

An hourglass-shaped graphic with a globe inside. The top bulb is dark blue, and the bottom bulb is light blue. The globe is centered in the narrow neck of the hourglass. The text is overlaid on the graphic.

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*House Standing Committee Chairs and Ranking Minority*

*Members: Rules Governing Selection Procedures*

Judy Schneider, Government and Finance Division

December 23, 2008

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# House Standing Committee Chairs and Ranking Minority Members: Rules Governing Selection Procedures

**Judy Schneider**  
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## Summary

House rules, Republican Conference rules, and Democratic Caucus rules each detail aspects of the procedures followed in selecting standing committee chairs and ranking minority members. This report summarizes those procedures and lists membership on each party's steering committee. The report will be updated if rules or procedures change.

## House Rules

House Rule X, clause 5(c)(2), adopted in 1995 and effective immediately, limited committee (and subcommittee) chairs to three-terms of consecutive service. Service for less than a full session in a Congress is disregarded. A rules change adopted on January 7, 2003, pursuant to H.Res. 5, exempted the Intelligence Committee chair from the limit. A rules change adopted on January 4, 2005, pursuant to H.Res. 5, exempted the Rules Committee chair from the limit.

## Republican Conference Procedures

Republican Conference rules delineate procedures for the selection of standing committee chairs and ranking minority members. The Speaker, with the Republicans in the majority, has the authority to nominate the chairs of the House Administration Committee and Rules Committee. In the minority, this is performed by the minority leader. He names the ranking minority members on these committees. The Speaker’s or minority leader’s nominations for these two positions are submitted directly to the full Republican Conference for ratification. If the conference rejects the leader’s nominee, the Speaker or minority leader has the authority to submit another name to the conference.

All other standing committee chairs or ranking minority members are nominated by the Republican Steering Committee and ratified by the full Republican Conference. Pursuant to conference rules, the Member nominated to be chair or ranking minority member does not need to be the Member with the longest continuous service on the committee. In the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress, the Steering Committee “interviewed” prospective candidates for ranking slots. Some of the new ranking members were the most senior members of the committee, others were not.

The Steering Committee is composed of party leaders, selected committee leaders, class leaders, and regional representatives. The Steering Committee is reconstituted each Congress. Regions are restructured to reflect as closely as possible an equal number of Republican Members from each region. Each region elects its Steering Committee member. If Steering Committee members are elected from states that have four or more Republican members, a “small state” group is triggered to also elect a member to the Steering Committee; the small state group is composed of states that have three or fewer Republican members. **Table 1** depicts the membership of the Republican Steering Committee for the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**Table 1. Republican Steering Committee**

Designated Representative	Member Serving in 111 <sup>th</sup> Congress	Comments
Republican Leader	John Boehner	Has 5 votes in Steering Committee
Minority Whip	Eric Cantor	Has 2 votes
Chief Deputy Whip	Kevin McCarthy	
Republican Conference Chair	Mike Pence	
Republican Conference Vice Chair	Cathy McMorris-Rogers	
Republican Conference Secretary	John Carter	
Republican Policy Chair	Thad McCotter	

Designated Representative	Member Serving in 111 <sup>th</sup> Congress	Comments
NRCC Chair, 110 <sup>th</sup> Congress	Tom Cole	
NRCC Chair, 111 <sup>th</sup> Congress	Pete Sessions	
Appropriations Committee ranking member	Jerry Lewis	
Energy and Commerce Committee ranking member	Joe Barton	
Financial Services Committee ranking member	Doc Hastings	
Rules Committee ranking member	David Dreier	
Ways and Means Committee ranking member	Dave Camp	
California Representative	Ken Calvert	
Texas Representative	Lamar Smith	
Florida Representative	Jeff Miller	
Region I Representative	Doc Hastings	Washington, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Wyoming, Colorado
Region II Representative	Lee Terry	Kansas, Oklahoma, Nebraska, Wisconsin, Minnesota
Region III Representative	John Shimkus	Iowa, Missouri, Illinois, Arkansas
Region IV Representative	Mike Rogers	Michigan, Indiana, Tennessee
Region V Representative	John McHugh	Delaware, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania
Region VI Representative	Steve LaTourette	Maryland, Ohio, Virginia
Region VII Representative	Hal Rogers	Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, West Virginia
Region VIII Representative	John Linder	Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina
Small State Representative	Mike Simpson	Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Maryland, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, West Virginia, Wyoming
110 <sup>th</sup> Class Representative	Adrian Smith	
111 <sup>th</sup> Class Representative	Gregg Harper	

