



House Republican Conference

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RULES *of the*
HOUSE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE
for the **112TH CONGRESS**
AS ADOPTED ON DECEMBER 8, 2010

RULE 1—CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP

(a) INCLUSION.—All Republican Members of the House of Representatives (including Delegates and the Resident Commissioner) and other Members of the House as determined by the Republican Conference of the House of Representatives (“the Conference”) shall be Members of the Conference.

(b) EXPULSION.—A 2/3 vote of the entire membership shall be necessary to expel a Member of the Conference. Proceedings for expulsion shall follow the rules of the House of Representatives, as nearly as practicable.

RULE 2—REPUBLICAN LEADERSHIP

(a) ELECTED LEADERSHIP.—The Elected Republican Leaders of the House of Representatives are—

(1) the Speaker;

(2) the Republican Leader;

(3) the Republican Whip;

(4) the Chair of the Republican Conference;

(5) the Chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee.

(6) the Chair of the Committee on Policy;

(7) the Vice-Chair of the Republican Conference; and,

(8) the Secretary of the Republican Conference.

(b) DESIGNATED LEADERSHIP.—The designated Republican Leaders of the House of Representatives are—

(1) the Chairman of the House Committee on Rules;

(2) the Chairman of the House Committee on Ways and Means;

(3) the Chairman of the House Committee on Appropriations;

(4) the Chairman of the House Committee on the Budget;

(5) the Chairman of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce;

(6) the Chief Deputy Whip;

(7) One member of the sophomore class elected by the sophomore class; and,

(8) Two members of the freshman class elected by the freshman class.

(c) LEADERSHIP ISSUES.—The Leader may designate certain issues as “Leadership Issues.” Those issues will require early and ongoing cooperation between the relevant committees and the Leadership as those issues evolve. A Member of the elected or designated Republican Leadership has an obligation, to the best of his or her ability, to support positions adopted by the Conference, and the resources of the Leadership shall be utilized to support that position.

(d) LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE LIMITATION.—

(1) The Speaker, Republican Leader, Whip, and the Chairs of the Republican Conference, the Committee on Policy, and the National Republican Congressional Committee shall not serve on more than one standing committee or subcommittee of the House of Representatives and in no case shall any of these individuals serve as Chairman of

a standing committee of the House of Representatives. Upon the recommendation of the Steering Committee and the approval of the Conference this provision may be waived.

(2) If a Member shall, at any time, cease to serve in any of the Leadership positions named above, he or she may resume his or her position on the standing committee on which he or she previously served.

(e) **AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE MINORITY.**—

(1) **THE SPEAKER AND REPUBLICAN LEADER.**—During any time that the Republican Party is not the majority party of the House of Representatives, the office of Speaker shall be considered as vacant, and any reference to, or authority vested in, the Speaker under these rules shall be considered references to and authority vested in the Republican Leader.

(2) **COMMITTEE CHAIRS AND RANKING REPUBLICAN MEMBERS.**—During any time that the Republican Party is not the majority party of the House of Representatives, any reference to, responsibility of, or authority vested in, the chairman of a committee of the House in these rules shall be considered a reference to, responsibility of, or authority

vested in the Ranking Republican Member of such committee.

RULE 3—ORGANIZING CONFERENCE

(a) ORGANIZING CONFERENCE.—The organizational meeting of the Conference shall be called by the Speaker, except as otherwise provided by law. The meeting shall be held not later than the 20th day of December.

(b) ORDER OF ELECTIONS.—At the organizational meeting of the Republican Conference, the Conference shall nominate and elect the Elected Leadership for that Congress in the following order—

- (1) the Speaker;
- (2) the Republican Leader;
- (3) the Republican Whip;
- (4) the Chair of the Republican Conference;
- (5) the Chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee;
- (6) the Chair of the Committee on Policy;
- (7) the Vice-Chair of the Republican Conference; and,
- (8) the Secretary of the Republican Conference.

except that during any time that the Republican Party is not the majority party of the House of Representatives, there shall be no election held for the office of Speaker.

(c) Prior to the convening of the organizational meeting called pursuant paragraph (a), the current Chair of the Republican Conference shall call a meeting to provide each of the announced candidates for Elected Leadership time to make an oral presentation and entertain questions from Members of the Conference. In establishing the time, date, and format of such meeting, the Chair shall consult with all announced candidates for Elected Leadership and a cross-section of Members of the Conference.

