

enumerating the items of business to be considered, shall be sent to all Committee Members at least 72 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) in advance of each meeting. In the event that the giving of such 72-hour notice is prevented by unforeseen requirements or Committee business, the Committee staff shall communicate notice by the quickest appropriate means to Members or appropriate staff assistants of Members and an agenda shall be furnished prior to the meeting.

(G) Subject to the second sentence of this paragraph, it shall not be in order for the Committee to consider any amendment in the first degree proposed to any measure under consideration by the Committee unless a written or electronic copy of such amendment has been delivered to each Member of the Committee at least 24 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) before the meeting at which the amendment is to be proposed. This paragraph may be waived by a majority vote of the Members and shall apply only when 72-hour written notice has been provided in accordance with paragraph (F).

II. QUORUMS

(A) Subject to the provisions of paragraph (B), ten Members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the reporting or approving of any measure or matter or recommendation. Seven Members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for purposes of transacting any other business.

(B) In order to transact any business at a Committee meeting, at least one Member of the minority shall be present. If, at any meeting, business cannot be transacted because of the absence of such a Member, the matter shall lay over for a calendar day. If the presence of a minority Member is not then obtained, business may be transacted by the appropriate quorum.

(C) One Member shall constitute a quorum for the purpose of receiving testimony.

III. VOTING

(A) Votes may be cast by proxy. A proxy shall be written and may be conditioned by personal instructions. A proxy shall be valid only for the day given.

(B) There shall be a complete record kept of all Committee actions. Such record shall contain the vote cast by each Member of the Committee on any question on which a roll call vote is requested.

IV. HEARINGS AND HEARING PROCEDURES

(A) Except as specifically otherwise provided, the rules governing meetings shall govern hearings.

(B) At least one week in advance of the date of any hearing, the Committee shall undertake, consistent with the provisions of paragraph 4 of rule XXVI of the Standing Rules of the Senate, to make public announcements of the date, place, time, and subject matter of such hearing.

(C)(1) Each witness who is scheduled to testify at a hearing of the Committee shall submit 40 copies of such witness' testimony to the Committee not later than 48 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) before the witness' scheduled appearance at the hearing.

(2) Any witness who fails to meet the deadline specified in paragraph (1) shall not be permitted to present testimony but may be seated to take questions from Committee members, unless the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member determine there is good cause for the witness' failure to meet the deadline or it is in the Committee's interest to permit such witness to testify.

(D) The presiding Member at any hearing is authorized to limit the time allotted to each witness appearing before the Committee.

(E) The Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee, is authorized to subpoena the attendance of witnesses and the production of memoranda, documents, records, and any other materials. If the Chairman or a Committee staff member designated by the Chairman has not received from the Ranking Minority Member or a Committee staff member designated by the Ranking Minority Member notice of the Ranking Minority Member's non-concurrence in the subpoena within 48 hours (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) of being notified of the Chairman's intention to subpoena attendance or production, the Chairman is authorized following the end of the 48-hour period involved to subpoena the same without the Ranking Minority Member's concurrence. Regardless of whether a subpoena has been concurred in by the Ranking Minority Member, such subpoena may be authorized by vote of the Members of the Committee. When the Committee or Chairman authorizes a subpoena, the subpoena may be issued upon the signature of the Chairman or of any other Member of the Committee designated by the Chairman.

(F) Except as specified in Committee Rule VII (requiring oaths, under certain circumstances, at hearings to confirm Presidential nominations), witnesses at hearings will be required to give testimony under oath whenever the presiding Member deems such to be advisable.

V. MEDIA COVERAGE

Any Committee meeting or hearing which is open to the public may be covered by television, radio, and print media. Photographers, reporters, and crew members using mechanical recording, filming, or broadcasting devices shall position and use their equipment so as not to interfere with the seating, vision, or hearing of the Committee Members or staff or with the orderly conduct of the meeting or hearing. The presiding Member of the meeting or hearing may for good cause terminate, in whole or in part, the use of such mechanical devices or take such other action as the circumstances and the orderly conduct of the meeting or hearing may warrant.

VI. GENERAL

All applicable requirements of the Standing Rules of the Senate shall govern the Committee.

