction of the Sergeant-at-Arms. Each report shall include financial statements and a description or explanation of current operations, the implementation of new policies and procedures, and future plans for each function.

§ 659. Semi-annual reports.

(f) The Sergeant-at-Arms shall fully cooperate with the appropriate offices and persons in the performance of reviews and audits of financial records and administrative operations.

§ 660. Cooperation with others.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, paragraphs (e) and (f) were found in former clauses 5 and 6 of rule IV (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). They were adopted initially in the 104th Congress (sec. 201(c), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463). A conforming change was effected at the beginning of the 106th Congress in the name of the Committee on House Administration (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47).

(g)(1) The Sergeant-at-Arms is authorized and directed to impose a fine against a Member, Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner for the use of an electronic device for still photography or for

§ 660a. Duties regarding electronic devices.

audio or visual recording or broadcasting in contravention of clause 5 of rule XVII and any applicable Speaker's announced policy on electronic devices.

(2) A fine imposed pursuant to this paragraph shall be \$500 for a first offense and \$2,500 for any subsequent offense.

(3)(A) The Sergeant-at-Arms shall promptly notify the Member, Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner, the Speaker, the Chief Administrative Officer, and the Committee on Ethics of any such fine.

(B) Such Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner may appeal the fine in writing to the Committee on Ethics not later than 30 calendar days or five legislative days, whichever is later, after notification pursuant to subdivision (A).

(C) Upon receipt of an appeal pursuant to subdivision (B), the Committee on Ethics shall have a period of 30 calendar days or five legislative days, whichever is later, to consider the appeal. The fine will be upheld unless the appeal is agreed to by a majority of the Committee. Upon a determination regarding the appeal or if no appeal has been filed at the expiration of the period specified in subdivision (B), the chair of the Committee on Ethics shall promptly notify the Member, Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner, the Speaker, the Sergeant-at-Arms, and the Chief Administrative Officer, and shall make such notification publicly available. The Speaker shall promptly lay such notification before the House.

(4) The Sergeant-at-Arms and the Committee on Ethics are authorized to establish policies and procedures for the implementation of this paragraph.

This clause was added in the 115th Congress (sec. 2(a)(1), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2017, p. 36), and it was amended during the 117th Congress to modify the process for consideration of appeals by the Committee on Ethics (sec. 8, H. Res. 85, Feb. 2, 2021, p. \_\_). Immediately following its adoption, the Chair announced procedures regarding its enforcement (Jan. 3, 2017, p. 66). The Speaker has inserted in the Record announced policies on electronic devices under clause 5 of rule XVII and on the implementation of this clause (Speaker Ryan, Jan. 3, 2017, p. 66; Speaker Pelosi, Jan. 3, 2019, p. \_\_; Speaker Pelosi, Jan. 4, 2021, p. \_\_; Speaker McCarthy, Jan. 9, 2023, p. \_\_; Speaker Johnson, Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_). The Speaker has emphasized this rule as part of a larger enforcement announcement regarding proper decorum (Speaker Ryan, June 23, 2017, p. 9794). For annotations under clause 5 of rule XVII, see § 962, *infra*.

During the 117th Congress, the House established fines for the failure to wear a mask during a designated public health emergency in contravention of the Speaker's announced policies (sec. 4, H. Res. 38, Jan. 12, 2021, p. \_\_) and for the failure to complete a required security screening for entrance to the House Chamber (H. Res. 73, Feb. 2, 2021, p. \_\_). The resolution that imposed a fine related to masks cross-referenced this clause for enforcement purposes, and established mask-wearing as a standard of conduct pursuant to clause 3(a)(2) of rule XI.

### ***Chief Administrative Officer***

4. (a) The Chief Administrative Officer shall have operational and financial responsibility for functions as assigned by the Committee on House Administration and shall be subject to the policy direction and oversight of the Committee on House Administration.

(b) In addition to any other reports required by the Committee on House Administration, the Chief Administrative Officer shall report to the Committee on House Administration not later than 45 days following

§ 661. Duties.