RULE 4—CONFERENCE ELECTION PROCEDURES

(a) VOTES BY SECRET BALLOT.—All contested elections shall be decided by secret ballot, and no proxy voting shall be allowed.

(b) NOMINATIONS.—

(1) Candidates for office shall be nominated in alphabetical surname order.

(2) For each Leadership nomination there shall be one nominating speech (not to exceed three minutes in length), and there may be two seconding speeches (each not to exceed one minute in length).

(c) BALLOTING PROCEDURES.—When there are more than two candidates for any office and none receives a majority of the votes on the first ballot, a quorum being present, the candidate with the lowest number of votes on that and each succeeding ballot will be dropped from the ballot until one candidate receives a majority of the votes, a quorum being present.

RULE 5—CONFERENCE MEETINGS**(a) CALL AND NOTICE.—**

(1) Meetings of the Republican Conference may be called at any time by the chair of the Conference, after consultation with the Speaker.

(2) A meeting shall be called upon written request of 20 percent of the membership addressed and delivered to the Chair. Such meeting shall be called as soon as practicable.

(b) SPEAKER'S ANNUAL MEETING.—The Speaker shall hold an annual Meeting at the beginning of each session of Congress at which the Republican Leadership shall report to the Membership on their plans for the upcoming session.

(c) With respect to a meeting called under this rule, whenever possible, at least 24 hours notice of the time, place, and agenda of a meeting shall be given to Members of the Conference.

RULE 6—RULES OF PROCEDURE

(a) **RULES OF THE HOUSE.**—The rules of the House Representatives, insofar as they are applicable, shall govern the proceedings of the Republican Conference.

(b) **SUSPENSION PROCEDURE.**—Two-thirds of the Members voting, a quorum being present, may suspend the Conference rules. All motions to suspend the rules shall be seconded by a majority, if demanded. The consideration of a motion to suspend the rules, to the extent practicable, shall follow the rules of the House.

(c) **RECONSIDERATION.**—When a motion has been made and carried or lost, it shall be in order for any member of the prevailing side, in the same or succeeding Conference, to move for the reconsideration thereof. The procedures for reconsideration shall be consistent with the Rules of the House.

RULE 7—CONFERENCE MEETINGS: ORDER OF BUSINESS

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b), all resolutions brought before the Republican Conference shall be referred by the Chair to the appropriate committee of the Conference for consideration. A resolution which has 25 or more signatures of Members shall be considered by the appropriate Conference committee as soon as practicable and reported back to the Conference. If the resolution is not acted on by the committee to which it was referred in a timely manner, a petition of 50 or more Members will discharge the resolution for consideration before the Conference.

(b) The Speaker, or a designee, may present any resolution to the Conference for its immediate consideration.

RULE 8—CONFERENCE MEETINGS: QUORUM

A majority of the Members of the Conference shall constitute a quorum.

RULE 9—CONFERENCE MEETINGS: SECRET BALLOT

On demand of one Member, with the support of five others, the vote on any matter properly pending before the Conference shall be taken by secret ballot.

RULE 10—CONFERENCE MEETINGS: ADMITTANCE

(a) The Chair may decide whether meetings of the Conference shall be open or closed to the public, subject to an appeal by any Member.

(b) The Chair may designate Leadership staff or other eligible persons to attend Conference meetings which are closed to the public. Those individuals shall be excused at the discretion of the Chair.

(c) Upon timely notice from the Chair, an executive session of the Conference may be called. This meeting shall be closed to all persons except Members of the Conference.

(d) On the demand of one Member, with the support of twenty-five others, a Conference meeting shall be taken into executive session.

RULE 11—CONFERENCE MEETINGS: JOURNAL

The Secretary of the Conference shall keep a journal of the Conference proceedings and each journal entry shall be signed by the Conference Secretary and the Conference Chair. The journal shall be open for inspection at the request of any Member of the Conference.

**RULE 12—ELECTION PROCEDURES FOR STANDING
COMMITTEES**

(a) IN GENERAL.—

(1) The Republican Steering Committee shall recommend to the Republican Conference the Republican Members of the standing committees of the House of Representatives, except as otherwise provided in this rule.

(2) In those cases where the Steering Committee nominated Members for membership on standing committees, the Steering Committee shall recommend directly to the House of Representatives the Republican Members to fill vacancies on standing committees which occur following the organization of a Congress. Whenever possible, a vacancy shall be filled within thirty days while Congress is in session.

