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Activities and Summary Report on the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct: 109th Congress

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Union Calendar No. 446

109TH CONGRESS }
2d Session

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

{ REPORT
109-744

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES
ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

A REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON
STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



JANUARY 2, 2007.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on
the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

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LETTER OF SUBMITTAL

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT,
Washington, DC, January 2, 2007.

Hon. KAREN HAAS,
Clerk, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MS. HAAS: Pursuant to clause 1(d) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, we hereby submit to the House a report on the Activities of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct for the 109th Congress.

Sincerely,

DOC HASTINGS,
Chairman.
HOWARD L. BERMAN,
Ranking Minority Member.

Union Calendar No. 446

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SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

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Mr. HASTINGS and Mr. BERMAN, from the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, submitted the following

R E P O R T

I. INTRODUCTION

House Rule XI, Clause 1(d), requires each committee to submit to the House, not later than January 2 of each odd-numbered year, a report on the activities of that committee under that rule and House Rule X during the Congress ending on January 3 of that year.

The jurisdiction of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct (“Committee”) is defined in Clauses 1(q) and 11(g)(4) of House Rule X, Clause 3 of House Rule XI, and Clause 5(f) of House Rule XXV. The text of those provisions is as follows:

Rule X, Clause 1(q)

1. There shall be in the House the following standing committees, each of which shall have the jurisdiction and related functions assigned by this clause and clauses 2, 3, and 4 . . .

* * *

(q) Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

THE CODE OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT

Rule X, Clause 11(g)(4)

(4) The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct shall investigate any unauthorized disclosure of intelligence or intelligence-related information by a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House in violation of subparagraph (3)

and report to the House concerning any allegation that it finds to be substantiated.

Rule XI, Clause 3

Committee on Standards of Official Conduct

3. (a) The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct has the following functions:

(1) The committee may recommend to the House from time to time such administrative actions as it may consider appropriate to establish or enforce standards of official conduct for Members, Delegates, the Resident Commissioner, officers, and employees of the House. A letter of reproof or other administrative action of the committee pursuant to an investigation under subparagraph (2) shall only be issued or implemented as a part of a report required by such subparagraph.

(2) The committee may investigate, subject to paragraph (b), an alleged violation by a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House of the Code of Official Conduct or of a law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the conduct of such Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee in the performance of his duties or the discharge of his responsibilities. After notice and hearing (unless the right to a hearing is waived by the Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee), the committee shall report to the House its findings of fact and recommendations, if any, for the final disposition of any such investigation and such action as the committee may consider appropriate in the circumstances.

(3) The committee may report to the appropriate Federal or State authorities, either with the approval of the House or by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the committee, any substantial evidence of a violation by a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House, of a law applicable to the performance of his duties or the discharge of his responsibilities that may have been disclosed in a committee investigation.

(4) The committee may consider the request of a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House for an advisory opinion with respect to the general propriety of any current or proposed conduct of such Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee. With appropriate deletions to ensure the privacy of the person concerned, the committee may publish such opinion for the guidance of other Members, Delegates, the Resident Commissioner, officers, and employees of the House.

(5) The committee may consider the request of a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House for a written waiver in exceptional circumstances with respect to clause 4 of rule XXIII.

(b)(1)(A) Unless approved by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct may not report a resolution, report, recommendation, or advisory opinion relating to the official conduct of a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House, or, except as provided in subparagraph (2), undertake an investigation of such conduct.

(B)(i) Upon the receipt of information offered as a complaint that is in compliance with this rule and the rules of the committee, the chairman and ranking minority member jointly may appoint members to serve as an investigative subcommittee.

(ii) The chairman and ranking minority member of the committee jointly may gather additional information concerning alleged conduct that is the basis of a complaint or of information offered as a complaint until they have established an investigative subcommittee or either of them has placed on the agenda of the committee the issue of whether to establish an investigative subcommittee.

(2) Except in the case of an investigation undertaken by the committee on its own initiative, the committee may undertake an investigation relating to the official conduct of an individual Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House only—

(A) upon receipt of information offered as a complaint, in writing and under oath, from a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner and transmitted to the committee by such Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner; or

(B) upon receipt of information offered as a complaint, in writing and under oath, from a person not a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner provided that a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner certifies in writing to the committee that he believes the information is submitted in good faith and warrants the review and consideration of the committee.

If a complaint is not disposed of within the applicable periods set forth in the rules of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, the chairman and ranking minority member shall establish jointly an investigative subcommittee and forward the complaint, or any portion thereof, to that subcommittee for its consideration. However, if at any time during those periods either the chairman or ranking minority member places on the agenda the issue of whether to establish an investigative subcommittee, then an investigative subcommittee may be established only by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the committee.

(3) The committee may not undertake an investigation of an alleged violation of a law, rule, regulation, or standard of conduct that was not in effect at the time of the alleged violation. The committee may not undertake an investigation of such an alleged violation that occurred before the third previous Congress unless the committee determines that the alleged violation is directly related to an alleged violation that occurred in a more recent Congress.

(4) A member of the committee shall be ineligible to participate as a member of the committee in a committee proceeding relating to the member's official conduct. Whenever a member of the committee is ineligible to act as a member of the committee under the preceding sentence, the Speaker shall designate a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner from the same political party as the ineligible member to act in any proceeding of the committee relating to that conduct.

(5) A member of the committee may disqualify himself from participating in an investigation of the conduct of a Member, Delegate, Resident Commissioner, officer, or employee of the House upon the submission in writing and under oath of an affidavit of disqualifica-

tion stating that the member cannot render an impartial and unbiased decision in the case in which the member seeks to be disqualified. If the committee approves and accepts such affidavit of disqualification, the chairman shall so notify the Speaker and request the Speaker to designate a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner from the same political party as the disqualifying member to act in any proceeding of the committee relating to that case.

(6) Information or testimony received, or the contents of a complaint or the fact of its filing, may not be publicly disclosed by any committee or staff member unless specifically authorized in each instance by a vote of the full committee.

(7) The committee shall have the functions designated in titles I and V of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 [on financial disclosure and the limitations on outside earned income and outside employment], in sections 7342 [the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act], 7351 [on gifts to superiors], and 7353 [on gifts] of title 5, United States Code, and in clause 11(g)(4) of rule X.

(c)(1) Notwithstanding clause 2(g)(1) of rule XI, each meeting of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct or a subcommittee thereof shall occur in executive session unless the committee or subcommittee, by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, opens the meeting to the public.

(2) Notwithstanding clause 2(g)(2) of rule XI, each hearing of an adjudicatory subcommittee or sanction hearing of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct shall be held in open session unless the committee or subcommittee, in open session by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, closes all or part of the remainder of the hearing on that day to the public.

(d) Before a member, officer, or employee of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, including members of a subcommittee of the committee selected under clause 5(a)(4) of rule X and shared staff, may have access to information that is confidential under the rules of the committee, the following oath (or affirmation) shall be executed:

“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will not disclose, to any person or entity outside the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, any information received in the course of my service with the committee, except as authorized by the committee or in accordance with its rules.”

Copies of the executed oath shall be retained by the Clerk as part of the records of the House. This paragraph establishes a standard of conduct within the meaning of paragraph (a)(2). Breaches of confidentiality shall be investigated by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct and appropriate action shall be taken.

(e)(1) If a complaint or information offered as a complaint is deemed frivolous by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, the committee may take such action as it, by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, considers appropriate in the circumstances.

(2) Complaints filed before the One Hundred Fifth Congress may not be deemed frivolous by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

Committee agendas

(f) The committee shall adopt rules providing that the chairman shall establish the agenda for meetings of the committee, but shall not preclude the ranking minority member from placing any item on the agenda.

Committee staff

(g)(1) The committee shall adopt rules providing that—

(A) the staff be assembled and retained as a professional, non-partisan staff;

(B) each member of the staff shall be professional and demonstrably qualified for the position for which he is hired;

(C) the staff as a whole and each member of the staff shall perform all official duties in a nonpartisan manner;

(D) no member of the staff shall engage in any partisan political activity directly affecting any congressional or presidential election;

(E) no member of the staff or outside counsel may accept public speaking engagements or write for publication on any subject that is in any way related to his or her employment or duties with the committee without specific prior approval from the chairman and ranking minority member; and

(F) no member of the staff or outside counsel may make public, unless approved by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the committee, any information, document, or other material that is confidential, derived from executive session, or classified and that is obtained during the course of employment with the committee.

(2) Only subdivisions (C), (E), and (F) of subparagraph (1) shall apply to shared staff.

(3)(A) All staff members shall be appointed by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the committee. Such vote shall occur at the first meeting of the membership of the committee during each Congress and as necessary during the Congress.

(B) Subject to the approval of the Committee on House Administration, the committee may retain counsel not employed by the House of Representatives whenever the committee determines, by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the committee, that the retention of outside counsel is necessary and appropriate.

(C) If the committee determines that it is necessary to retain staff members for the purpose of a particular investigation or other proceeding, then such staff shall be retained only for the duration of that particular investigation or proceeding.

(D) Outside counsel may be dismissed before the end of a contract between the committee and such counsel only by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the committee.

(4) In addition to any other staff provided for by law, rule, or other authority, with respect to the committee, the chairman and ranking minority member each may appoint one individual as a shared staff member from his or her personal staff to perform service for the committee. Such shared staff may assist the chairman or ranking minority member on any subcommittee on which he serves.

Meetings and hearings

(h)(1) The committee shall adopt rules providing that—

(A) all meetings or hearings of the committee or any subcommittee thereof, other than any hearing held by an adjudicatory subcommittee or any sanction hearing held by the committee, shall occur in executive session unless the committee or subcommittee by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members opens the meeting or hearing to the public; and

(B) any hearing held by an adjudicatory subcommittee or any sanction hearing held by the committee shall be open to the public unless the committee or subcommittee by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members closes the hearing to the public.

Public disclosure

(i) The committee shall adopt rules providing that, unless otherwise determined by a vote of the committee, only the chairman or ranking minority member, after consultation with each other, may make public statements regarding matters before the committee or any subcommittee thereof.

Requirements to constitute a complaint

(j) The committee shall adopt rules regarding complaints to provide that whenever information offered as a complaint is submitted to the committee, the chairman and ranking minority member shall have 14 calendar days or five legislative days, whichever is sooner, to determine whether the information meets the requirements of the rules of the committee for what constitutes a complaint.

Duties of chairman and ranking minority member regarding properly filed complaints

(k)(1) The committee shall adopt rules providing that whenever the chairman and ranking minority member jointly determine that information submitted to the committee meets the requirements of the rules of the committee for what constitutes a complaint, they shall have 45 calendar days or five legislative days, whichever is later, after that determination (unless the committee by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members votes otherwise) to—

(A) recommend to the committee that it dispose of the complaint, or any portion thereof, in any manner that does not require action by the House, which may include dismissal of the complaint or resolution of the complaint by a letter to the Member, officer, or employee of the House against whom the complaint is made;

(B) establish an investigative subcommittee; or

(C) request that the committee extend the applicable 45-calendar day or five-legislative day period by one additional 45-calendar day period when they determine more time is necessary in order to make a recommendation under subdivision (A).

(2) The committee shall adopt rules providing that if the chairman and ranking minority member jointly determine that information submitted to the committee meets the requirements of the rules of the committee for what constitutes a complaint, and the complaint is not disposed of within the applicable time periods under subparagraph (1), then they shall establish an investigative subcommittee and forward the complaint, or any portion thereof, to that subcommittee for its consideration. However, if, at any time during those periods, either the chairman or ranking minority

member places on the agenda the issue of whether to establish an investigative subcommittee, then an investigative subcommittee may be established only by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the committee.

Duties of chairman and ranking minority member regarding information not constituting a complaint

(l) The committee shall adopt rules providing that whenever the chairman and ranking minority member jointly determine that information submitted to the committee does not meet the requirements of the rules of the committee for what constitutes a complaint, they may—

(1) return the information to the complainant with a statement that it fails to meet the requirements of the rules of the committee for what constitutes a complaint; or

(2) recommend to the committee that it authorize the establishment of an investigative subcommittee.

Investigative and adjudicatory subcommittees

(m) The committee shall adopt rules providing that—

(1)(A) an investigative subcommittee shall be composed of four Members (with equal representation from the majority and minority parties) whenever such a subcommittee is established pursuant to the rules of the committee;

(B) an adjudicatory subcommittee shall be composed of the members of the committee who did not serve on the pertinent investigative subcommittee (with equal representation from the majority and minority parties) whenever such a subcommittee is established pursuant to the rules of the committee; and

(C) notwithstanding any other provision of this clause, the chairman and ranking minority member of the committee may consult with an investigative subcommittee either on their own initiative or on the initiative of the subcommittee, shall have access to information before a subcommittee with which they so consult, and shall not thereby be precluded from serving as full, voting members of any adjudicatory subcommittee;

(2) at the time of appointment, the chairman shall designate one member of a subcommittee to serve as chairman and the ranking minority member shall designate one member of the subcommittee to serve as the ranking minority member; and

(3) the chairman and ranking minority member of the committee may serve as members of an investigative subcommittee, but may not serve as non-voting, ex officio members.

