

RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

§ 883–§ 885

Rule XV, clause 1

The words of the rule “one hour after” have been interpreted to mean a less time in case the call of committees shall have exhausted itself before the expiration of one hour (IV, 3135); but not otherwise (IV, 3141). After the House has been in Committee of the Whole under this order and has risen and reported, and the report has been acted on by the House, other motions to go into Committee to consider other bills are in order (IV, 3136). The motion to go into Committee generally may be made by the individual Member (IV, 3138), but when it is proposed to designate a particular bill he must have the authority of a committee (IV, 3138). The amendment to the motion to consider a particular bill must refer to a bill on the Union Calendar (IV, 3139). This order of business is used entirely for nonprivileged bills and is not used in the House for consideration of bills in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union if otherwise privileged under clause 5 of rule XIII.

6. All questions relating to the priority of business shall be decided by a majority without debate.

§ 884. Decision of questions as to priority of business without debate.

This provision was adopted in 1803 to prevent obstructive debate (IV, 3061). Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found in former rule XXV (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. —). The question of consideration under clause 3 of rule XVI and the motion that the House resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole are not debatable (VIII, 2447; IV, 3062, 3063).

This rule may not be invoked to establish an order of business or to inhibit the Speaker’s power of recognition (Speaker Albert, July 31, 1975, p. 26249). It has been held that appeals from decisions of the Chair as to priority of business are not debatable under this rule (V, 6952).

RULE XV

BUSINESS IN ORDER ON SPECIAL DAYS

Suspensions, Mondays and Tuesdays

1. (a) A rule may not be suspended except by a vote of two-thirds of the Members voting, a quorum being present. The Speaker may not entertain a motion that the House suspend the rules except on Mondays

§ 885. Motions to suspend the rules.

and Tuesdays and during the last six days of a session of Congress.

This provision (former clause 1 of rule XXVII) has been built up gradually on an old rule of 1794, which provided that no rule should be rescinded without one day's notice. In 1822 a clause was added that no rule should be suspended except by a two-thirds vote; and in 1828 it was provided that the order of business, as established by the rules, should not be changed except by a two-thirds vote. This provision marks the great purpose of the motion, which was to give a means of getting consideration for bills which could not get forward under the rule for the order of business. Originally in order on any day, the motion was, in 1847, restricted to Mondays of each week, and, in 1880, to the first and third Mondays of each month. In 1874 the old limit of 10 days at the end of the session was reduced to six days. In the 93d Congress, the rule was amended to permit the Speaker to recognize for such motions on the first and third Mondays and on the Tuesdays immediately following those days and to eliminate the distinction between days on which committees and individuals had preference (H. Res. 6, Jan. 3, 1973, pp. 26, 27); and in the 95th Congress, the rule was amended to permit the Speaker to recognize for such motions on every Monday and Tuesday (H. Res. 5, Jan. 4, 1977, 95th Cong., pp. 53–70). Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found in former clause 1 of rule XXVII (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. —). Originally of great use in establishing the order of business, when the older and more defective rules for the order of business existed, the use of the motion has changed since the House in 1890 adopted rules for the order of business which enables the House on any day to go to any public bills on its calendars. About the same time the perfection of the process of getting bills before the House out of order by a majority vote through a report from the Committee on Rules further diminished the importance of the motion to suspend the rules (V, 6790).

While originally the motion was used to suspend the rule on the order of business in order to consider a particular bill (V, 6852, 6853), in the later practice it is more usual to move “to suspend the rules and pass” the bill (V, 6846, 6847), and a division of the question may not be demanded, either as to the two branches of the motion or as to distinct substantive propositions in the subject of the motion (V, 6141–6143). The motion may not be amended (V, 5322, 5405, 6858; Dec. 21, 1973, pp. 43251–63; June 4, 1985, pp. 13983, 13986, 13989), postponed (V, 5322), or laid on the table (V, 5405). The motion to reconsider may not be applied to a negative vote on the motion (V, 5645, 5646; VIII, 2781; Sept. 28, 1996, p. —), although it may be applied to an affirmative vote (Sept. 28, 1996, p. —). The motion to refer may not be applied to the bill which it is proposed to pass under suspension of the rules (V, 6860). The motion to suspend the rules applied to the parliamentary law of Jefferson's Manual

§ 886. Nature of the motion to suspend the rules.