(b) ELECTION OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON RULES.—

(1) NOMINATION.—The Speaker shall nominate the Republican Members of the Committee on Rules, including the Chairman. These nominations shall be submitted to the Conference along with the other nominees from the Steering Committee.

(2) REJECTION AND NEW NOMINATION.—If the Republican Conference rejects the nominee for Chairman to the Committee on Rules, the Speaker shall again submit a nomination to the Conference.

(3) RETENTION OF SENIORITY RIGHTS.—A Member newly assigned to the Rules Committee shall have the option of being “on leave with seniority” from one standing committee on which he or she served previously. At such time as service on the Rules Committee shall cease, such member shall have the right to return to active membership on that standing committee with the relative seating and seniority accumulated during his or her tenure on the Rules Committee.

(c) ELECTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET.—

(1) CHAIRMAN.—The Republican Steering Committee shall nominate the Member to serve as the Chairman of the Committee on the Budget. Limits on the term of service for the Chairman shall be determined by the Rules of the House.

(2) LEADERSHIP MEMBER.—The Speaker shall appoint one member to serve on the committee. That Member will

serve as the second highest-ranking Republican on the committee.

(3) NOMINATION OF OTHER MEMBERS.—The Steering Committee shall recommend members from the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Ways & Means, and the Committee on Rules for service on the Committee on the Budget in such numbers as may be consistent with the Rules of the House. Chairmen and Leadership Members are considered towards these requirements if that member also happens to serve on the Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on Ways & Means, or the Committee on Rules.

(d) ELECTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) NOMINATION.—The Speaker shall nominate the Republican Members of the Committee on House Administration, including the Chairman. These nominations shall be submitted to the Conference along with the other nominees from the Steering Committee.

(2) REJECTION AND NEW NOMINATION.—If the Republican Conference rejects the nominee for Chairman to the

Committee on House Administration, the Speaker shall again submit a nomination to the Conference.

**RULE 13—APPOINTMENTS TO JOINT AND SELECT
COMMITTEES**

The Speaker shall recommend to the House all Republican Members of such joint, select, and ad hoc committees as shall be created by the House, in accordance with law.

RULE 14—NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF COMMITTEE**CHAIRMEN****(a) NOMINATIONS BY THE STEERING COMMITTEE.—**

(1) The Republican Steering Committee shall nominate the Republican Members who shall serve as Chairmen, except as provided in Rules 12 and 13. The Member nominated by the Steering Committee for this position need not be the Member with the longest consecutive service on the Committee, and such nominations shall be out of order except as recommended in the report of the Steering Committee.

(2) The Republican Steering Committee may also designate the Republican Members who shall serve as Vice Chairman. The Member designated by the Steering Committee for this position need not be the Member with the longest consecutive service on the Committee.

(b) VOTING PROCEDURE.—The Conference shall vote by secret ballot on each recommendation of the House Republican Steering Committee for the position of Chairman. The call of the Conference at which such balloting will take place shall name and list the individuals recommended by the Committee.

(c) REJECTION AND NEW NOMINATIONS.—If the Republican Conference fails to approve a recommendation of the Steering Committee with respect to a nomination for the position of Chairman, the matter shall be automatically recommitted without instructions to that Committee.

(d) OBLIGATION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN.—The Republican Chairman of each committee has an obligation to ensure that each measure on which the Republican Conference has taken a position is managed in accordance with such position on the Floor of the House of Representatives.

(e) TERM LIMITATION.—No individual shall serve more than three consecutive terms as Chairman or Ranking Member of a standing, select, joint, or ad hoc Committee or Subcommittee beginning with the 104th Congress.

RULE 15—LIMITATION ON NUMBER OF COMMITTEE**CHAIRMEN AND SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

No individual shall serve as Chairman of more than one standing Committee or Subcommittee except for the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct; or the Committee on House Administration; or any joint, select, or ad hoc Committee; or any subcommittee thereof. Provided, however, that upon recommendation of the Steering Committee and approval of the Conference this provision shall be waived.

RULE 16—VACANCIES IN COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN**POSITIONS**

A vacancy which occurs during a session of Congress for the position of Chairman shall be filled in accordance with Rule 14. Whenever possible, a vacancy shall be filled within thirty days while Congress is in session.

RULE 17—COMMITTEE ORGANIZING CAUCUSES

(a) Each Committee shall have an organizing caucus of the Republican Members before the organizing meeting of the full Committee. The committee Chairman shall call the meeting, giving at least three days written notice to all Republican Members of the committee.