Standard of proof for adoption of statement of alleged violation

(n) The committee shall adopt rules to provide that an investigative subcommittee may adopt a statement of alleged violation only if it determines by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the subcommittee that there is substantial reason to believe that a violation of the Code of Official Conduct, or of a law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the performance of official duties or the discharge of official responsibilities by a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives, has occurred.

Subcommittee powers

(o)(1) The committee shall adopt rules providing that an investigative subcommittee or an adjudicatory subcommittee may authorize and issue subpoenas only when authorized by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the subcommittee.

(2) The committee shall adopt rules providing that an investigative subcommittee may, upon an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, expand the scope of its investigation approved by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the committee.

(3) The committee shall adopt rules to provide that—

(A) an investigative subcommittee may, upon an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, amend its statement of alleged violation anytime before the statement of alleged violation is transmitted to the committee; and

(B) if an investigative subcommittee amends its statement of alleged violation, the respondent shall be notified in writing and shall have 30 calendar days from the date of that notification to file an answer to the amended statement of alleged violation.

Due process rights of respondents

(p) The committee shall adopt rules to provide that—

(1) not less than 10 calendar days before a scheduled vote by an investigative subcommittee on a statement of alleged violation, the subcommittee shall provide the respondent with a copy of the statement of alleged violation it intends to adopt together with all evidence it intends to use to prove those charges which it intends to adopt, including documentary evidence, witness testimony, memoranda of witness interviews, and physical evidence, unless the subcommittee by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members decides to withhold certain evidence in order to protect a witness; but if such evidence is withheld, the subcommittee shall inform the respondent that evidence is being withheld and of the count to which such evidence relates;

(2) neither the respondent nor his counsel shall, directly or indirectly, contact the subcommittee or any member thereof during the period of time set forth in paragraph (1) except for the sole purpose of settlement discussions where counsel for the respondent and the subcommittee are present;

(3) if, at any time after the issuance of a statement of alleged violation, the committee or any subcommittee thereof determines that it intends to use evidence not provided to a respondent under paragraph (1) to prove the charges contained in the statement of alleged violation (or any amendment thereof), such evidence shall be made immediately available to the respondent, and it may be used in any further proceeding under the rules of the committee;

(4) evidence provided pursuant to paragraph (1) or (3) shall be made available to the respondent and his or her counsel only after each agrees, in writing, that no document, information, or other materials obtained pursuant to that paragraph shall be made public until—

(A) such time as a statement of alleged violation is made public by the committee if the respondent has waived the adjudicatory hearing; or

(B) the commencement of an adjudicatory hearing if the respondent has not waived an adjudicatory hearing;

but the failure of respondent and his counsel to so agree in writing, and their consequent failure to receive the evidence, shall not preclude the issuance of a statement of alleged violation at the end of the period referred to in paragraph (1);

(5) a respondent shall receive written notice whenever—

(A) the chairman and ranking minority member determine that information the committee has received constitutes a complaint;

(B) a complaint or allegation is transmitted to an investigative subcommittee;

(C) an investigative subcommittee votes to authorize its first subpoena or to take testimony under oath, whichever occurs first; or

(D) an investigative subcommittee votes to expand the scope of its investigation;

(6) whenever an investigative subcommittee adopts a statement of alleged violation and a respondent enters into an agreement with that subcommittee to settle a complaint on which that statement is based, that agreement, unless the respondent requests otherwise, shall be in writing and signed by the respondent and respondent's counsel, the chairman and ranking minority member of the subcommittee, and the outside counsel, if any;

(7) statements or information derived solely from a respondent or his counsel during any settlement discussions between the committee or a subcommittee thereof and the respondent shall not be included in any report of the subcommittee or the committee or otherwise publicly disclosed without the consent of the respondent; and

(8) whenever a motion to establish an investigative subcommittee does not prevail, the committee shall promptly send a letter to the respondent informing him of such vote.

Committee reporting requirements

(q) The committee shall adopt rules to provide that—

(1) whenever an investigative subcommittee does not adopt a statement of alleged violation and transmits a report to that effect to the committee, the committee may by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members transmit such report to the House of Representatives;

(2) whenever an investigative subcommittee adopts a statement of alleged violation, the respondent admits to the violations set forth in such statement, the respondent waives his or her right to an adjudicatory hearing, and the respondent's waiver is approved by the committee—

(A) the subcommittee shall prepare a report for transmittal to the committee, a final draft of which shall be provided to the respondent not less than 15 calendar days before the subcommittee votes on whether to adopt the report;

(B) the respondent may submit views in writing regarding the final draft to the subcommittee within seven calendar days of receipt of that draft;

(C) the subcommittee shall transmit a report to the committee regarding the statement of alleged violation together with any views submitted by the respondent pursuant to subdivision (B), and the committee shall make the report together with the respondent's views available to the public before the commencement of any sanction hearing; and

(D) the committee shall by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members issue a report and transmit such report to the House of Representatives, together with the respondent's views previously submitted pursuant to subdivision (B) and any additional views respondent may submit for attachment to the final report; and

(3) members of the committee shall have not less than 72 hours to review any report transmitted to the committee by an investigative subcommittee before both the commencement of a sanction hearing and the committee vote on whether to adopt the report.

House Rule XXV, Clause 5(f)

(f) All the provisions of this clause [the gift rule] shall be interpreted and enforced solely by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct. The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is authorized to issue guidance on any matter contained in this clause.

In addition, a number of provisions of statutory law confer authority on the Committee. Specifically, for purposes of the statutes on gifts to Federal employees (5 U.S.C. § 7353) and gifts to superiors (5 U.S.C. § 7351), both the Committee and the House of Representatives are the "supervising ethics office" of House Members, officers, and employees. In addition, as discussed further in Part III below, for House Members and staff, the Committee is both the "supervising ethics office" with regard to financial disclosure and the "employing agency" for certain purposes under the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act. Finally, the outside employment and earned income limitations are administered by the Committee with respect to House Members and staff (5 U.S.C. app. 4 § 503(1)(A)).

II. ADVICE AND EDUCATION

Pursuant to a provision of the Ethics Reform Act of 1989 (2 U.S.C. § 29d(i)), the Committee maintains an Office of Advice and Education, which is staffed as directed by the Committee's Chairman and Ranking Minority Member. Under the statute, the primary responsibilities of the Office include the following:

- Providing information and guidance to House Members, officers, and employees on the laws, rules, and other standards of conduct applicable to them in their official capacities;
- Drafting responses to specific advisory opinion requests received from House Members and staff, and submitting them to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member for review and approval;
- Drafting advisory memoranda on the ethics rules for general distribution to House Members and staff, and submitting them to the Chairman and Ranking Member, or the full Committee, for review and approval; and
- Developing and conducting educational briefings for Members and staff.

The duties of the Office of Advice and Education are also addressed in Committee Rule 3, which sets out additional requirements and procedures for the issuance of Committee advisory opinions.

Under Committee Rule 3(i), the Committee will keep confidential any request for advice from a Member, officer, or employee, as well as any response to such a request. As a further inducement to

Members and staff to seek Committee advice whenever they have any uncertainty on the applicable laws, rules, or standards, statutory law (2 U.S.C. § 29d(i)(4)) provides that no information provided to the Committee by a Member or staff person when seeking advice on prospective conduct may be used as a basis for initiating a Committee investigation, if the individual acts in accordance with the Committee's written advice. In the same vein, Committee Rule 3(j) provides that the Committee may take no adverse action in regard to any conduct that has been undertaken in reliance on a written opinion of the Committee if the conduct conforms to the specific facts addressed in the opinion. In addition, the Committee understands that federal courts may consider the good faith reliance of a House Member, officer, or employee on written Committee advice as a defense to Justice Department prosecution regarding certain statutory violations.

The Committee believes that a broad, active program for advice and education is an extremely important means for attaining understanding of, and compliance with, the ethics rules. The specifics of the Committee's efforts in the areas of publications, briefings, and advisory opinion letters during the 109th Congress are set forth below. In addition, on a daily basis Committee staff attorneys provided informal advice in response to inquiries received from Members, staff persons, and others in telephone calls and e-mails directed to the Committee office, and in meetings.

PUBLICATIONS

The Committee's major publications are the House Ethics Manual and two more recently issued booklets that update portions of the Manual. One of the booklets, Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives on Gifts and Travel (issued in April 2000), provides a detailed explanation of gift and travel rules applicable to House Members, officers and employees. The other booklet, Laws, Rules and Standards of Conduct on Campaign Activity (issued in December 2001), provides guidance for House Members, officers and employees when they engage in campaign or political activity. These two booklets supersede Chapters 2 and 8, respectively, of the 1992 House Ethics Manual.

The Committee updates and expands upon the materials in the Manual and the booklets, as well as highlights matters of particular concern, through the issuance of advisory memoranda and letters to all Members and staff. The letters and memoranda issued during the 109th Congress were as follows:

- The 2005 Outside Earned Income Limit, and the Salary Levels at which the Outside Earned Income and Employment Limitations, the Financial Disclosure Requirement, and the Post-Employment Restrictions Apply in 2005 (February 10, 2005),
- The 2006 Outside Earned Income Limit and the Salary Levels at which the Outside Earned Income and Employment Limitations, the Financial Disclosure Requirement, and the Post-Employment Restrictions Apply in 2006 (February 8, 2006),
- Interim Process for Voluntary Certification of Privately Funded Travel Taken in Connection with Official Duties (May 10, 2006),

- Use of Campaign Funds and Campaign-Funded Resources for Official House Purposes (July 26, 2006),
- Laws, Rules, and Standards of Conduct Governing Campaign Activity (July 26, 2006),
- Post-Employment and Related Restrictions for Members and Officers (September 29, 2006),
- Post-Employment and Related Restrictions for Staff (September 29, 2006),
- Ethics Laws and Rules for Departing Members and Staff (November 15, 2006), and
- Member Swearing-in Receptions and Attendance at Related Events (December 15, 2006).

In addition to the advisory memoranda listed above, the Committee issued updated versions of its summary memorandum, Highlights of the House Ethics Rules, in February 2005 and February 2006. Copies of all Committee publications are available from the Committee office, and their text is posted on the Committee's website.

BRIEFINGS

As part of its outreach and educational efforts during the 109th Congress, the Committee conducted numerous briefings on the ethics rules for Members, staff, and others.

In addition to briefings on financial disclosure (discussed in the next section), Committee staff held seven briefings on the ethics rules during 2005 and 2006 that were open to all House Members, officers, and employees. Five of those briefings provided a general overview of the ethics rules, and the other two, held in late 2006, were focused on the rules applicable to campaign activity. Finally, together with the Committee on House Administration, the Committee participated in two general briefings, one in 2005 and one in 2006, on the rules related to Member participation in the Congressional Art Competition.

The Committee also held two briefings exclusively for Members on the ethics rules. In addition, the Committee made a presentation to the Members-elect of the 110th Congress as part of the New Member Orientation. As part of that presentation, the Committee provided to each incoming Member a copy of the Highlights of the House Ethics Rules memorandum and a memorandum noting points of particular interest to Members-elect. The Committee also offered to each incoming Member the opportunity to schedule an individual briefing for the Member and the Member's staff on the ethics rules.

In addition to these general presentations, Committee staff led more than 150 briefings tailored to the needs of an individual Member office, committee, or other House office.

Committee staff also participated in nine briefings sponsored by the Congressional Research Service for district office employees and in approximately six briefings sponsored by outside organizations. The Committee also had an information booth at the House Services Fair held annually by the Chief Administrative Officer. In addition, Committee staff led approximately six briefings for visiting international dignitaries. Visitors from countries in South America and the Far East were particularly interested in the House ethics rules and enforcement procedures.

The Committee will continue this outreach activity in the 110th Congress.

ADVISORY OPINION LETTERS

The Committee's Office of Advice and Education, under the direction and supervision of the Committee's Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, prepared more than 965 private advisory opinions during the 109th Congress. Opinions issued by the Committee in the 109th Congress addressed a wide range of subjects, including various provisions of the gift rule, travel funded by outside entities, Member or staff participation in fund-raising activities of charities and for other purposes, the outside earned income and employment limitations, campaign activity by staff, and the post-employment restrictions.