VII. PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATIONS

(A) Each Presidential nominee whose nomination is subject to Senate confirmation and referred to this Committee shall submit a statement of his or her background and financial interests, including the financial interests of his or her spouse and of children living in the nominee's household, on a form approved by the Committee, which shall be sworn to as to its completeness and accuracy. The Committee form shall be in two parts:

(1) Information concerning employment, education, and background of the nominee, which generally relates to the position to which the individual is nominated and which is to be made public; and

(2) Information concerning the financial and other background of the nominee, to be made public when the Committee determines that such information bears directly on the nominee's qualifications to hold the position to which the individual is nominated.

(B) At any hearing to confirm a Presidential nomination, the testimony of the nominee and, at the request of any Member, any other witness shall be under oath.

(C) Committee action on a nomination, including hearings or a meeting to consider a motion to recommend confirmation, shall

not occur until at least five days (not counting Saturdays, Sundays, and federal holidays) after the nominee submits with respect to the currently pending nomination the form required by this rule unless the Chairman, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member, waives this waiting period.

VIII. NAMING OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FACILITIES

It is the policy of the Committee that a Department of Veterans Affairs facility may be named only after a deceased individual and only under the following circumstances:

(A) Such individual was:

(1) A veteran who (i) was instrumental in the construction or the operation of the facility to be named, or (ii) was a recipient of the Medal of Honor or, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, otherwise performed military service of an extraordinarily distinguished character;

(2) A Member of the United States House of Representatives or Senate who had a direct association with such facility;

(3) An Administrator of Veterans' Affairs, a Secretary of Veterans Affairs, a Secretary of Defense or of a service branch, or a military or other Federal civilian official of comparable or higher rank; or

(4) An individual who, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, performed outstanding service for veterans.

(B) Each Member of the Congressional delegation representing the State in which the designated facility is located must indicate in writing such Member's support of the proposal to name such facility after such individual. It is the policy of the Committee that sponsoring or cosponsoring legislation to name such facility after such individual will not alone satisfy this requirement.

(C) The pertinent State department or chapter of each Congressionally chartered veterans' organization having a national membership of at least 500,000 must indicate in writing its support of such proposal. Under certain circumstances, the Committee may grant a waiver to accept written support from pertinent chapters or posts of chartered veterans' organizations in lieu of the State department.

(D) The above criteria for naming a VA facility may be waived by unanimous consent.

IX. AMENDMENTS TO THE RULES

The rules of the Committee may be changed, modified, amended, or suspended at any time provided, however, that no less than a majority of the entire membership so determine at a regular meeting with due notice or at a meeting specifically called for that purpose. The rules governing quorums for reporting legislative matters shall govern rules changes, modification, amendments, or suspension.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RECOGNIZING THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF PROTECTORS OF ANIMALS

● Mr. BLUMENTHAL. Madam President, I rise today to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Protectors of Animals, a remarkable nonprofit organization dedicated to the advocacy and promotion of animal welfare.

Protectors of Animals is a no-kill animal shelter and rescue that was formed in 1975 in East Hartford, CT, to rescue abandoned, abused, and stray

cats and dogs. Today, the shelter stands as one of the oldest and most respected animal welfare organizations in the northeastern United States.

Protectors of Animals has grown into a truly exceptional organization, providing critical animal welfare support and services throughout Connecticut. From online resources for pet owners, to services including low-cost spay and neuter clinics, to the all-important adoption center, Protectors of Animals has truly advanced the cause of animal welfare.

I have been honored to be involved with Protectors of Animals for over 20 years. One of my personal priorities is to treat animals humanely, and I am a long-time advocate for the safeguarding of animals against abuse and neglect. That is why I have been so grateful for the support of Protectors of Animals over the years; they perform incredible advocacy work, and above all else, they truly care about the animals they serve.

I would like to extend my thanks to the dedicated staff, volunteers, and supporters of Protectors of Animals who have helped this august organization save thousands of animals and connect them with their forever home, enhancing the quality of life of so many Connecticut residents.

Protectors of Animals is celebrating their 50th anniversary on Saturday, February 15—50 years of incredibly important advocacy and services, and I am sure that there are many more to come. I hope my colleagues will join me in celebrating Protectors of Animals and the remarkable work they do.●

RECOGNIZING BHFO

● Ms. ERNST. Madam President, as chair of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week, it is my privilege to recognize BHFO of Cedar Rapids, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week.