(b) During any time in which the Republican Party is the majority party in the House of Representatives, the Chairman of a committee shall seek to the maximum extent possible to avoid overlapping scheduling of subcommittee meetings in order to assure maximum Member participation.

RULE 18—PERIODIC COMMITTEE CAUCUSES

Meetings of a committee caucus shall be called if requested by a majority of the Republican Members of the Committee or at any time by the Chairman. A majority of the Members may request a meeting provided the request to the Chairman is in writing and states the subject matter to be discussed at the meeting. A meeting so requested must be called by the Chairman within ten days after receipt of the written request, and after notice to all committee caucus Members.

RULE 19—ELECTION OF SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**(a) IN GENERAL.—**

(1) In accordance with Rule 15, the method for the selection of Chairmen of the Committee's subcommittees shall be at the discretion of the full Committee Chairman, unless a majority of the Republican Members of the full Committee disapprove the action of the Chairman.

(2) The Chairman shall formalize in writing for the other Republican Members of the Committee the procedures to be followed in selecting Subcommittee Chairmen and individual subcommittee assignments and shall do so in advance of the Committee's organization. The procedures may be modified by a majority vote of the Republican Members of the full Committee.

(b) APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMEN.—The Chairman of the Committee on Appropriations shall bring his nominations for the subcommittee Chairmen to the Republican Steering Committee for approval. If any nomination is rejected by the Steering Committee, the Chairman shall submit the new nomination(s) in a timely fashion.

**RULE 20—VACANCIES IN THE POSITION OF SUBCOMMITTEE
CHAIRMEN**

Vacancies in the position of Subcommittee Chairman shall be filled according to the procedures established by the various Committees in accordance with Rule 19.

**RULE 21—COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL
CONDUCT**

No Member shall serve on the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for more than three consecutive terms.

RULE 22—COMMITTEE ON POLICY**(a) IN GENERAL.—**

(1) The Committee on Policy shall be an advisory Committee to the Membership of the House Republican Conference. The Committee on Policy shall meet at the call of the Chair of the Committee on Policy or the Speaker, and shall discuss legislative proposals with Republican Members of the appropriate standing and special committees and with such other Republican Members as the Chair may invite to meetings.

(2) The Committee on Policy shall report its suggestions for Republican action and policy to the Republican Members of the House. The Chair of the Committee on Policy may appoint, in consultation with the Speaker, such subcommittees from the Republican Members of the House for such purposes as may be deemed appropriate.

(b) COMPOSITION.—The Committee on Policy shall be composed of—

(1) One Member elected from each region, State, or group of States under the Steering Committee structure;

(2) Two Members elected by the sophomore class and one Member elected by the freshman class;

(3) The House Republican Leadership, as designated by Rule 2;

(4) One Member from each standing committee of the House appointed by the Speaker; and,

(5) Such Members-at-large as may be appointed by the Speaker.

(c) SENIORITY.—The traditions and privileges of seniority shall not apply to membership of the Committee on Policy and the Committee may, at its direction, make such rules as are necessary for conduct of its business.

**RULE 23—THE NATIONAL REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL
COMMITTEE**

(a) COMPOSITION.—The National Republican Congressional Committee (“NRCC”) shall be composed of an executive committee of 38 members, to be composed of—

- (1) the Speaker;
- (2) the Republican Leader;
- (3) the Republican Whip;
- (4) the Chair of the Republican Conference;
- (5) the Chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee;
- (6) the Chair of the Committee on Policy;
- (7) the Vice Chair of the Republican Conference;
- (8) the Secretary of the Republican Conference; and,
- (9) Thirty members appointed to serve on the executive committee by the Chair of the National Republican Congressional Committee.

(A) Appointments pursuant to this subparagraph shall be reported to the Conference for its approval.

(B) The Conference shall vote by secret ballot on each such recommendation.

(C) If the Republican Conference fails to approve a recommendation of the Chair of the NRCC with respect to a nomination, the matter shall be automatically re-committed to the Chair of the NRCC without instructions.

(b) DUTIES.—The duties of the National Republican Congressional Committee shall be to—

(1) act as counsel and advisor to the Members of the House Republican Conference;

(2) furnish support services to the extent consistent with the Rules of the House; and,

(3) have oversight in election campaigns in all general and special elections for membership in the House of Representatives.

RULE 24—REPUBLICAN PERSONNEL

(a) The House Republican Conference hereby vests in the Speaker supervisory authority over all Republican employees of the House of Representatives, and direct authority over the Republican Floor Assistants and Republican Conference.