In addition to issuing private advisory opinions, the Committee also instituted for the first time a new process for approval of officially-connected congressional trips sponsored by private entities. The process, described in the Committee's advisory memorandum of May 10, 2006, was created by the Committee as a means for private entities to obtain advanced, written approval (labeled "certification") from the Committee for any trip they planned to sponsor for House Members or staff. Under the certification process, prospective trip sponsors would provide detailed information to the Committee concerning the proposed trip. If a majority of Committee members approved the trip, the trip sponsor would receive a written letter from the Committee indicating that the trip was in compliance with House rules. The certification process was a voluntary one, instituted by the Committee in response to changes to the House rules that were proposed in House Resolution 4975, which is also discussed in sections IV and V of this Report.

III. FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE, FOREIGN GIFTS AND DECORATIONS, AND TRAVEL DISCLOSURE

Title I of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, as amended (5 U.S.C. app. 4 §§ 101–111), requires certain officials in all branches of the Federal Government, as well as candidates for Federal office, to file publicly available statements that set out financial information regarding themselves and their families. On May 15 of each year, the covered individuals are required to file a statement that provides information for the preceding calendar year.

The Act designates the Committee as the "supervising ethics office" of House Members, officers, and employees for purposes of financial disclosure and provides that the Committee is to administer the Act with regard to those officials. The Committee establishes policy, issues instructions, and designs the Financial Disclosure Statements to be filed by Members, officers, legislative branch employees, and candidates for the House. After statements are filed with the Legislative Resource Center of the Clerk of the House, they are forwarded to the Committee to be reviewed for compliance with the law. Accountants from the General Accounting Office assist the Committee in its review efforts.

Each year the Committee publishes a detailed instruction booklet that is sent to each person required to file with the Clerk of the House. For the 2006 filings (covering calendar year 2005), the Com-

mittee issued two separate instruction booklets, one for current House Members and employees and a second for candidates and new employees. Prior to the May 15th filing date, the Committee also held three briefings on the financial disclosure requirements that were open to all Members, officers, and employees. At Member request, Committee staff also met on an individual basis with any Member who had questions regarding the preparation of the Member's statement. In addition, Committee staff members responded, by telephone, e-mail, or in person, to numerous questions on the financial disclosure filing requirements. Upon request, Committee staff reviewed statements in draft form, prior to their being formally filed with the Clerk, for compliance with the disclosure requirements in order to reduce errors and the need for amendments. The Committee encourages all financial disclosure filers to avail themselves of this service for their future filings.

In calendar years 2005 and 2006, the Legislative Resource Center referred a total of 5,600 financial disclosure statements to the Committee for review under the statute. Of those, 4,626 were statements filed by current, new, or terminated House Members or employees, and 1,004 were statements filed by candidates for the House. Where the Committee review indicates that a filed statement has a deficiency, such as a failure to include required information, the Committee requests an amendment from the filer. The Committee also follows up with any filer whose statement indicates non-compliance with applicable law, such as the outside employment and earned income limitations. Where the Committee finds that a Member or staff person has received income in violation of any of these limitations, the Committee determines the appropriate remedy for the violation, which may include a requirement that the individual repay the amount that was improperly received.

Pursuant to its responsibilities under 5 U.S.C. § 7342, the Committee also continued its activities in implementing the Foreign Gifts and Decorations Act, including the disclosure and reporting requirements of the Act, and responded to questions from Members and staff regarding the Act. The regulations that the Committee has issued under the Act are published in the Committee's *Gifts & Travel* booklet. Reports of gifts from foreign governments (including travel and travel expenses) that Members and staff file in accordance with this Act are available for public inspection at the Committee office upon reasonable notice. Pursuant to the Act, the contents of those reports are published in the *Federal Register* on an annual basis.

The Committee staff also reviews the Member Travel Disclosure Forms and the Employee Travel Disclosure Forms that are filed with the Legislative Resource Center (which makes the forms available to the public) pursuant to the gift rule (House Rule XXV, cl. 5). Where the Committee finds that a Member or staff person has improperly accepted travel or expenses, the Committee determines the appropriate remedy, which may include a requirement that reimbursement be made with personal funds.

IV. LEGISLATION

On April 6, 2006, the Committee met to mark up certain provisions of H. Res. 4975, the Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act, which in part made changes to certain of the ethics

rules enforced by the Committee. The Committee voted unanimously on that date to report the bill favorably, without amendment.

V. HEARINGS

On May 3, 2006, the House passed H. Res. 4975, the Lobbying Accountability and Transparency Act of 2006. If enacted, that Act, among other provisions, would have prohibited House Members and staff from accepting payment of travel expenses from a private source for officially-connected travel unless the trip was first certified by the Committee as being in conformance with House rules. The Act also directed the Committee to issue a report proposing changes to House Rule XXV regarding the acceptance of gifts and travel expenses by Members and staff.

Although the Act was not enacted during the 109th Congress, the Committee undertook to carry out some of its directives on a voluntary basis. The travel certification process is described above in Section II of this Report. In order to gather information regarding current and proposed rules on privately-funded travel, on June 7, 2006, the Committee held a public hearing, during which it heard testimony from representatives of entities that have sponsored past congressional travel and an interest group that advocates changes in the rules governing such travel.

VI. COMMITTEE RULES

On May 4, 2005, the Committee met and adopted Committee rules for the 109th Congress, which were identical to the Committee rules for the 108th Congress. A copy of the Committee rules for the 109th Congress is included as Appendix I to this Report.

VII. INVESTIGATIONS

On March 30, 2006, the Committee voted to carry over from the 108th Congress the matter concerning Representative James McDermott. On May 17, 2006, the Committee voted to establish an investigative subcommittee to investigate the conduct of Representative Robert W. Ney with regard to his acceptance of gifts, travel, or other benefits in exchange for actions taken in his capacity as a Member of Congress. Also on May 17, 2006, the Committee voted to establish an investigative subcommittee to investigate allegations that Representative William J. Jefferson or his family received money or other benefits in exchange for actions taken in his capacity as a Member of Congress. Also on May 17, 2006, the Committee issued a statement that it was closing its investigation of Representative Tom DeLay.

On October 5, 2006, the Committee adopted a resolution establishing an investigative subcommittee to investigate the conduct of any House Members, officer, or employee related to information concerning any improper interaction between Members and current or former participants in the House Page Program.

These investigative matters are described in more detail below.

Representative James McDermott

A complaint was filed by Representative David L. Hobson against Representative James McDermott on November 16, 2004 during

the 108th Congress. Representative Hobson's complaint alleged that, in January 1997, Representative McDermott violated certain laws, rules and standards of conduct in disclosing to the news media the contents of an intercepted telephone conversation.

On December 22, 2004, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee determined, under Committee Rule 16(b)(2), to establish an Investigative Subcommittee and to forward portions of the complaint to that subcommittee. Representative Judy Biggert was designated to serve as Chairman of the Investigative Subcommittee, and Representative Lucille Roybal-Allard was designated to serve as its Ranking Minority Member. The other two members of the Investigative Subcommittee were Representative Phil English and Representative Robert C. Scott.

On March 20, 2006, the Committee voted to carry over the matter regarding Representative McDermott to the 109th Congress. The members of the Investigative Subcommittee remained those appointed in 2004.

On December 8, 2006, the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct voted to adopt the Report of the Investigative Subcommittee, "In the Matter of Representative James McDermott," dated December 6, 2006, as the Report of the full Committee in this matter. The Report was transmitted to the House of Representatives on December 19, 2006. The Investigative Subcommittee concluded in its Report that Representative McDermott's actions "were not consistent with the spirit of the Committee's rules." The Investigative Subcommittee decided against additional proceedings in this matter, and recommended to the full Committee that the Report of the Investigative Subcommittee be released to the public. The Report was released to the public on December 8, 2006.

Representative Robert W. Ney

On May 17, 2006, the Committee voted to establish an Investigative Subcommittee to determine whether Representative Robert W. Ney violated any House rule, law, regulation, or other standard of conduct with respect to allegations that he received gifts, travel benefits, campaign contributions, or other items of value from Jack Abramoff, Michael Scanlon, Tony Rudy, Neil Volz, or any individuals or entities associated with any of them, in exchange for action taken by Representative Ney in his capacity as a Member of Congress. This action was undertaken following the guilty pleas by the four named individuals in federal court to numerous charges, including conspiracy to bribe public officials. The factual recitations in the guilty pleas of those individuals included details indicating that one of the public officials involved was Representative Ney.

Representative Lamar S. Smith served as Chairman of the Investigative Subcommittee, and Representative Gene Green served as its Ranking Minority Member. The other two Members designated to serve on the Investigative Subcommittee were Representative Marsha Blackburn and Representative Xavier Becerra.

On October 13, 2006, Representative Ney pleaded guilty in federal district court to conspiracy to commit multiple offenses—including honest services fraud, making false statements, and violations of his former chief of staff's one-year lobbying ban—and with making false statements to the House. As part of his plea, Rep-

representative Ney admitted that he corruptly solicited and accepted things of value, including trips, meals, concert and sporting tickets, thousands of dollars worth of gambling chips, and tens of thousands of dollars of campaign contributions and in-kind contributions such as free fundraisers, from certain lobbyists and a foreign businessman, with the intent to be influenced and induced to take official actions. Ney also admitted conspiring to aid and abet violations of the federal one-year lobbying ban by his former chief of staff. He further admitted to making false statements to the House on travel and financial disclosure forms filed by the Clerk of the House. He is due to be sentenced in federal court on both counts on January 19, 2007.

Following his guilty plea, Representative Ney resigned from the House as of November 3, 2006. As a result of his resignation, the Committee no longer has jurisdiction over Representative Ney.

Representative William J. Jefferson

On May 17, 2006, the Committee voted to establish an Investigative Subcommittee to determine whether Representative William J. Jefferson violated any House rule, law, regulation, or other standard of conduct with respect to allegations that he or his family members received cash, stock shares, agreements for future profits, offers of employment, travel benefits, or other items of value from certain individuals or entities in exchange for action taken by Representative Jefferson in his capacity as a Member of Congress or as a result of his status as a Member of Congress. This action was undertaken following guilty pleas by two individuals, one of whom was a former staff member of Representative Jefferson, in federal court to conspiracy to bribe a public official, whom they specifically identified as Representative Jefferson.

Representative Melissa Hart was appointed as Chairman of the Investigative Subcommittee, and Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones served as its Ranking Minority Member. The other two members of the Investigative Subcommittee were Representative Tom Latham and Representative Adam Schiff.

Representative Tom DeLay

On June 15, 2004, then-Representative Chris Bell filed a complaint against Representative Tom DeLay. The complaint included three counts against Representative DeLay. Two of those counts were addressed by the Committee during the 108th Congress; details on the substance and disposition of those counts are provided in the Committee's Summary of Activities for the 108th Congress.

The remaining count of the complaint alleged that Representative DeLay had used Texans for Republican Majority ("TRMPAC"), a political action committee with which he was affiliated, to direct corporate funds to campaigns for state-level offices in Texas in violation of the Texas election code. During the 108th Congress, the Committee determined to defer action on this count in accordance with Committee Rule 15(f) pending further action on the matter in Texas state court and the outcome of a continuing investigation by the District Attorney of Travis County, Texas.

On May 11, 2006, Representative DeLay informed the Speaker that he was resigning his House seat effective June 9, 2006. The Committee issued a statement on May 17, 2006 announcing that,

in light of Representative DeLay's impending departure from the House, it was closing its investigation on the remaining count of the Bell complaint without taking any action on that count.

In that same May 17 statement, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member also noted that allegations had been made concerning Representative DeLay's participation in certain overseas trips funded by private entities. The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member stated that, but for Representative DeLay's resignation from the House, they would have recommended that the full Committee vote on whether to form an investigative subcommittee to seek additional information on that matter.

Investigation of Allegations Related to Improper Conduct Involving Members and Current or Former House Pages

On October 5, 2006, the Committee adopted a resolution which established an Investigative Subcommittee to investigate the action, or lack of action, by House Members, officers, and employees with regard to information concerning the alleged improper conduct of Members towards current or former participants in the House page program. This investigation was undertaken following media reports made in late September 2006 that Representative Mark Foley had engaged in electronic mail or instant messaging of a suggestive or sexual nature with former participants in the House page program. Representative Foley resigned from the House on September 29, 2006, immediately following widespread reporting of the matter by the media. That same day, the House, by unanimous vote, referred to the Committee House Resolution 1065, expressing the desire of the House that the Committee convene an investigative subcommittee "to fully and expeditiously determine the facts connected with Representative Foley's conduct and the response thereto."