§ 662. Semi-annual reports.

the close of each semiannual period ending on June 30 or December 31 on the financial and operational status of each function under the jurisdiction of the Chief Administrative Officer. Each report shall include financial statements and a description or explanation of current operations, the implementation of new policies and procedures, and future plans for each function.

(c) The Chief Administrative Officer shall fully cooperate with the appropriate offices and persons in the performance of reviews and audits of financial records and administrative operations.

§ 663. Cooperation with others.

(d)(1) Upon notification from the chair of the Committee on Ethics pursuant to clause 3(g)(3)(C), the Chief Administrative Officer shall deduct the amount of any fine levied under clause 3(g) from the net salary otherwise due the Member, Delegate, or the Resident Commissioner.

§ 663a. Deduction from salary for certain fines.

(2) The Chief Administrative Officer is authorized to establish policies and procedures for such salary deductions.

(e) The Chief Administrative Officer shall assist the Clerk in carrying out the responsibilities described in clause 2(i).

§ 663b. Vacant offices.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, clause 4 was found in former rule V (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially in this form in the 104th Congress (sec. 201(c), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463). It was amended in the 105th Congress to eliminate the supervisory role of the Speaker over the Chief Administrative Officer (H. Res. 5, Jan. 7, 1997, p. 121). A conforming change was effected at the beginning of the 106th Congress in the name of the Committee on House Administration (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). Paragraph (a) was amended

in the 107th Congress to reflect the removal of the requirement that the Committee on House Administration provide policy direction to the Chief Administrative Officer (sec. 2(g), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2001, p. 25), but that change was reversed in the 114th Congress (sec. 2(a)(3)(B), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2015, p. 34). Paragraph (d) was added in the 115th Congress (sec. 2(a)(2), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2017, p. 36), and paragraph (e) was added in the 119th Congress (sec. 2(c), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_). The earlier form of the rule enumerated the duties of the Doorkeeper, which were transferred to the Sergeant-at-Arms incident to the abolishment of the Office of the Doorkeeper. The Chief Administrative Officer makes certain reports on receipts and expenditures (2 U.S.C. 4108, 4109), which are available to the public. However, members of the public have no statutory or constitutional right to examine the actual financial records that are used in preparing such reports. *Trimble v. Johnston*, 173 F. Supp. 651 (D.C. Cir. 1959).

During the 117th Congress, the House established a fine for failure to wear a mask during a designated public health emergency in contravention of the Speaker’s announced policies, which required the Chief Administrative Officer to deduct the amount of any such fine (sec. 4, H. Res. 38, Jan. 12, 2021, p. \_\_). The House also established a fine for the failure to complete a required security screening for entrance to the House Chamber, which required the Chief Administrative Officer, upon failure of a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner to pay such a fine within a specified period, to deduct the amount of the fine from the net salary of the Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner in accordance with procedures established by the Committee on House Administration (H. Res. 73, Feb. 2, 2021, p. \_\_).

Before the 104th Congress (sec. 201(c), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463), rule V enumerated the duties of the Doorkeeper, who enforced the rules relating to the privileges of the Hall of the House. The earlier form of the rule was adopted in 1838 and amended in 1869, 1880 (I, 260), and 1890 (V, 7295). By law the Doorkeeper was assigned certain administrative duties (I, 262), including certain housekeeping functions. Through employees and appointees, the Doorkeeper also discharged various duties not enumerated in the law or in the rules, such as announcing at the door of the Hall of the House all messengers from the President and the Senate (V, 6591). The Clerk having died, and the Sergeant-at-Arms having been absent, the Doorkeeper of the 79th Congress presided at the organization of the 80th Congress (Jan. 3, 1947, p. 33). In the 78th Congress, the House adopted a resolution on the death of the Doorkeeper and appointed a committee to attend his funeral (Jan. 28, 1943, pp. 421, 422).