## Democratic Caucus Procedures

Democratic Caucus rules address selecting committee chairs and ranking minority members. The Democratic leader nominates a chair/ranking member for the Committees on Rules and House Administration, who must be approved by the entire Democratic Caucus. The Budget Committee chair/ranking member is selected from among members choosing to run for the position. Other

chair/ranking member nominations are made by the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee and voted on by the entire Democratic Caucus. In making selections, the Steering Committee considers, pursuant to caucus rules, “merit, length of service on the committee and degree of commitment to the Democratic agenda of the nominee, and the diversity of the Caucus.” The Steering Committee is reconstituted each Congress, and regions can be restructured to reflect equal Democratic representation among regions. The number of appointments made by the party leader can also change. **Table 2** depicts the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee as constituted at the beginning of the 111<sup>h</sup> Congress.

**Table 2. Democratic Steering Committee**

Designated Representative	Member Serving in the 111 <sup>h</sup> Congress	Comments
Steering Committee Chair	Nancy Pelosi	
Steering Committee Co-Chair	Rosa DeLauro	
Policy Committee Co-Chair	George Miller	
Vice-Chair	Marion Berry	
Vice-Chair	Hilda Solis	
Whip	James Clyburn	
Democratic Caucus Chair	John Larson	
Democratic Caucus Vice-Chair	Xavier Becerra	
DCCC Chair	Chris Van Hollen	
Senior Chief Deputy Whip	John Lewis	
Chief Deputy Whip	Joe Crowley	
Chief Deputy Whip	Diana DeGette	
Chief Deputy Whip	G.K. Butterfield	
Chief Deputy Whip	Ed Pastor	
Chief Deputy Whip	John Tanner	
Chief Deputy Whip	Maxine Waters	
Chief Deputy Whip	Debbie Wasserman Schultz	
Chief Deputy Whip	Jan Schakowsky	
Region I	Linda Sherman	Southern California: 21-53
Region II	Jerry McNerney	Northern California: 1-20; Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Alaska, Marianas Islands
Region III	Tammy Baldwin	Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska
Region IV	Jan Schakowsky	Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma
Region V	Rick Larsen	Colorado, Utah, Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Idaho
Region VI	Eddie Bernice Johnson	Texas, Arizona, New Mexico

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<b>Designated Representative</b>	<b>Member Serving in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Region VII	Bob Etheridge	Louisiana, Tennessee, Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina
Region VIII	Ron Klein	Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico
Region IX	James Moran	Maryland, New Jersey, West Virginia, Virginia, D.C., Delaware
Region X	Robert Brady	Ohio, Pennsylvania, Kentucky
Region XI	Jerrold Nadler	New York
Region XII	John Tierney	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont
Appropriations Committee Chair	David Obey	
Budget Committee Chair	John Spratt	
Energy and Commerce Committee Chair	Henry Waxman	
Financial Services Committee Chair	Barney Frank	
Rules Committee Chair	Louis Slaughter	
Ways and Means Committee Chair	Charles Rangel	
Organization Study and Review (OSR) Chair	Mike Capuano	
Freshman Representative	Jared Polis	
Members appointed by Democratic Leader	Dennis Cardoza Kathy Castor Jerry Costello Artur Davis Lloyd Doggett Debbie Halvorson Rush Holt Marcy Kaptur Zoe Lofgren Doris Matsui Kendrick Meek Collin Peterson Tim Ryan Nydia Velazquez	

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