The Investigative Subcommittee was convened pursuant to Committee Rules 1(c), 14(a)(3), and 18(a), which authorize the Committee to establish an investigative subcommittee on its own initiative, in an effort to determine the extent to which any Members, officers, or House employees may have been aware of any improper conduct by Representative Foley, or any other Member, with current or former participants in the page program prior to the September 2006 media reports.

The resolution adopted by the Committee provided as follows:

Whereas certain allegations have arisen related to communications and interactions between former Representative Mark Foley and current or former participants in the U.S. House of Representatives Page Program; and

Whereas certain additional allegations have arisen regarding the conduct of certain Members and employees of the House related to communications and interactions between former Representative Mark Foley and current or former participants in the U.S. House of Representatives Page Program; and

Whereas the conduct of a Member, officer, or employee of the House, in connection with the aforementioned allegations, may have violated the Code of Official Conduct or one or more law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the conduct of a Member, officer, or employee of the House in the performance of his or her duties or the discharge of his or her responsibilities; and

Whereas the Committee has authority to investigate such conduct pursuant to House Rule XI, clauses 3(a)(2) and (3)(b)(2), and pursuant to Committee Rules 14(a)(3) and 18; and

Whereas the Committee has determined pursuant to Committee Rule 1(c) that the interests of justice require the adoption of special procedures in order for the Committee to carry out its investigative and enforcement responsibilities with respect to the aforementioned allegations;

It is hereby resolved by the Committee—

1. That an Investigative Subcommittee be established with jurisdiction to conduct a full and complete inquiry and investigation into any conduct of House Members, officers and staff related to information concerning improper conduct involving Members and current and former House Pages;

2. That the scope of the inquiry may extend to any matters related to the jurisdiction of the Investigative Subcommittee as set forth in this resolution;

3. That the Investigative Subcommittee is authorized to advise the public at large that it is interested in receiving information and testimony from any person with first-hand information regarding the matters within the jurisdiction of the Investigative Subcommittee;

4. That at the conclusion of its inquiry, the Investigative Subcommittee shall report to the Committee its findings, conclusions, and recommendations;

5. That the Members of the Investigative Subcommittee shall be designated pursuant to Committee Rule 19(a);

6. That Committee Rules 7 (Confidentiality), 8(a) (Subcommittees—General Policy and Structure), 9 (Quorums and Member Disqualification), and 10 (Vote Requirements) are fully applicable to this inquiry by the Investigative Subcommittee;

7. That the Investigative Subcommittee is authorized to obtain evidence and relevant information by the means and in the manner set forth in Committee Rules 19(b)—(c), except as those rules apply to respondents;

8. That witnesses before the Investigative Subcommittee shall be furnished with a copy of the special procedures for this inquiry (as set forth in this resolution), as well as accorded the rights set forth in Committee Rules 26(k)—(o);

9. That the Committee intends that all witnesses who provide testimony before the Investigative Subcommittee should be sequestered and should not communicate with any other witnesses regarding any aspect of their testimony unless the Investigative Subcommittee permits otherwise;

10. That except as otherwise provided in this Resolution, the Rules of the Committee shall be applicable in this matter and will be interpreted by the Investigative Subcommittee and the Committee in a manner not inconsistent with this Resolution.

In accordance with Committee Rule 19(a), Committee Chairman Doc Hastings and Ranking Minority Member Howard L. Berman designated themselves as chairman and ranking minority member, respectively, of the Investigative Subcommittee. The other two members of the Investigative Subcommittee were the next most senior members of the Committee, Representative Judy Biggert and Representative Stephanie Tubbs Jones.

The evidence obtained by the Investigative Subcommittee during its inquiry included, but was not limited to, the sworn testimony of eight Members of the House (including members of the leadership and the House Page Board), three current or former officers of the House, and interviews and sworn testimony obtained from approximately 45 other witnesses, including House employees and former participants in the page program. During the inquiry, approximately 3,500 pages of transcribed sworn testimony and witness statements resulted from proceedings before the Investigative Subcommittee or interviews with Investigative Subcommittee counsel. In addition, the Investigative Subcommittee sought, via informal request or subpoena, and received several hundred pages of documents and records from witnesses it determined possessed relevant materials.

The Investigative Subcommittee completed its investigation in December 2006. Pursuant to its charge, at the conclusion of its inquiry, the Investigative Subcommittee prepared a report to the full Committee with the Investigative Subcommittee's findings, conclusions, and recommendations.

On December 8, 2006, the full Committee voted to allow the Investigative Subcommittee to release its Report, entitled "Investigation of Allegations Related to Improper Conduct Involving Members and Current or Former House Pages," to the public, which was done on December 8, 2006. On that same date, the full Committee voted to transmit the report of the Investigative Subcommittee to the House. The Report was transmitted to the House on December 19, 2006.

As explained in the Report, the Investigative Subcommittee found that, although some Members and employees of the House had knowledge regarding Representative Foley's conduct with current or former House pages, many of those individuals either did not take responsive action regarding that knowledge or acted with insufficient diligence or oversight. The Committee further found that none of the conduct of any Member or employee was sufficient to establish a violation of any provision of the House Code of Official Conduct. Accordingly, the Investigative Subcommittee recommended that the matter be closed without instituting any further investigative or adjudicative proceedings against any Member or employee.

The Report of the Investigative Subcommittee also recommended changes to the administration and oversight of the House page program. These recommendations included constituting the House Page Board with equal representation from both parties and requiring that the Page Board hold regular meetings.

VIII. OTHER COMMITTEE ACTIONS

Matter related to the conduct of Representative Randall "Duke" Cunningham: Representative Randall "Duke" Cunningham resigned from the House on December 1, 2005 after pleading guilty in federal court to engaging in a criminal conspiracy and tax evasion. Following his resignation, numerous news media reports suggested that Representative Cunningham and possibly other Members and staff were provided with hotel rooms, limousines, and other services in exchange for performing official acts.

On May 17, 2006, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member publicly announced that they had begun informal fact-gathering related to this matter under Committee Rule 18(a).

Representative John Conyers: The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, pursuant to Committee Rule 18(a), initiated an informal inquiry in December 2003 into reports that members of the congressional staff of Representative John Conyers had performed campaign activity on official time and in some instances using official resources, and that some staff members may have been compelled to do campaign work or personal work for Representative Conyers. The assertions, if true, could implicate a number of laws and House rules applicable to Members, including: House Rule 23, clause 1 (requiring the conduct of a Member or employee to reflect creditably on the House); House Rule 23, clause 8 (requiring that congressional staff perform official duties commensurate with compensation); 31 U.S.C. § 1301(a) and corresponding regulations of the Committee on House Administration (providing that official funds may be used only for the purposes appropriated); and 18 U.S.C. § 606 (prohibiting adverse personnel action or intimidation to secure money or services for a political purpose).

During the course of their inquiry, the Chairman and Ranking Member asked for and received information, including documents, from several sources, including Representative Conyers. Committee staff also interviewed witnesses regarding the allegations. In the course of providing information to the Committee, Representative Conyers acknowledged what he characterized as a “lack of clarity” in his communications with staff members regarding their official duties and responsibilities, and accepted responsibility for his actions. Representative Conyers also provided the Committee with documents indicating that he had begun taking steps to provide clearer guidance to staff regarding the requirement that campaign work and official work be separate.

On December 29, 2006, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member issued a public statement indicating that the matter would be resolved through the issuance of the public statement and the agreement by Representative Conyers to take a number of additional steps to ensure that his office complies with all rules and standards regarding campaign work by congressional staff. Among the conditions agreed to by Representative Conyers were: (1) prohibiting his personal congressional staff (other than his Chief of Staff) from performing any campaign-related work, including work done on a voluntary basis, during the 110th Congress, unless the staff member goes on leave without pay status from the House and obtains prior written approval from the Committee, and informing each member of his staff in writing of that prohibition; (2) distributing a memorandum to each member of his congressional staff setting forth the House rules concerning the performance of campaign and other non-official work by congressional staff; (3) requiring his congressional staff to attend a briefing conducted by Committee counsel on the application of, and compliance with, House rules concerning the performance of campaign work by congressional staff, and providing a similar briefing within his congressional office on an annual basis; and (4) maintaining a detailed time-keeping system for his staff.

Representative Tom Feeney: Representative Tom Feeney contacted the Committee in March 2005 after media reports regarding a trip he had taken to Scotland in August 2003. The media reports concerned allegations that the trip had been paid for by lobbyist Jack Abramoff, rather than the trip sponsor he had reported, and that the trip may have been substantially recreational in nature, contrary to House rules. See House Rule 25, cls. 5(b)(1)(A), 5(b)(1)(B). Representative Feeney reported the cost of his participation in the trip as \$5,643. The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member instituted an informal investigation of the matter pursuant to Committee Rule 18(a), and concluded that the trip did not comply with House rules. Representative Feeney agreed to resolve the matter by paying the cost of the trip to the United States Treasury.

Representative Curt Weldon: The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, pursuant to Committee Rule 18(a), reviewed a trip taken by Representative Curt Weldon and ten of his family members in January 2003. Prior to taking the trip, Representative Weldon sought formal Committee guidance regarding whether the trip complied with gift rule provisions permitting a Member to accept travel and other benefits resulting from outside activities that are unrelated to official duties. Committee counsel advised Representative Weldon, through his staff, that he could not rely on that provision of the gift rule. Representative Weldon then sought a gift rule waiver from the Committee, but he withdrew that request prior to receiving a formal written response from the Committee.

Following the trip, Representative Weldon, through counsel, made a submission to the Committee asserting that the trip was unrelated to his official duties and was therefore not subject to certain gift rule limitations. After reviewing this submission, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member concluded that the trip was in fact officially connected. As a result, payment by the trip sponsors for the participation in the trip by family members of Representative Weldon in excess of the one family member permitted by the gift rule was prohibited. By letter dated September 29, 2006, the Committee informed Representative Weldon that he was required to repay to the donors certain expenses of that trip, which exceeded \$23,000.

To date, Representative Weldon has not made the repayment as required by the Committee, but he has, through a letter from his counsel to the Committee dated December 29, 2006, expressed his intent to do so.

In addition to the publicly-disclosed matters discussed in this report, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee either commenced or continued from the 108th Congress fact-gathering under Committee Rule 18(a) regarding the conduct of nine other Members and one House employee. Of these matters, three were resolved during the 109th Congress without the empanelment of an investigative subcommittee or other formal action by the Committee, and the remaining matters are still pending.

APPENDIX I

RULES

Committee on Standards of Official Conduct



Adopted May 4, 2005
109th Congress

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

RULES

Committee on Standards of Official Conduct



Adopted May 4, 2005
109th Congress

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515

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COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

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GENE GREEN, Texas
LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, California
MICHAEL F. DOYLE, Pennsylvania

KENNETH E. KELLNER, *Acting Chief Counsel*

(II)

CONTENTS

RULES OF THE COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF OFFICIAL CONDUCT

PART I—GENERAL COMMITTEE RULES

	Page
RULE 1. General Provisions	1
RULE 2. Definitions	2
RULE 3. Advisory Opinions and Waivers	3
RULE 4. Financial Disclosure	6
RULE 5. Meetings	11
RULE 6. Committee Staff	12
RULE 7. Confidentiality	14
RULE 8. Subcommittees—General Policy and Structure	17
RULE 9. Quorums and Member Disqualification	18
RULE 10. Vote Requirements	19
RULE 11. Committee Records	20
RULE 12. Broadcasts of Committee and Subcommittee Proceedings	20

PART II—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY

RULE 13. House Resolution	22
RULE 14. Committee Authority to Investigate—General Policy	22
RULE 15. Complaints	15
RULE 16. Duties of Committee Chairman and Ranking Minority Member	25
RULE 17. Processing of Complaints	28
RULE 18. Committee-Initiated Inquiry	29
RULE 19. Investigative Subcommittee	30
RULE 20. Amendments to Statements of Alleged Violation	35
RULE 21. Committee Reporting Requirements	36
RULE 22. Respondent's Answer	37
RULE 23. Adjudicatory Hearings	40
RULE 24. Sanction Hearing and Consideration of Sanctions or Other Recommendations	47
RULE 25. Disclosure of Exculpatory Information to Respondent	49
RULE 26. Rights of Respondents and Witnesses	50
RULE 27. Frivolous Filings	55
RULE 28. Referrals to Federal or State Authorities	55

(III)

FOREWORD

The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct is unique in the House of Representatives. Consistent with the duty to carry out its advisory and enforcement responsibilities in an impartial manner, the Committee is the only standing committee of the House of Representatives the membership of which is divided evenly by party. These rules are intended to provide a fair procedural framework for the conduct of the Committee's activities and to help insure that the Committee serves well the people of the United States, the House of Representatives, and the Members, officers, and employees of the House of Representatives.