The Chief Administrative Officer supplanted the Director of Non-legislative and Financial Services formerly provided for under clause 1 of rule VI in the 103d Congress, which corresponded to an erstwhile rule LII of the 102d Congress. Certain functions and entities formerly within

§ 663c. Former Office of Doorkeeper.

§ 664. Former Director of Non-legislative and Financial Services.

the purview of elected officers were transferred to the Director of Non-legislative and Financial Services pursuant to the House Administrative Reform Resolution of 1992 (H. Res. 423, Apr. 9, 1992, p. 9040), which also vested the Committee on House Administration with authority to prescribe regulations providing for the orderly transfer of such functions and entities and any other transfers necessary for the improvement of non-legislative and financial services in the House, so long as not transferring a function or entity within the jurisdiction of the committee under rule X. Pursuant to clause 1 of rule VI of the 103d Congress (then still designated as rule LII of the 102d Congress), the Speaker, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader jointly appointed the first Director of Non-legislative and Financial Services on October 23, 1992 (Oct. 29, 1992, p. 34802).

### *Chaplain*

**5. The Chaplain shall offer a prayer at the commencement of each day's sitting of the House.**

§ 665. Duties of the Chaplain.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this clause was found in former rule VII (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially in 1880 (I, 272), but the sessions of the House were opened with prayer from the first, and the Chaplain was an officer of the House before the adoption of the rule (I, 273–282). The Chaplain takes the oath prescribed for the officers of the House (VI, 31; Feb. 1, 1950, p. 1311). Prayer by the Chaplain is not business requiring the presence of a quorum and the Speaker declines to entertain a point of no quorum before prayer is offered (VI, 663; clause 7 of rule XX). There is no precedent for prayer to be offered by the Chaplain during a continuous session of the House, absent an adjournment or recess (compare Apr. 22 and 23, 1985, pp. 8753 and 8959). Form of resignation of the Chaplain (Feb. 28, 1921, p. 4075; Jan. 30, 1950, p. 1097; Mar. 23, 2000, p. 3480; *Precedents (Wickham)*, ch. 6, § 16.5; *Precedents (Wickham)*, ch. 6, § 16.3). Form of resolution electing a Chaplain emeritus (VI, 31; Jan. 30, 1950, p. 1095; *Precedents (Wickham)*, ch. 6, § 16.21).

During the 97th Congress, the Supreme Court held that employment of a chaplain for the legislative body of Nebraska did not violate the Establishment Clause of the first amendment to the Constitution. *Marsh v. Chambers*, 463 U.S. 783 (1983). The Court of Appeals cited the *Marsh* decision as controlling authority in a similar challenge to the House Chaplain. *Murray v. Buchanan*, 729 F.2d 689 (D.C. Cir. 1983). The House adopted a privileged resolution articulating its position in the *Murray* case (H. Res. 413, Mar. 30, 1982, p. 5890). During the 113th Congress, the Supreme Court held that the practice of opening a town board meeting with a prayer offered by a member of the clergy did not violate the Establishment Clause

in part because of the tradition long followed by Congress and state legislatures. *Town of Greece v. Galloway*, 572 U.S. 565 (2014).

### ***Office of Inspector General***

6. (a) There is established an Office of Inspector General.

§ 667. Inspector General.

(b) The Inspector General shall be appointed for a Congress by the Speaker, the Majority Leader, and the Minority Leader, acting jointly.