In 2003, Jon and Stacie Sefton founded BHFO in the basement of their home in Cedar Rapids. The company's name reflects their family-oriented approach, incorporating the initials of their daughters Brittany and Hannah, along with "Factory Outlet," to emphasize accessibility to premium products. The couple wanted to provide high-quality, designer apparel at affordable prices. The emerging world of e-commerce provided an opportunity for Jon and Stacie to sell brand-name fashion items online through eBay. In 2010, they launched their own website and have continued to reach customers all around the world.

BHFO started as a single online marketplace with two suppliers and has now grown to operate across 18 different marketplaces with hundreds of brand partnerships. Jon, who serves as the CFO and President, and Stacie,

who serves as CEO, relocated the business multiple times to accommodate their rapid expansion before settling into a state-of-the-art, 240,000-square-foot facility in Cedar Rapids. This facility serves as the hub for their operations, allowing them to efficiently source, process, and distribute an extensive selection of clothing, shoes, and accessories to their customers worldwide. Today, BHFO employs over 100 team members, including their daughter Brittany who works as a buyer for the company. The company prides itself on adapting to changing consumer trends and embracing technological advancements to optimize its e-commerce platform and logistics. Their business continues to grow and thrive, with over 2.8 million positive reviews on eBay.

Beyond their impressive business achievements, BHFO remains committed to giving back to the community by supporting food pantry collections and a cancer walk that raises funds towards cancer research. BHFO is a member of the Cedar Rapids Metro Economic Alliance, and in 2013, they awarded BHFO with the Bravo Award for their local growth and economic impact. In 2024, Newsweek ranked BHFO in the top 30 for best multibrand online shop in the United States. The business contributes to charitable organizations such as the Zach Johnson Foundation, Youth for Christ, and Many Hands for Haiti International, reflecting BHFO's belief in using their success to uplift others. In March, BHFO looks forward to celebrating its 22nd anniversary in Iowa.

The entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to excellence demonstrated by BHFO is clear. I want to congratulate Jon and Stacie, their family, along with their entire team, for their hard work, innovation, and dedication to enriching their community in Iowa. I look forward to seeing their continued success.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Kelly, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations and a withdrawal which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

MESSAGES FROM THE HOUSE

At 10:03 a.m., a message from the House of Representatives delivered by Mrs. Cole, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has passed the

following bills, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H.R. 224. An act to amend section 102(a)(20) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to require the exclusion of service-connected disability compensation when determining whether a person is a person of low and moderate income, a person of low income, or a person of moderate income, and for other purposes.

H.R. 386. An act to require the United States Governor of, and the United States Executive Director at, the International Monetary Fund to oppose an increase in the weight of the Chinese renminbi in the Special Drawing Rights basket of the Fund, and for other purposes.

H.R. 692. An act to require the United States Executive Director at the International Monetary Fund to advocate for increased transparency with respect to exchange rate policies of the People's Republic of China, and for other purposes.

H.R. 736. An act to amend title 31, United States Code, to modify the deadline for filing beneficial ownership information reports for reporting companies formed or registered before January 1, 2024.

H.R. 965. An act to amend section 3(b)(4) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 to exclude certain disability benefits from income for the purposes of determining eligibility for the supported housing program under section 8(o)(19), and for other purposes.

H.R. 975. An act to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to modify the frequency of board of directors meetings, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that pursuant to section 803(a) of the Congressional Recognition for Excellence in Arts Education Act (2 U.S.C. 803(a)), and the order of the House of January 3, 2025, the Minority Leader appoints the following individual on the part of the House of Representatives to the Congressional Award Board: Mr. David Trone of Potomac, Maryland.

At 4:16 p.m., a message from the House of Representatives, delivered by Mrs. Alli, one of its reading clerks, announced that the House has agreed to the following concurrent resolution, in which it requests the concurrence of the Senate:

H. Con. Res. 11. Concurrent resolution providing for a joint session of Congress to receive a message from the President.

MEASURES REFERRED

The following bills were read the first and the second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

H.R. 224. An act to amend section 102(a)(20) of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 to require the exclusion of service-connected disability compensation when determining whether a person is a person of low and moderate income, a person of low income, or a person of moderate income, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

H.R. 386. An act to require the United States Governor of, and the United States Executive Director at, the International Monetary Fund to oppose an increase in the weight of the Chinese renminbi in the Special Drawing Rights basket of the Fund, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.