PART I—GENERAL COMMITTEE RULES

Rule 1. General Provisions

(a) So far as applicable, these rules and the Rules of the House of Representatives shall be the rules of the Committee and any subcommittee. The Committee adopts these rules under the authority of clause 2(a)(1) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, 109th Congress.

(b) The rules of the Committee may be modified, amended, or repealed by a vote of a majority of the Committee.

(c) When the interests of justice so require, the Committee, by a majority vote of its members, may adopt any special procedures, not inconsistent with these rules, deemed necessary to resolve a particular matter before it. Copies of such special procedures shall be furnished to all parties in the matter.

(d) The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member shall have access to such information that they request as necessary to conduct Committee business.

Rule 2. Definitions

(a) "Committee" means the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.

(b) "Complaint" means a written allegation of improper conduct against a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives filed with the Committee with the intent to initiate an inquiry.

(c) "Inquiry" means an investigation by an investigative subcommittee into allegations against a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives.

(d) "Investigative Subcommittee" means a subcommittee designated pursuant to Rule 19(a) to conduct an inquiry to determine if a Statement of Alleged Violation should be issued.

(e) "Statement of Alleged Violation" means a formal charging document filed by an investigative subcommittee with the Committee containing specific allegations against a Member, officer, or

employee of the House of Representatives of a violation of the Code of Official Conduct, or of a law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the performance of official duties or the discharge of official responsibilities.

(f) “Adjudicatory Subcommittee” means a subcommittee designated pursuant to Rule 23(a), that holds an adjudicatory hearing and determines whether the counts in a Statement of Alleged Violation are proved by clear and convincing evidence.

(g) “Sanction Hearing” means a Committee hearing to determine what sanction, if any, to adopt or to recommend to the House of Representatives.

(h) “Respondent” means a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives who is the subject of a complaint filed with the Committee or who is the subject of an inquiry or a Statement of Alleged Violation.

(i) “Office of Advice and Education” refers to the Office established by section 803(i) of the Ethics Reform Act of 1989. The Office handles inquiries; prepares written opinions in response to specific requests; develops general guidance; and organizes seminars, workshops, and briefings for the benefit of the House of Representatives.

(j) “Member” means a Representative in, or a Delegate to, or the Resident Commissioner to, the U.S. House of Representatives.

Rule 3. Advisory Opinions and Waivers

(a) The Office of Advice and Education shall handle inquiries; prepare written opinions providing specific advice; develop general guidance; and organize seminars, workshops, and briefings for the benefit of the House of Representatives.

(b) Any Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives, may request a written opinion with respect to the propriety of any current or proposed conduct of such Member, officer, or employee.

(c) The Office of Advice and Education may provide information and guidance regarding laws, rules, regulations, and other standards of conduct applicable to Members, officers, and employees in the performance of their duties or the discharge of their responsibilities.

(d) In general, the Committee shall provide a written opinion to an individual only in response to a written request, and the written opinion shall address the conduct only of the inquiring individual, or of persons for whom the inquiring individual is responsible as employing authority.

(e) A written request for an opinion shall be addressed to the Chairman of the Committee and shall include a complete and accurate statement of the relevant facts. A request shall be signed by the requester or the requester’s authorized representative or employing authority. A representative shall disclose to the Committee the identity of the principal on whose behalf advice is being sought.

(f) The Office of Advice and Education shall prepare for the Committee a response to each written request for an opinion from a Member, officer or employee. Each response shall discuss all applicable laws, rules, regulations, or other standards.

(g) Where a request is unclear or incomplete, the Office of Advice and Education may seek additional information from the requester.

(h) The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member are authorized to take action on behalf of the Committee on any proposed written opinion that they determine does not require consideration by the Committee. If the Chairman or Ranking Minority Member requests a written opinion, or seeks a waiver, extension, or approval pursuant to Rules 3(l), 4(c), 4(e), or 4(h), the next ranking member of the requester's party is authorized to act in lieu of the requester.

(i) The Committee shall keep confidential any request for advice from a Member, officer, or employee, as well as any response thereto.

(j) The Committee may take no adverse action in regard to any conduct that has been undertaken in reliance on a written opinion if the conduct conforms to the specific facts addressed in the opinion.

(k) Information provided to the Committee by a Member, officer, or employee seeking advice regarding prospective conduct may not be used as the basis for initiating an investigation under clause 3(a)(2) or clause 3(b) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, if such Member, officer, or employee acts in good faith in accordance with the written advice of the Committee.

(l) A written request for a waiver of clause 5 of House Rule XXV (the House gift rule), or for any other waiver or approval, shall be treated in all respects like any other request for a written opinion.

(m) A written request for a waiver of clause 5 of House Rule XXV (the House gift rule) shall specify the nature of the waiver being sought and the specific circumstances justifying the waiver.

(n) An employee seeking a waiver of time limits applicable to travel paid for by a private source shall include with the request evidence that the employing authority is aware of the request. In any other instance where proposed employee conduct may reflect on the performance of official duties, the Committee may require that the requester submit evidence that the employing authority knows of the conduct.

Rule 4. Financial Disclosure

(a) In matters relating to Title I of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978, the Committee shall coordinate with the Clerk of the House of Representatives, Legislative Resource Center, to assure that appropriate individuals are notified of their obligation to file Financial Disclosure Statements and that such individuals are provided in a timely fashion with filing instructions and forms developed by the Committee.

(b) The Committee shall coordinate with the Legislative Resource Center to assure that information that the Ethics in Government Act requires to be placed on the public record is made public.

(c) The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member are authorized to grant on behalf of the Committee requests for reasonable extensions of time for the filing of Financial Disclosure Statements. Any such request must be received by the Committee no later than the date on which the statement in question is due. A request received after such date may be granted by the Committee only in extraordinary circumstances. Such extensions for one individual in a calendar year shall not exceed a total of 90 days. No extension shall be granted authorizing a nonincumbent candidate to file a state-

ment later than 30 days prior to a primary or general election in which the candidate is participating.

(d) An individual who takes legally sufficient action to withdraw as a candidate before the date on which that individual's Financial Disclosure Statement is due under the Ethics in Government Act shall not be required to file a Statement. An individual shall not be excused from filing a Financial Disclosure Statement when withdrawal as a candidate occurs after the date on which such Statement was due.

(e) Any individual who files a report required to be filed under title I of the Ethics in Government Act more than 30 days after the later of—

(1) the date such report is required to be filed, or

(2) if a filing extension is granted to such individual, the last day of the filing extension period, is required by such Act to pay a late filing fee of \$200. The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member are authorized to approve requests that the fee be waived based on extraordinary circumstances.

(f) Any late report that is submitted without a required filing fee shall be deemed procedurally deficient and not properly filed.

(g) The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member are authorized to approve requests for waivers of the aggregation and reporting of gifts as provided by section 102(a)(2)(C) of the Ethics in Government Act. If such a request is approved, both the incoming request and the Committee response shall be forwarded to the Legislative Resource Center for placement on the public record.

(h) The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member are authorized to approve blind trusts as qualifying under section 102(f)(3) of the Ethics in Government Act. The correspondence relating to formal approval of a blind trust, the trust document, the list of assets transferred to the trust, and any other documents required by law to be made public, shall be forwarded to the Legislative Resource Center for such purpose.

(i) The Committee shall designate staff counsel who shall review Financial Disclosure Statements and, based upon information contained therein, indicate in a form and manner prescribed by the Committee whether the Statement appears substantially accurate and complete and the filer appears to be in compliance with applicable laws and rules.

(j) Each Financial Disclosure Statement shall be reviewed within 60 days after the date of filing.

(k) If the reviewing counsel believes that additional information is required because (1) the Statement appears not substantially accurate or complete, or (2) the filer may not be in compliance with applicable laws or rules, then the reporting individual shall be notified in writing of the additional information believed to be required, or of the law or rule with which the reporting individual does not appear to be in compliance. Such notice shall also state the time within which a response is to be submitted. Any such notice shall remain confidential.

(l) Within the time specified, including any extension granted in accordance with clause (c), a reporting individual who concurs with the Committee's notification that the Statement is not complete, or that other action is required, shall submit the necessary informa-

tion or take appropriate action. Any amendment may be in the form of a revised Financial Disclosure Statement or an explanatory letter addressed to the Clerk of the House of Representatives.

(m) Any amendment shall be placed on the public record in the same manner as other Statements. The individual designated by the Committee to review the original Statement shall review any amendment thereto.

(n) Within the time specified, including any extension granted in accordance with clause (c), a reporting individual who does not agree with the Committee that the Statement is deficient or that other action is required, shall be provided an opportunity to respond orally or in writing. If the explanation is accepted, a copy of the response, if written, or a note summarizing an oral response, shall be retained in Committee files with the original report.

(o) The Committee shall be the final arbiter of whether any Statement requires clarification or amendment.

(p) If the Committee determines, by vote of a majority of its members, that there is reason to believe that an individual has willfully failed to file a Statement or has willfully falsified or willfully failed to file information required to be reported, then the Committee shall refer the name of the individual, together with the evidence supporting its finding, to the Attorney General pursuant to section 104(b) of the Ethics in Government Act. Such referral shall not preclude the Committee from initiating such other action as may be authorized by other provisions of law or the Rules of the House of Representatives.

Rule 5. Meetings

(a) The regular meeting day of the Committee shall be the second Wednesday of each month, except when the House of Representatives is not meeting on that day. When the Committee Chairman determines that there is sufficient reason, a meeting may be called on additional days. A regularly scheduled meeting need not be held when the Chairman determines there is no business to be considered.

(b) The Chairman shall establish the agenda for meetings of the Committee and the Ranking Minority Member may place additional items on the agenda.

(c) All meetings of the Committee or any subcommittee shall occur in executive session unless the Committee or subcommittee, by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, opens the meeting or hearing to the public.

(d) Any hearing held by an adjudicatory subcommittee or any sanction hearing held by the Committee shall be open to the public unless the Committee or subcommittee, by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, closes the hearing to the public.

(e) A subcommittee shall meet at the discretion of its Chairman.

(f) Insofar as practicable, notice for any Committee or subcommittee meeting shall be provided at least seven days in advance of the meeting. The Chairman of the Committee or subcommittee may waive such time period for good cause.

Rule 6. Committee Staff

(a) The staff is to be assembled and retained as a professional, nonpartisan staff.

(b) Each member of the staff shall be professional and demonstrably qualified for the position for which he is hired.

(c) The staff as a whole and each individual member of the staff shall perform all official duties in a nonpartisan manner.

(d) No member of the staff shall engage in any partisan political activity directly affecting any congressional or presidential election.

(e) No member of the staff or outside counsel may accept public speaking engagements or write for publication on any subject that is in any way related to his or her employment or duties with the Committee without specific prior approval from the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member.

(f) All staff members shall be appointed by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee. Such vote shall occur at the first meeting of the membership of the Committee during each Congress and as necessary during the Congress.

(g) Subject to the approval of the Committee on House Administration, the Committee may retain counsel not employed by the House of Representatives whenever the Committee determines, by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee, that the retention of outside counsel is necessary and appropriate.

(h) If the Committee determines that it is necessary to retain staff members for the purpose of a particular investigation or other proceeding, then such staff shall be retained only for the duration of that particular investigation or proceeding.

(i) Outside counsel may be dismissed prior to the end of a contract between the Committee and such counsel only by a majority vote of the members of the Committee.

(j) In addition to any other staff provided for by law, rule, or other authority, with respect to the Committee, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member each may appoint one individual as a shared staff member from his or her personal staff to perform service for the Committee. Such shared staff may assist the Chairman or Ranking Minority Member on any subcommittee on which he serves. Only paragraphs (c) and (e) of this Rule and Rule 7(b) shall apply to shared staff.

Rule 7. Confidentiality

(a) Before any Member or employee of the Committee, including members of an investigative subcommittee selected under clause 5(a)(4) of Rule X of the House of Representatives and shared staff designated pursuant to Committee Rule 6(j), may have access to information that is confidential under the rules of the Committee, the following oath (or affirmation) shall be executed in writing:

“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will not disclose, to any person or entity outside the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, any information received in the course of my service with the Committee, except as authorized by the Committee or in accordance with its rules.”

Copies of the executed oath shall be provided to the Clerk of the House as part of the records of the House. Breaches of confiden-

tiality shall be investigated by the Committee and appropriate action shall be taken.

(b) No member of the staff or outside counsel may make public, unless approved by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee, any information, document, or other material that is confidential, derived from executive session, or classified and that is obtained during the course of employment with the Committee.

(c) Committee members and staff shall not disclose any evidence relating to an investigation to any person or organization outside the Committee unless authorized by the Committee.