(c) Subject to the policy direction and oversight of the Committee on House Administration, the Inspector General shall only—

(1) provide audit, investigative, and advisory services to the House and joint entities in a manner consistent with government-wide standards;

(2) inform the officers or other officials who are the subject of an audit of the results of that audit and suggesting appropriate curative actions;

(3) simultaneously notify the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on House Administration in the case of any financial irregularity discovered in the course of carrying out responsibilities under this clause;

(4) simultaneously submit to the Speaker, the Majority Leader, the Minority Leader, and the chair and ranking minority member of the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on House Administration a report of each audit conducted under this clause; and

(5) report to the Committee on Ethics information involving possible violations by a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House of any rule of the House or of any law applicable to the performance of official duties or the discharge of official responsibilities that may require referral to the appropriate Federal or State authorities under clause 3(a)(3) of rule XI.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this clause was found in former rule VI (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially in this form at the beginning of the 104th Congress (sec. 201(c), H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463). Later in the 104th Congress and in the 106th Congress it was amended to effect a technical correction (H. Res. 254, Nov. 30, 1995, p. 35077; H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). Its predecessor form was composed in the 103d Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 5, 1993, p. 49) by combining two rules adopted in the House Administrative Reform Resolution of 1992 (H. Res. 423, Apr. 9, 1992, p. 9040). Paragraph (c)(1) was amended, and gender-based references were eliminated, in the 111th Congress (secs. 2(a), 2(l), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7). Paragraph (c)(5) was amended in the 112th Congress to reflect a change in committee name (sec. 2(e)(8), H. Res. 5, Jan. 5, 2011, p. 80). Paragraph (c)(4) was amended in the 113th Congress to add the Committee on Appropriations (sec. 2(f), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2013, p. 26).

In the form of the rule adopted in the 103d Congress, paragraph (a) (formerly clause 1) corresponded to an erstwhile rule LII of the 102d Congress (relating to the Director of Non-legislative and Financial Services, who in the 104th Congress was supplanted by the Chief Administrative Officer; see clause 4 of rule II, §§661–663a, *supra*), and paragraph (b) (formerly clause 2) corresponded to an erstwhile rule LIII of the 102d Congress (relating to the Inspector General). The 104th Congress rewrote clause 2 of rule VI (as it was composed in the 103d Congress) to occupy all of rule VI and to: broaden the auditing responsibilities beyond the offices of the elected officers (paragraph (c)(1), formerly clause 2(c)(1)); add requirements for simultaneous reporting (paragraphs (c)(3) and (4), formerly clauses 2(c)(3) and (4)); delete a provision relating to classification of employees (formerly clause 2(d)); and add the responsibility to report certain information to the Committee on Ethics (paragraph (c)(5)) (sec. 201, H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 464). The 104th Congress also mandated that the Inspector General, in consultation with the Speaker and the Committee on House Administration, procure an independent and comprehensive audit of House financial records and administrative operations and report

the results thereof in accord with this rule (sec. 107, H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 463).

Until the 102d Congress, former rule VI provided for an Office of the Postmaster, which supervised the post offices of the House and the delivery of its mail. The earlier form of the rule was adopted in 1838 and amended in 1880 (I, 270), 1911 (VI, 34), 1971 (H. Res. 5, Jan. 21, 1971, p. 15), and 1972 (H. Res. 1153, Oct. 13, 1972, pp. 36013, 36014). The Office of the Postmaster was abolished during the 102d Congress by the House Administrative Reform Resolution of 1992 (H. Res. 423, Apr. 9, 1992, p. 9040).

### *Office of the Historian*

7. There is established an Office of the Historian of the House of Representatives. The Speaker shall appoint and set the annual rate of pay for employees of the Office of the Historian.

§ 669. Historian.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found in former clause 10 of rule I (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially in the 101st Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 1989, p. 72). The second sentence was added in the 106th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). An earlier form of this clause provided for the seven-year establishment of an Office for the Bicentennial to coordinate the commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the House of Representatives (Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 23.1). The management, supervision, and administration of the office was under the direction of the Speaker and was staffed by a professional historian appointed by the Speaker on a nonpartisan basis. In 1984 the office was removed from the standing rules and established for the remainder of its existence by P.L. 98–367. Apart from the Office of the Historian, the History of the House Awareness and Preservation Act requires the Librarian of Congress to prepare a new and complete written history of the House in consultation with the Committee on House Administration (2 U.S.C. 183). The Act also requires the Librarian to accept for deposit, preserve, maintain, and make accessible an oral history of the House as told by its Members and former Members (2 U.S.C. 183a).