(b) The Speaker is hereby empowered to offer recommendations and advise the Republican Conference as to the location and use of all personnel and funds, appropriated or otherwise, of the Republican Conference or any committee or officer thereof including but not limited to: the Republican Whip, the Republican Committee on Policy and the National Republican Congressional Committee, to avoid duplication and improve coordination and best utilization of those assets.

(c) The funds appropriated for the offices of the Republican Leader, the Republican Whip, and the Republican Conference may be allocated and utilized by the Republican Leader, the Republican Whip and the Chair of the Republican Conference, respectively, only after a budget, prepared in consultation with the Speaker, detailing the proposed use of such funds has been established.

(d) The Speaker shall provide general personnel referral services to Republican Members and such other services as he or she deems necessary.

(e) The staff employed by the elected Republican Leadership as defined under Rule 2, or under the direct authority of the Speaker, will be considered a unified staff, although directly responsible to the employing office, will work for all others of the Leadership as directed by the Speaker in consultation with the employing office.

**RULE 25—TEMPORARY STEP ASIDE OF A CHAIRMAN WHO IS
INDICTED**

(a) The Chairman of a standing, select, joint or ad hoc committee, or any subcommittee thereof, who is indicted for a felony for which a sentence of two or more years imprisonment may be imposed, shall step aside in favor of the next ranking Republican Member of the committee or subcommittee concerned who shall serve as acting Chairman for the remainder of the Congress, unless the Steering Committee nominates a Member consistent with Rule 14, or unless the Chairman resumes his position in accord with paragraphs (b) or (c) of this rule.

(b) If a Chairman steps aside and subsequently during that Congress the charges are dismissed or reduced to less than a felony as described in paragraph 1 or this section, or if the Member is found not guilty of said charges, the Chairman shall automatically resume the powers and duties of the position of the Chairman unless the Conference within 10 legislative days decides otherwise.

(c) The conference may waive the provisions of this rule at any time by majority vote.

**RULE 26—TEMPORARY STEP ASIDE OF A MEMBER OF
LEADERSHIP WHO IS INDICTED**

(a) A Member of the leadership shall step aside if indicted for a felony for which a sentence of two or more years imprisonment may be imposed.

(b) If a Member of the Republican leadership is indicted, the Republican Conference shall meet and elect a Member to temporarily serve in that position.

**RULE 27—AUTOMATIC REPLACEMENT OF A CHAIRMAN
WHO IS CENSURED OR CONVICTED**

(a) The Chairman of a standing, select, joint or ad hoc committee of the Congress, or subcommittee thereof, who is censured by a vote of the House or who is convicted of a felony for which a sentence of two or more years imprisonment may be imposed, shall cease to exercise the powers of the Chairman and shall not serve as Chairman of a Committee or Subcommittee for the remainder of the Congress. The position will be considered vacant under the rules of the Conference.

(b) The rule is in effect for any indictments or convictions handed down subsequent to the adoption of the rule.

RULE 28—GUIDELINES ON SUSPENSION OF HOUSE RULES

(a) The Republican Leader shall not schedule, or request to have scheduled, any bill or resolution for consideration under suspension of the Rules which—

(1) fails to include a cost estimate;

(2) has not been cleared by the minority;

(3) was opposed by more than one-third of the committee members reporting the bill;

(4) creates a new program, unless it also eliminates or reduces a program of equal or greater size;

(5) extends an authorization whose originating statute contained a sunset provision;

(6) authorizes an increase in authorizations, appropriations, or direct spending in any given year, unless fully offset by at least an equal reduction in current spending;

(7) expresses appreciation, commends, congratulates, celebrates, recognizes the accomplishments of, or celebrates the anniversary of, an entity, event, group, individual, institution, team or government program; or acknowledges or recognizes a period of time for such purposes; or

(8) directs the Secretary of the Treasury to strike an additional Congressional Gold Medal in a particular calendar

year if the Secretary has already been directed to strike 2 medals in such year.

(b) A waiver of this rule can be granted by the majority of the Elected Leadership as defined under Rule 2.

RULE 29—TRANSPARENCY

To the maximum extent practicable, the Chair shall make the text of matters adopted during the organizational conference held pursuant to rule 3 publicly available in electronic form.

STANDING ORDERS FOR THE 112TH CONGRESS**EARMARK MORATORIUM**

It is the policy of the House Republican Conference that no Member shall request a congressional earmark, limited tax benefit, or limited tariff benefit, as such terms have been described in the Rules of the House.