(d) Members and staff of the Committee shall not disclose to any person or organization outside the Committee, unless authorized by the Committee, any information regarding the Committee's or a subcommittee's investigative, adjudicatory or other proceedings, including but not limited to: (i) the fact or nature of any complaints; (ii) executive session proceedings; (iii) information pertaining to or copies of any Committee or subcommittee report, study or other document which purports to express the views, findings, conclusions or recommendations of the Committee or subcommittee in connection with any of its activities or proceedings; or (iv) any other information or allegation respecting the conduct of a Member, officer or employee of the House.

(e) Except as otherwise specifically authorized by the Committee, no Committee member or staff member shall disclose to any person outside the Committee, the name of any witness subpoenaed to testify or to produce evidence.

(f) The Committee shall not disclose to any person or organization outside the Committee any information concerning the conduct of a respondent until it has transmitted a Statement of Alleged Violation to such respondent and the respondent has been given full opportunity to respond pursuant to Rule 22. The Statement of Alleged Violation and any written response thereto shall be made public at the first meeting or hearing on the matter that is open to the public after such opportunity has been provided. Any other materials in the possession of the Committee regarding such statement may be made public as authorized by the Committee to the extent consistent with the Rules of the House of Representatives. If no public hearing is held on the matter, the Statement of Alleged Violation and any written response thereto shall be included in the Committee's final report on the matter to the House of Representatives.

(g) Unless otherwise determined by a vote of the Committee, only the Chairman or Ranking Minority Member of the Committee, after consultation with each other, may make public statements regarding matters before the Committee or any subcommittee.

(h) The Committee may establish procedures necessary to prevent the unauthorized disclosure of any testimony or other information received by the Committee or its staff.

Rule 8. Subcommittees—General Policy and Structure

(a) Notwithstanding any other provision of these Rules, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee may consult with an investigative subcommittee either on their own ini-

tiative or on the initiative of the subcommittee, shall have access to evidence and information before a subcommittee with whom they so consult, and shall not thereby be precluded from serving as full, voting members of any adjudicatory subcommittee. Except for the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee pursuant to this paragraph, evidence in the possession of an investigative subcommittee shall not be disclosed to other Committee members except by a vote of the subcommittee.

(b) The Committee may establish other noninvestigative and nonadjudicatory subcommittees and may assign to them such functions as it may deem appropriate. The membership of each subcommittee shall provide equal representation for the majority and minority parties.

(c) The Chairman may refer any bill, resolution, or other matter before the Committee to an appropriate subcommittee for consideration. Any such bill, resolution, or other matter may be discharged from the subcommittee to which it was referred by a majority vote of the Committee.

(d) Any member of the Committee may sit with any noninvestigative or nonadjudicatory subcommittee, but only regular members of such subcommittee may vote on any matter before that subcommittee.

Rule 9. Quorums and Member Disqualification

(a) The quorum for an investigative subcommittee to take testimony and to receive evidence shall be two members, unless otherwise authorized by the House of Representatives.

(b) The quorum for an adjudicatory subcommittee to take testimony, receive evidence, or conduct business shall consist of a majority plus one of the members of the adjudicatory subcommittee.

(c) Except as stated in clauses (a) and (b) of this rule, a quorum for the purpose of conducting business consists of a majority of the members of the Committee or subcommittee.

(d) A member of the Committee shall be ineligible to participate in any Committee or subcommittee proceeding in which he is the respondent.

(e) A member of the Committee may disqualify himself from participating in any investigation of the conduct of a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives upon the submission in writing and under oath of an affidavit of disqualification stating that the member cannot render an impartial and unbiased decision. If the Committee approves and accepts such affidavit of disqualification, or if a member is disqualified pursuant to Rule 17(e) or Rule 23(a), the Chairman shall so notify the Speaker and ask the Speaker to designate a Member of the House of Representatives from the same political party as the disqualified member of the Committee to act as a member of the Committee in any Committee proceeding relating to such investigation.

Rule 10. Vote Requirements

(a) The following actions shall be taken only upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate:

- (1) Issuing a subpoena.
- (2) Adopting a full Committee motion to create an investigative subcommittee.
- (3) Adoption or amendment of a Statement of Alleged Violation.
- (4) Finding that a count in a Statement of Alleged Violation has been proved by clear and convincing evidence.
- (5) Sending a letter of reproof.
- (6) Adoption of a recommendation to the House of Representatives that a sanction be imposed.
- (7) Adoption of a report relating to the conduct of a Member, officer, or employee.
- (8) Issuance of an advisory opinion of general applicability establishing new policy.
- (b) Except as stated in clause (a), action may be taken by the Committee or any subcommittee thereof by a simple majority, a quorum being present.
- (c) No motion made to take any of the actions enumerated in clause (a) of this Rule may be entertained by the Chair unless a quorum of the Committee is present when such motion is made.

Rule 11. Committee Records

- (a) All communications and all pleadings pursuant to these rules shall be filed with the Committee at the Committee's office or such other place as designated by the Committee.
- (b) All records of the Committee which have been delivered to the Archivist of the United States shall be made available to the public in accordance with Rule VII of the Rules of the House of Representatives.

Rule 12. Broadcasts of Committee and Subcommittee Proceedings

- (a) Television or radio coverage of a Committee or subcommittee hearing or meeting shall be without commercial sponsorship.
- (b) No witness shall be required against his or her will to be photographed or otherwise to have a graphic reproduction of his or her image made at any hearing or to give evidence or testimony while the broadcasting of that hearing, by radio or television, is being conducted. At the request of any witness, all media microphones shall be turned off, all television and camera lenses shall be covered, and the making of a graphic reproduction at the hearing shall not be permitted. This paragraph supplements clause 2(k)(5) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives relating to the protection of the rights of witnesses.
- (c) Not more than four television cameras, operating from fixed positions, shall be permitted in a hearing or meeting room. The Committee may allocate the positions of permitted television cameras among the television media in consultation with the Executive Committee of the Radio and Television Correspondents' Galleries.
- (d) Television cameras shall be placed so as not to obstruct in any way the space between any witness giving evidence or testimony and any member of the Committee, or the visibility of that witness and that member to each other.

(e) Television cameras shall not be placed in positions that unnecessarily obstruct the coverage of the hearing or meeting by the other media.

PART II—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY

Rule 13. House Resolution

Whenever the House of Representatives, by resolution, authorizes or directs the Committee to undertake an inquiry or investigation, the provisions of the resolution, in conjunction with these Rules, shall govern. To the extent the provisions of the resolution differ from these Rules, the resolution shall control.

Rule 14. Committee Authority To Investigate—General Policy

(a) Pursuant to clause 3(b) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Committee may exercise its investigative authority when:

(1) information offered as a complaint by a Member of the House of Representatives is transmitted directly to the Committee;

(2) information offered as a complaint by an individual not a Member of the House is transmitted to the Committee, provided that a Member of the House certifies in writing that he or she believes the information is submitted in good faith and warrants the review and consideration of the Committee;

(3) the Committee, on its own initiative, establishes an investigative subcommittee;

(4) a Member, officer, or employee is convicted in a Federal, State, or local courts of a felony; or

(5) the House of Representatives, by resolution, authorizes or directs the Committee to undertake an inquiry or investigation.

(b) The Committee also has investigatory authority over:

(1) certain unauthorized disclosures of intelligence-related information, pursuant to House Rule X, clauses II(g)(4) and (g)(5); or

(2) reports received from the Office of the Inspector General pursuant to House Rule II, clause 6(c)(5).

Rule 15. Complaints

(a) A complaint submitted to the Committee shall be in writing, dated, and properly verified (a document will be considered properly verified where a notary executes it with the language, “Signed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me on (date) by (the name of the person)” setting forth in simple, concise, and direct statements—

(1) the name and legal address of the party filing the complaint (hereinafter referred to as the “complainant”);

(2) the name and position or title of the respondent;

(3) the nature of the alleged violation of the Code of Official Conduct or of other law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the performance of duties or discharge of responsibilities; and

(4) the facts alleged to give rise to the violation. The complaint shall not contain innuendo, speculative assertions, or conclusory statements.

(b) Any documents in the possession of the complainant that relate to the allegations may be submitted with the complaint.

(c) Information offered as a complaint by a Member of the House of Representatives may be transmitted directly to the Committee.

(d) Information offered as a complaint by an individual not a Member of the House may be transmitted to the Committee, provided that a Member of the House certifies in writing that he or she believes the information is submitted in good faith and warrants the review and consideration of the Committee.

(e) A complaint must be accompanied by a certification, which may be unsworn, that the complainant has provided an exact copy of the filed complaint and all attachments to the respondent.

(f) The Committee may defer action on a complaint against a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives when the complaint alleges conduct that the Committee has reason to believe is being reviewed by appropriate law enforcement or regulatory authorities, or when the Committee determines that it is appropriate for the conduct alleged in the complaint to be reviewed initially by law enforcement or regulatory authorities.

(g) A complaint may not be amended without leave of the Committee. Otherwise, any new allegations of improper conduct must be submitted in a new complaint that independently meets the procedural requirements of the Rules of the House of Representatives and the Committee's Rules.

(h) The Committee shall not accept, and shall return to the complainant, any complaint submitted within the 60 days prior to an election in which the subject of the complaint is a candidate.

(i) The Committee shall not consider a complaint, nor shall any investigation be undertaken by the Committee, of any alleged violation which occurred before the third previous Congress unless the Committee determines that the alleged violation is directly related to an alleged violation which occurred in a more recent Congress.

Rule 16. Duties of Committee Chairman and Ranking Minority Member

(a) Whenever information offered as a complaint is submitted to the Committee, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member shall have 14 calendar days or 5 legislative days, whichever occurs first, to determine whether the information meets the requirements of the Committee's rules for what constitutes a complaint.

(b) Whenever the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member jointly determine that information submitted to the Committee meets the requirements of the Committee's rules for what constitutes a complaint, they shall have 45 calendar days or 5 legislative days, whichever is later, after the date that the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member determine that information filed meets the requirements of the Committee's rules for what constitutes a complaint, unless the Committee by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members votes otherwise, to—

(1) recommend to the Committee that it dispose of the complaint, or any portion thereof, in any manner that does not require action by the House, which may include dismissal of the complaint or resolution of the complaint by a letter to the Member, officer, or employee of the House against whom the complaint is made;

(2) establish an investigative subcommittee; or
 (3) request that the Committee extend the applicable 45-calendar day period when they determine more time is necessary in order to make a recommendation under paragraph (1) or (2) of Rule 16(b).

(c) The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member may jointly gather additional information concerning alleged conduct which is the basis of a complaint or of information offered as a complaint until they have established an investigative subcommittee or the Chairman or Ranking Minority Member has placed on the agenda the issue of whether to establish an investigative subcommittee.

(d) If the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member jointly determine that information submitted to the Committee meets the requirements of the Committee rules for what constitutes a complaint, and the complaint is not disposed of within 45 calendar days or 5 legislative days, whichever is later, and no additional 45-day extension is made, then they shall establish an investigative subcommittee and forward the complaint, or any portion thereof, to that subcommittee for its consideration. If at any time during the time period either the Chairman or Ranking Minority Member places on the agenda the issue of whether to establish an investigative subcommittee, then an investigative subcommittee may be established only by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee.

(e) Whenever the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member jointly determine that information submitted to the Committee does not meet the requirements for what constitutes a complaint set forth in the Committee rules, they may (1) return the information to the complainant with a statement that it fails to meet the requirements for what constitutes a complaint set forth in the Committee's rules; or (2) recommend to the Committee that it authorize the establishment of an investigative subcommittee.

Rule 17. Processing of Complaints

(a) If a complaint is in compliance with House and Committee Rules, a copy of the complaint and the Committee Rules shall be forwarded to the respondent within five days with notice that the complaint conforms to the applicable rules.

(b) The respondent may, within 30 days of the Committee's notification, provide to the Committee any information relevant to a complaint filed with the Committee. The respondent may submit a written statement in response to the complaint. Such a statement shall be signed by the respondent. If the statement is prepared by counsel for the respondent, the respondent shall sign a representation that he/she has reviewed the response and agrees with the factual assertions contained therein.

(c) The Committee staff may request information from the respondent or obtain additional information pertinent to the case from other sources prior to the establishment of an investigative subcommittee only when so directed by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member.

(d) The respondent shall be notified in writing regarding the Committee's decision either to dismiss the complaint or to create an investigative subcommittee.

(e) The respondent shall be notified of the membership of the investigative subcommittee and shall have ten days after such notice is transmitted to object to the participation of any subcommittee member. Such objection shall be in writing and shall be on the grounds that the subcommittee member cannot render an impartial and unbiased decision. The subcommittee member against whom the objection is made shall be the sole judge of his or her disqualification.