### *Office of General Counsel*

8. (a) There is established an Office of General Counsel for the purpose of providing legal assistance and rep-

§ 670. General Counsel.

resentation to the House. Legal assistance and representation shall be provided without regard to political affiliation. The Speaker shall appoint and set the annual rate of pay for employees of the Office of General Counsel. The Office of General Counsel shall function pursuant to the direction of the Speaker, who shall consult with the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group.

Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found in former clause 11 of rule I (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47). It was adopted initially in the 103d Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 5, 1993, p. 49). The previous year, in the House Administrative Reform Resolution of 1992 (H. Res. 423, Apr. 9, 1992, p. 9040), the House had directed the Committee on House Administration to provide for an Office of General Counsel in a manner ensuring appropriate coordination with and participation by both the majority and minority leaderships in matters of representation and litigation. It was amended in the 114th Congress to move composition of the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group to a new paragraph (b) (sec. 2(b), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2015, p. 34).

The General Counsel 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. 5571(a)). Furthermore, the law requires the Attorney General to notify the General Counsel of a determination not to appeal a court decision affecting the constitutionality of an Act (2 U.S.C. 5571(b)). The House may authorize the General Counsel to represent the House or a committee or take other action in a judicial proceeding (Feb. 14, 2008, p. 2191; sec. 4(f), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 10; June 28, 2012, pp. 10512, 10515; sec. 4(a)(2), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2013, p. 27; Precedents (Wickham), ch. 6, § 19.3; secs. 3(f)(1), 3(f)(2), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2015, p. 36; sec. 103(n), H. Res. 6, Jan. 3, 2019, p. \_\_; title III, H. Res. 6, Jan. 9, 2019, p. \_\_; H. Res. 430, June 11, 2019, \_\_; H. Res. 917, Dec. 13, 2023, p. \_\_; sec. 3(v)(2), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_). The House has authorized the Office of General Counsel to retain private counsel in support of an ongoing impeachment inquiry (H. Res. 661, Nov. 14, 2019, p. \_\_; H. Res. 917, Dec. 13, 2023, p. \_\_).

(b) There is established a Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group composed of the Speaker and the majority and minority leaderships. Unless otherwise provided by the House, the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group

§ 670a. Bipartisan  
Legal Advisory Group.

speaks for, and articulates the institutional position of, the House in all litigation matters.

This paragraph was added in the 114th Congress to affirmatively establish the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group, whose composition was previously included in what is now paragraph (a) (sec. 2(b), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2015, p. 34). The second sentence reflected a separate order of the House of the 113th Congress, which also authorized the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group to continue certain civil actions begun in the previous Congress (sec. 4(a)(1), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2013, p. 27). In the 116th and 118th Congresses the House adopted a resolution reaffirming the authority of the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group to speak for the House in regard to authorizing committees to initiate or intervene in judicial proceedings (H. Res. 430, June 11, 2019, p. \_\_; H. Res. 917, Dec. 13, 2023, p. \_\_).

(c) The House, the Speaker, a committee or the chair of a committee authorized during a prior Congress to act in a litigation matter is authorized to act as the successor in interest to the House, the Speaker, such committee or the chair of such committee of a prior Congress, respectively, with respect to such litigation matter, and to take such steps as may be appropriate to ensure continuation of such litigation matter.

§ 670b. Continuing litigation authority.

This paragraph was added in the 115th Congress (sec. 2(h), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2017, p. 37). It was amended in the 117th Congress to clarify that the issuance of subpoenas constituted an appropriate step to ensure continuation of a litigation matter (sec. 2(c), H. Res. 8, Jan. 4, 2021, p. \_\_), but such language was removed in the 118th Congress (sec. 2(n), H. Res. 5, Jan. 9, 2023, p. \_\_). Previously, authority to continue judicial proceedings had been granted by separate orders for specific matters (*e.g.*, sec. 4(f), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 10; sec. 4(a)(2), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2013, p. 27; secs. 3(f)(1), 3(f)(2), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2015, p. 36). In several instances, such authority has been granted by separate order even after the addition of this paragraph (sec. 3(q), H. Res. 8, Jan. 4, 2021, p. \_\_; sec. 3(v), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_).

***Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds***

9. (a) There is established an Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds. The Speaker, in consultation with the chairs and ranking minority members of the Committee on House Administration and the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, shall appoint a Director of the Office.

(b) Subject to the policy direction and oversight of the Committee on House Administration, and in consultation with any other committee (at the request of the chair or ranking minority member of such other committee), the Office of the Whistleblower Ombuds shall—

- (1) promulgate best practices for whistleblower intake for offices of the House; and
- (2) provide training for offices of the House on whistleblower intake, including establishing an effective reporting system for whistleblowers, maintaining whistleblower confidentiality, advising staff of relevant laws and policies, and protecting information provided by whistleblowers.

This clause was adopted in the 117th Congress (sec. 2(b), H. Res. 8, Jan. 4, 2021, p. \_\_). It was amended in the 118th and 119th Congresses to reflect a change in the name of a committee (sec. 2(j), H. Res. 5, Jan. 9, 2023, p. \_\_; sec. 2(d), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_). It was initially designated as clause 10 but was redesignated in the 119th Congress (sec. 2(f), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_). Prior to its inclusion in the standing rules, the office was established in the 116th Congress and given similar duties (sec. 104(e), H. Res. 6, Jan. 3, 2019, p. \_\_).

An Office of Diversity and Inclusion was established under this clause in the 117th Congress (sec. 2(b), H. Res. 8, Jan. 4, 2021, p. \_\_). Prior to its inclusion in the standing rules, the office was established in the 116th Congress with responsibility for the development of plans for increased

§ 670d. Former Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

diversity in House employment as well as a biennial report on diversity within the House (sec. 104(d), H. Res. 6, Jan. 3, 2019, p. \_\_\_). It was formally eliminated in the 119th Congress (sec. 2(f), H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 2025, p. \_\_\_).

## RULE III

### THE MEMBERS, DELEGATES, AND RESIDENT COMMISSIONER OF PUERTO RICO

#### *Voting*

1. Every Member shall be present within the Hall of the House during its sittings, unless excused or necessarily prevented, and shall vote on each question put, unless having a direct personal or pecuniary interest in the event of such question.

§ 671. Personal interest.

When the House recodified its rules, it consolidated former rule VIII, rule XII, and clause 6(h) of rule X under rule III, except that viable provisions of former clause 2 of rule VIII were transferred to current clause 3 of rule XX. This clause was adopted initially in 1789, with amendment in 1890 (V, 5941). A gender-based reference was eliminated in the 111th Congress (sec. 2(l), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. 7). Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this clause was found in former clause 1 of rule VIII (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. 47).

Leaves of absence are presented pending the motion to adjourn (IV, 3151), and are usually granted by unanimous consent, but sometimes are opposed or even refused (II, 1142–1145). Application for leave of absence is properly presented by filing with the Clerk the printed form to be secured at the desk rather than by oral request from the floor (VI, 199). Whether or not they are privileged is a matter of doubt (II, 1146, 1147). Excuses for absence, as distinguished from leaves of absence, may be granted by less than a quorum (IV, 3000–3002). The statutes provide that deductions may be made from the salaries of Members who are absent without sufficient excuse (II, 1149, 1150); and although this law has been enforced (IV, 3011, footnote; VI, 30, 198), its general application is not practical under modern conditions. Form of resolution for the arrest of Members absent without leave (VI, 686).

It has been found impracticable to enforce the provision requiring every Member to vote (V, 5942–5948), and such question, even if entertained, may not interrupt a pending record vote (V, 5947). The weight of authority also favors the

§ 672. Control of a Member's own vote.