Rule 18. Committee-Initiated Inquiry

(a) Notwithstanding the absence of a filed complaint, the Committee may consider any information in its possession indicating that a Member, officer, or employee may have committed a violation of the Code of Official Conduct or any law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the conduct of such Member, officer, or employee in the performance of his or her duties or the discharge of his or her responsibilities. The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member may jointly gather additional information concerning such an alleged violation by a Member, officer, or employee unless and until an investigative subcommittee has been established.

(b) If the Committee votes to establish an investigative subcommittee, the Committee shall proceed in accordance with Rule 19.

(c) Any written request by a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives that the Committee conduct an inquiry into such person's own conduct shall be processed in accordance with subsection (a) of this Rule.

(d) An inquiry shall not be undertaken regarding any alleged violation that occurred before the third previous Congress unless a majority of the Committee determines that the alleged violation is directly related to an alleged violation that occurred in a more recent Congress.

(e) An inquiry shall be undertaken by an investigative subcommittee with regard to any felony conviction of a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives in a Federal, State, or local court who has been sentenced. Notwithstanding this provision, the Committee has the discretion to initiate an inquiry upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee at any time prior to conviction or sentencing.

Rule 19. Investigative Subcommittee

(a) Upon the establishment of an investigative subcommittee, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee shall designate four members (with equal representation from the majority and minority parties) to serve as an investigative subcommittee to undertake an inquiry. Members of the Committee and Members of the House selected pursuant to clause 5(a)(4)(A) of Rule X of the House of Representatives, are eligible for appointment to an investigative subcommittee, as determined by the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee. At the time of appointment, the Chairman shall designate one member of the subcommittee to serve as the chairman and the Ranking Minority

Member shall designate one member of the subcommittee to serve as the ranking minority member of the investigative subcommittee. The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee may serve as members of an investigative subcommittee, but may not serve as non-voting, ex-officio members.

(b) In an inquiry undertaken by an investigative subcommittee—

(1) All proceedings, including the taking of testimony, shall be conducted in executive session and all testimony taken by deposition or things produced pursuant to subpoena or otherwise shall be deemed to have been taken or produced in executive session.

(2) The Chairman of the investigative subcommittee shall ask the respondent and all witnesses whether they intend to be represented by counsel. If so, the respondent or witnesses or their legal representatives shall provide written designation of counsel. A respondent or witness who is represented by counsel shall not be questioned in the absence of counsel unless an explicit waiver is obtained.

(3) The subcommittee shall provide the respondent an opportunity to present, orally or in writing, a statement, which must be under oath or affirmation, regarding the allegations and any other relevant questions arising out of the inquiry.

(4) The staff may interview witnesses, examine documents and other evidence, and request that submitted statements be under oath or affirmation and that documents be certified as to their authenticity and accuracy.

(5) The subcommittee, by a majority vote of its members, may require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, documents, and other items as it deems necessary to the conduct of the inquiry. Unless the Committee otherwise provides, the subpoena power shall rest in the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee and a subpoena shall be issued upon the request of the investigative subcommittee.

(6) The subcommittee shall require that testimony be given under oath or affirmation. The form of the oath or affirmation shall be: "Do you solemnly swear (or affirm) that the testimony you will give before this subcommittee in the matter now under consideration will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth (so help you God)?" The oath or affirmation shall be administered by the Chairman or subcommittee member designated by the Chairman to administer oaths.

(c) During the inquiry, the procedure respecting the admissibility of evidence and rulings shall be as follows:

(1) Any relevant evidence shall be admissible unless the evidence is privileged under the precedents of the House of Representatives.

(2) The Chairman of the subcommittee or other presiding member at any investigative subcommittee proceeding shall rule upon any question of admissibility or pertinency of evidence, motion, procedure or any other matter, and may direct any witness to answer any question under penalty of contempt. A witness, witness' counsel, or a member of the subcommittee may appeal any rulings to the members present at that proceeding. The majority vote of the members present at such proceeding on such appeal shall govern

the question of admissibility, and no appeal shall lie to the Committee.

(3) Whenever a person is determined by a majority vote to be in contempt of the subcommittee, the matter may be referred to the Committee to determine whether to refer the matter to the House of Representatives for consideration.

(4) Committee counsel may, subject to subcommittee approval, enter into stipulations with the respondent and/or the respondent's counsel as to facts that are not in dispute.

(d) Upon an affirmative vote of a majority of the subcommittee members, and an affirmative vote of a majority of the full Committee, an investigative subcommittee may expand the scope of its investigation.

(e) Upon completion of the investigation, the staff shall draft for the investigative subcommittee a report that shall contain a comprehensive summary of the information received regarding the alleged violations.

(f) Upon completion of the inquiry, an investigative subcommittee, by a majority vote of its members, may adopt a Statement of Alleged Violation if it determines that there is substantial reason to believe that a violation of the Code of Official Conduct, or of a law, rule, regulation, or other standard of conduct applicable to the performance of official duties or the discharge of official responsibilities by a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives has occurred. If more than one violation is alleged, such Statement shall be divided into separate counts. Each count shall relate to a separate violation, shall contain a plain and concise statement of the alleged facts of such violation, and shall include a reference to the provision of the Code of Official Conduct or law, rule, regulation or other applicable standard of conduct governing the performance of duties or discharge of responsibilities alleged to have been violated. A copy of such Statement shall be transmitted to the respondent and the respondent's counsel.

(g) If the investigative subcommittee does not adopt a Statement of Alleged Violation, it shall transmit to the Committee a report containing a summary of the information received in the inquiry, its conclusions and reasons therefore, and any appropriate recommendation.

Rule 20. Amendments to Statements of Alleged Violation

(a) An investigative subcommittee may, upon an affirmative vote of a majority of its members, amend its Statement of Alleged Violation anytime before the Statement of Alleged Violation is transmitted to the Committee; and

(b) If an investigative subcommittee amends its Statement of Alleged Violation, the respondent shall be notified in writing and shall have 30 calendar days from the date of that notification to file an answer to the amended Statement of Alleged Violation.

Rule 21. Committee Reporting Requirements

(a) Whenever an investigative subcommittee does not adopt a Statement of Alleged Violation and transmits a report to that effect to the Committee, the Committee may by an affirmative vote of a

majority of its members transmit such report to the House of Representatives;

(b) Whenever an investigative subcommittee adopts a Statement of Alleged Violation but recommends that no further action be taken, it shall transmit a report to the Committee regarding the Statement of Alleged Violation; and

(c) Whenever an investigative subcommittee adopts a Statement of Alleged Violation, the respondent admits to the violations set forth in such Statement, the respondent waives his or her right to an adjudicatory hearing, and the respondent's waiver is approved by the Committee—

(1) the subcommittee shall prepare a report for transmittal to the Committee, a final draft of which shall be provided to the respondent not less than 15 calendar days before the subcommittee votes on whether to adopt the report;

(2) the respondent may submit views in writing regarding the final draft to the subcommittee within 7 calendar days of receipt of that draft;

(3) the subcommittee shall transmit a report to the Committee regarding the Statement of Alleged Violation together with any views submitted by the respondent pursuant to subparagraph (2), and the Committee shall make the report, together with the respondent's views, available to the public before the commencement of any sanction hearing; and

(4) the Committee shall by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members issue a report and transmit such report to the House of Representatives, together with the respondent's views previously submitted pursuant to subparagraph (2) and any additional views respondent may submit for attachment to the final report; and

(d) Members of the Committee shall have not less than 72 hours to review any report transmitted to the Committee by an investigative subcommittee before both the commencement of a sanction hearing and the Committee vote on whether to adopt the report.

Rule 22. Respondent's Answer

(a)(1) Within 30 days from the date of transmittal of a Statement of Alleged Violation, the respondent shall file with the investigative subcommittee an answer, in writing and under oath, signed by respondent and respondent's counsel. Failure to file an answer within the time prescribed shall be considered by the Committee as a denial of each count.

(2) The answer shall contain an admission to or denial of each count set forth in the Statement of Alleged Violation and may include negative, affirmative, or alternative defenses and any supporting evidence or other relevant information.

(b) The respondent may file a Motion for a Bill of Particulars within 10 days of the date of transmittal of the Statement of Alleged Violation. If a Motion for a Bill of Particulars is filed, the respondent shall not be required to file an answer until 20 days after the subcommittee has replied to such motion.

(c)(1) The respondent may file a Motion to Dismiss within 10 days of the date of transmittal of the Statement of Alleged Violation or, if a Motion for a Bill of Particulars has been filed, within 10 days of the date of the subcommittee's reply to the Motion for

a Bill of Particulars. If a Motion to Dismiss is filed, the respondent shall not be required to file an answer until 20 days after the subcommittee has replied to the Motion to Dismiss, unless the respondent previously filed a Motion for a Bill of Particulars, in which case the respondent shall not be required to file an answer until 10 days after the subcommittee has replied to the Motion to Dismiss. The investigative subcommittee shall rule upon any Motion to Dismiss filed during the period between the establishment of the subcommittee and the subcommittee's transmittal of a report or Statement of Alleged Violation to the Committee or to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member at the conclusion of an inquiry, and no appeal of the subcommittee's ruling shall lie to the Committee.

(2) A Motion to Dismiss may be made on the grounds that the Statement of Alleged Violation fails to state facts that constitute a violation of the Code of Official Conduct or other applicable law, rule, regulation, or standard of conduct, or on the grounds that the Committee lacks jurisdiction to consider the allegations contained in the Statement.

(d) Any motion filed with the subcommittee pursuant to this rule shall be accompanied by a Memorandum of Points and Authorities.

(e)(1) The Chairman of the investigative subcommittee, for good cause shown, may permit the respondent to file an answer or motion after the day prescribed above.

(2) If the ability of the respondent to present an adequate defense is not adversely affected and special circumstances so require, the Chairman of the investigative subcommittee may direct the respondent to file an answer or motion prior to the day prescribed above.

(f) If the day on which any answer, motion, reply, or other pleading must be filed falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, such filing shall be made on the first business day thereafter.

(g) As soon as practicable after an answer has been filed or the time for such filing has expired, the Statement of Alleged Violation and any answer, motion, reply, or other pleading connected therewith shall be transmitted by the Chairman of the investigative subcommittee to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee.

Rule 23. Adjudicatory Hearings

(a) If a Statement of Alleged Violation is transmitted to the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member pursuant to Rule 22, and no waiver pursuant to Rule 26(b) has occurred, the Chairman shall designate the members of the Committee who did not serve on the investigative subcommittee to serve on an adjudicatory subcommittee. The Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee shall be the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the adjudicatory subcommittee unless they served on the investigative subcommittee. The respondent shall be notified of the designation of the adjudicatory subcommittee and shall have ten days after such notice is transmitted to object to the participation of any subcommittee member. Such objection shall be in writing and shall be on the grounds that the member cannot render an impartial and

unbiased decision. The member against whom the objection is made shall be the sole judge of his or her disqualification.

(b) A majority of the adjudicatory subcommittee membership plus one must be present at all times for the conduct of any business pursuant to this rule.

(c) The adjudicatory subcommittee shall hold a hearing to determine whether any counts in the Statement of Alleged Violation have been proved by clear and convincing evidence and shall make findings of fact, except where such violations have been admitted by respondent.

(d) At an adjudicatory hearing, the subcommittee may require, by subpoena or otherwise, the attendance and testimony of such witnesses and production of such books, records, correspondence, memoranda, papers, documents, and other items as it deems necessary. Depositions, interrogatories, and sworn statements taken under any investigative subcommittee direction may be accepted into the hearing record.

(e) The procedures set forth in clause 2(g) and (k) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives shall apply to adjudicatory hearings. All such hearings shall be open to the public unless the adjudicatory subcommittee, pursuant to such clause, determines that the hearings or any part thereof should be closed.

(f)(1) The adjudicatory subcommittee shall, in writing, notify the respondent that the respondent and his or her counsel have the right to inspect, review, copy, or photograph books, papers, documents, photographs, or other tangible objects that the adjudicatory subcommittee counsel intends to use as evidence against the respondent in an adjudicatory hearing. The respondent shall be given access to such evidence, and shall be provided the names of witnesses the subcommittee counsel intends to call, and a summary of their expected testimony, no less than 15 calendar days prior to any such hearing. Except in extraordinary circumstances, no evidence may be introduced or witness called in an adjudicatory hearing unless the respondent has been afforded a prior opportunity to review such evidence or has been provided the name of the witness.

(2) After a witness has testified on direct examination at an adjudicatory hearing, the Committee, at the request of the respondent, shall make available to the respondent any statement of the witness in the possession of the Committee which relates to the subject matter as to which the witness has testified.

(3) Any other testimony, statement, or documentary evidence in the possession of the Committee which is material to the respondent's defense shall, upon request, be made available to the respondent.

(g) No less than five days prior to the hearing, the respondent or counsel shall provide the adjudicatory subcommittee with the names of witnesses expected to be called, summaries of their expected testimony, and copies of any documents or other evidence proposed to be introduced.

(h) The respondent or counsel may apply to the subcommittee for the issuance of subpoenas for the appearance of witnesses or the production of evidence. The application shall be granted upon a showing by the respondent that the proposed testimony or evidence is relevant and not otherwise available to respondent. The applica-

tion may be denied if not made at a reasonable time or if the testimony or evidence would be merely cumulative.

(i) During the hearing, the procedures regarding the admissibility of evidence and rulings shall be as follows:

(1) Any relevant evidence shall be admissible unless the evidence is privileged under the precedents of the House of Representatives.

(2) The Chairman of the subcommittee or other presiding member at an adjudicatory subcommittee hearing shall rule upon any question of admissibility or pertinency of evidence, motion, procedure, or any other matter, and may direct any witness to answer any question under penalty of contempt. A witness, witness's counsel, or a member of the subcommittee may appeal any ruling to the members present at that proceeding. The majority vote of the members present at such proceeding on such an appeal shall govern the question of admissibility and no appeal shall lie to the Committee.

(3) Whenever a witness is deemed by a Chairman or other presiding member to be in contempt of the subcommittee, the matter may be referred to the Committee to determine whether to refer the matter to the House of Representatives for consideration.

(4) Committee counsel may, subject to subcommittee approval, enter into stipulations with the respondent and/or the respondent's counsel as to facts that are not in dispute.

(j) Unless otherwise provided, the order of an adjudicatory hearing shall be as follows:

(1) The Chairman of the subcommittee shall open the hearing by stating the adjudicatory subcommittee's authority to conduct the hearing and the purpose of the hearing.

(2) The Chairman shall then recognize Committee counsel and the respondent's counsel, in turn, for the purpose of giving opening statements.

(3) Testimony from witnesses and other pertinent evidence shall be received in the following order whenever possible:

(i) witnesses (deposition transcripts and affidavits obtained during the inquiry may be used in lieu of live witnesses if the witness is unavailable) and other evidence offered by the Committee counsel,

(ii) witnesses and other evidence offered by the respondent,

(iii) rebuttal witnesses, as permitted by the Chairman.

(4) Witnesses at a hearing shall be examined first by counsel calling such witness. The opposing counsel may then cross-examine the witness. Redirect examination and recross examination by counsel may be permitted at the Chairman's discretion. Subcommittee members may then question witnesses. Unless otherwise directed by the Chairman, questions by Subcommittee members shall be conducted under the five-minute rule.

(5) The Chairman shall then recognize Committee counsel and respondent's counsel, in turn, for the purpose of giving closing arguments. Committee counsel may reserve time for rebuttal argument, as permitted by the Chairman.

(k) A subpoena to a witness to appear at a hearing shall be served sufficiently in advance of that witness' scheduled appearance to allow the witness a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Chairman of the adjudicatory subcommittee, to prepare for the hearing and to employ counsel.

(l) Each witness appearing before the subcommittee shall be furnished a printed copy of the Committee rules, the pertinent provisions of the Rules of the House of Representatives applicable to the rights of witnesses, and a copy of the Statement of Alleged Violation.

(m) Testimony of all witnesses shall be taken under oath or affirmation. The form of the oath or affirmation shall be: "Do you solemnly swear (or affirm) that the testimony you will give before this subcommittee in the matter now under consideration will be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth (so help you God)?" The oath or affirmation shall be administered by the Chairman or Committee member designated by the Chairman to administer oaths.

(n) At an adjudicatory hearing, the burden of proof rests on Committee counsel to establish the facts alleged in the Statement of Alleged Violation by clear and convincing evidence. However, Committee counsel need not present any evidence regarding any count that is admitted by the respondent or any fact stipulated.

(o) As soon as practicable after all testimony and evidence have been presented, the subcommittee shall consider each count contained in the Statement of Alleged Violation and shall determine by a majority vote of its members whether each count has been proved. If a majority of the subcommittee does not vote that a count has been proved, a motion to reconsider that vote may be made only by a member who voted that the count was not proved. A count that is not proved shall be considered as dismissed by the subcommittee.

(p) The findings of the adjudicatory subcommittee shall be reported to the Committee.

Rule 24. Sanction Hearing and Consideration of Sanctions or Other Recommendations

(a) If no count in a Statement of Alleged Violation is proved, the Committee shall prepare a report to the House of Representatives, based upon the report of the adjudicatory subcommittee.

(b) If an adjudicatory subcommittee completes an adjudicatory hearing pursuant to Rule 23 and reports that any count of the Statement of Alleged Violation has been proved, a hearing before the Committee shall be held to receive oral and/or written submissions by counsel for the Committee and counsel for the respondent as to the sanction the Committee should recommend to the House of Representatives with respect to such violations. Testimony by witnesses shall not be heard except by written request and vote of a majority of the Committee.

(c) Upon completion of any proceeding held pursuant to clause (b), the Committee shall consider and vote on a motion to recommend to the House of Representatives that the House take disciplinary action. If a majority of the Committee does not vote in favor of the recommendation that the House of Representatives take action, a motion to reconsider that vote may be made only by a member who voted against the recommendation. The Committee may also, by majority vote, adopt a motion to issue a Letter of Reapproval or take other appropriate Committee action.

(d) If the Committee determines a Letter of Reproval constitutes sufficient action, the Committee shall include any such letter as a part of its report to the House of Representatives.

(e) With respect to any proved counts against a Member of the House of Representatives, the Committee may recommend to the House one or more of the following sanctions:

(1) Expulsion from the House of Representatives.

(2) Censure.

(3) Reprimand.

(4) Fine.

(5) Denial or limitation of any right, power, privilege, or immunity of the Member if under the Constitution the House of Representatives may impose such denial or limitation.

(6) Any other sanction determined by the Committee to be appropriate.

(f) With respect to any proved counts against an officer or employee of the House of Representatives, the Committee may recommend to the House one or more of the following sanctions:

(1) Dismissal from employment.

(2) Reprimand.

(3) Fine.

(4) Any other sanction determined by the Committee to be appropriate.

(g) With respect to the sanctions that the Committee may recommend, reprimand is appropriate for serious violations, censure is appropriate for more serious violations, and expulsion of a Member or dismissal of an officer or employee is appropriate for the most serious violations. A recommendation of a fine is appropriate in a case in which it is likely that the violation was committed to secure a personal financial benefit; and a recommendation of a denial or limitation of a right, power, privilege, or immunity of a Member is appropriate when the violation bears upon the exercise or holding of such right, power, privilege, or immunity. This clause sets forth general guidelines and does not limit the authority of the Committee to recommend other sanctions.

(h) The Committee report shall contain an appropriate statement of the evidence supporting the Committee's findings and a statement of the Committee's reasons for the recommended sanction.

Rule 25. Disclosure of Exculpatory Information to Respondent

If the Committee, or any investigative or adjudicatory subcommittee at any time receives any exculpatory information respecting a Complaint or Statement of Alleged Violation concerning a Member, officer, or employee of the House of Representatives, it shall make such information known and available to the Member, officer, or employee as soon as practicable, but in no event later than the transmittal of evidence supporting a proposed Statement of Alleged Violation pursuant to Rule 26(c). If an investigative subcommittee does not adopt a Statement of Alleged Violation, it shall identify any exculpatory information in its possession at the conclusion of its inquiry and shall include such information, if any, in the subcommittee's final report to the Committee regarding its inquiry. For purposes of this rule, exculpatory evidence shall be any evidence or information that is substantially favorable to the respond-

ent with respect to the allegations or charges before an investigative or adjudicatory subcommittee.

Rule 26. Rights of Respondents and Witnesses

(a) A respondent shall be informed of the right to be represented by counsel, to be provided at his or her own expense.

(b) A respondent may seek to waive any procedural rights or steps in the disciplinary process. A request for waiver must be in writing, signed by the respondent, and must detail what procedural steps the respondent seeks to waive. Any such request shall be subject to the acceptance of the Committee or subcommittee, as appropriate.

(c) Not less than 10 calendar days before a scheduled vote by an investigative subcommittee on a Statement of Alleged Violation, the subcommittee shall provide the respondent with a copy of the Statement of Alleged Violation it intends to adopt together with all evidence it intends to use to prove those charges which it intends to adopt, including documentary evidence, witness testimony, memoranda of witness interviews, and physical evidence, unless the subcommittee by an affirmative vote of a majority of its members decides to withhold certain evidence in order to protect a witness, but if such evidence is withheld, the subcommittee shall inform the respondent that evidence is being withheld and of the count to which such evidence relates.

(d) Neither the respondent nor his counsel shall, directly or indirectly, contact the subcommittee or any member thereof during the period of time set forth in paragraph (c) except for the sole purpose of settlement discussions where counsels for the respondent and the subcommittee are present.

(e) If, at any time after the issuance of a Statement of Alleged Violation, the Committee or any subcommittee thereof determines that it intends to use evidence not provided to a respondent under paragraph (c) to prove the charges contained in the Statement of Alleged Violation (or any amendment thereof), such evidence shall be made immediately available to the respondent, and it may be used in any further proceeding under the Committee's rules.

(f) Evidence provided pursuant to paragraph (c) or (e) shall be made available to the respondent and his or her counsel only after each agrees, in writing, that no document, information, or other materials obtained pursuant to that paragraph shall be made public until—

(1) such time as a Statement of Alleged Violation is made public by the Committee if the respondent has waived the adjudicatory hearing; or

(2) the commencement of an adjudicatory hearing if the respondent has not waived an adjudicatory hearing; but the failure of respondent and his counsel to so agree in writing, and therefore not receive the evidence, shall not preclude the issuance of a Statement of Alleged Violation at the end of the period referenced to in paragraph (c).

(g) A respondent shall receive written notice whenever—

(1) the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member determine that information the Committee has received constitutes a complaint;

(2) a complaint or allegation is transmitted to an investigative subcommittee;

(3) that subcommittee votes to authorize its first subpoena or to take testimony under oath, whichever occurs first; and

(4) the Committee votes to expand the scope of the inquiry of an investigative subcommittee.

(h) Whenever an investigative subcommittee adopts a Statement of Alleged Violation and a respondent enters into an agreement with that subcommittee to settle a complaint on which the Statement is based, that agreement, unless the respondent requests otherwise, shall be in writing and signed by the respondent and the respondent's counsel, the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the subcommittee, and the outside counsel, if any.

(i) Statements or information derived solely from a respondent or his counsel during any settlement discussions between the Committee or a subcommittee thereof and the respondent shall not be included in any report of the subcommittee or the Committee or otherwise publicly disclosed without the consent of the respondent.

(j) Whenever a motion to establish an investigative subcommittee does not prevail, the Committee shall promptly send a letter to the respondent informing him of such vote.

(k) Witnesses shall be afforded a reasonable period of time, as determined by the Committee or subcommittee, to prepare for an appearance before an investigative subcommittee or for an adjudicatory hearing and to obtain counsel.

(l) Prior to their testimony, witnesses shall be furnished a printed copy of the Committee's Rules of Procedure and the provisions of the Rules of the House of Representatives applicable to the rights of witnesses.

(m) Witnesses may be accompanied by their own counsel for the purpose of advising them concerning their constitutional rights. The Chairman may punish breaches of order and decorum, and of professional responsibility on the part of counsel, by censure and exclusion from the hearings; and the Committee may cite the offender to the House of Representatives for contempt.

(n) Each witness subpoenaed to provide testimony or other evidence shall be provided the same per diem rate as established, authorized, and regulated by the Committee on House Administration for Members, officers and employees of the House, and as the Chairman considers appropriate, actual expenses of travel to or from the place of examination. No compensation shall be authorized for attorney's fees or for a witness' lost earnings. Such per diem may not be paid if a witness had been summoned at the place of examination.

(o) With the approval of the Committee, a witness, upon request, may be provided with a transcript of his or her deposition or other testimony taken in executive session, or, with the approval of the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member, may be permitted to examine such transcript in the office of the Committee. Any such request shall be in writing and shall include a statement that the witness, and counsel, agree to maintain the confidentiality of all executive session proceedings covered by such transcript.

Rule 27. Frivolous Filings

If a complaint or information offered as a complaint is deemed frivolous by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee, the Committee may take such action as it, by an affirmative vote of its members, deems appropriate in the circumstances.

Rule 28. Referrals to Federal or State Authorities

Referrals made under clause 3(a)(3) of Rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives may be made by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of the Committee.