as well as to the other rules of the House (V, 6796), and may even be used to deny the right to have read a paper on which the House is to vote (V, 5278–5284). While it has been held that the right of a Member to have read the paper on which he is called to vote is not changed by the fact that the procedure is by suspension of the rules (V, 5277; VIII, 3400), the precedents are not uniform in this regard, and in earlier instances the separate motion to suspend the rules and dispense with reading of pending bills, amendments, and Senate amendments was held in order (V, 5278–84). Under the modern practice, only the motion “to suspend the rules and pass” is itself read and is held to suspend all rules inconsistent with its purposes, including a rule requiring that a recess be taken (V, 5752), or that a quorum be present when a bill is reported from committee (Sept. 22, 1992, p. 26932). Thus only the title of the bill is normally read by the Clerk, and amendments included in the motion are not reported separately, but the Chair may, in his discretion, where objection is made to that procedure, require the reading of an amendment which is not printed or otherwise available (July 17, 1950, p. 10448). Where a motion to suspend the rules and agree to a resolution which provided for concurring in a Senate amendment with an amendment consisting of the text of a bill introduced in the House, the Speaker ruled that reading of the resolution itself was sufficient and that it could be re-read to the House only by unanimous consent (Dec. 21, 1973, pp. 43251–63). It may be used also to change a rule (V, 6862), or to make a new rule, as was more frequently done in the earlier years of the House when it was the only way for making a special order except by unanimous consent (IV, 3152–3162). In the later practice special orders may still be made by motion to suspend the rules (IV, 3154); but usually they are made by majority vote of the House on a report from the Committee on Rules (IV, 3169). The motion to suspend may include a series of actions, as the discharge of a committee from consideration of a bill and the passage of it (V, 6850), the reconsideration of the vote passing a bill, amendment of it, and passage again (V, 6849), the permission to a committee to report several bills (V, 6857), an order to the Clerk to incorporate in the engrossment of a general appropriation bill a provision not otherwise in order (IV, 3845), an authorization to the House to entertain a specified motion to suspend the rules on a future day, not a suspension day (IV, 3845), a motion to take a bill (V, 6288; VIII, 3425), or a motion to reconsider, from the table (V, 5640). A motion to suspend the rules may provide for the passage of a bill regardless of whether it has been reported or referred to any calendar or even previously introduced (VIII, 3421; July 16, 1996, p. 17228), may include an amendment without the formality of committee approval (June 22, 1992, p. 15617), and may provide for agreeing to a conference report which has been ruled out of order by the Speaker (Dec. 20, 1974, p. 41860). One motion to suspend the rules having been rejected, the Speaker may recognize for a similar motion (Dec. 21, 1973, pp. 43270–81).

In the early practice, when the motion to suspend the rules was used to enable a matter to be taken up for consideration out of order, it was not admitted when a subject was already before the House (V, 5278, 6836, 6837, 6852, 6853). A bill taken up under this early practice might be amended (V, 6842, 6856) by the House, or withdrawn by the mover, in which case another Member might not present it (V, 6854, 6855). In the later practice, where the motion includes both suspension of the rules and action on the subject it is admitted, although another matter be pending (V, 6834), although the yeas and nays may have been demanded on another highly privileged motion (V, 6835), or although the previous question may have been ordered or moved on another matter (V, 6827; see also Sept. 17, 1990, p. 24695; V, 6831–6833; VIII, 3418). Earlier rulings, however, did not, while a series of Senate amendments were pending, permit a motion to suspend the rules in order to permit a vote to be taken on the amendments in gross (V, 6828, 6830). But in the earlier practice, while a matter was pending, a motion to suspend the rules in order to dispense with the reading otherwise required was admitted (V, 5278). The motion to suspend the rules has been ruled out of order when the House is considering a bill under a special order (V, 6838); and when a question of high privilege under rule IX is before the House a motion to suspend the rules and consider another matter is not in order (V, 6825, 6826; VI, 553, 565). But the motion to suspend the rules has been held of equal privilege with the motion to instruct conferees after 20 days of conference, which under former clause 1(c) of rule XXVIII (current clause 7(c) of rule XXII) is of the highest privilege (Mar. 1, 1988, pp. 2749, 2751, 2754). A motion to suspend the rules and approve the Journal was held in order, although the Journal had not been read and the then highly privileged motion to fix the day to which the House should adjourn was pending (IV, 2758). While the motion is of high privilege, it may be superseded by a question of the privilege of the House (III, 2553; VI, 565). Pursuant to clause 1(b) of rule XV the Speaker may entertain one motion to adjourn pending a motion to suspend the rules, but after that vote shall not entertain any other motion until the vote is taken on the motion to suspend the rules. Moreover, in the absence of a motion to suspend, the ordinary motions relating to business of the House may be made on suspension days as on other days (IV, 3080). The motion to suspend the rules may be made on days other than suspension days by unanimous consent (V, 6795) or by adoption of a resolution reported by the Rules Committee. On suspension days the motion to suspend the rules has been admitted at the discretion of the Speaker since 1881 (V, 6791–6794, 6845; VIII, 3402–3404), and no appeal may be taken from the Speaker’s denial of recognition (II, 1425), and no advance notice to Members of bills to be called up under suspension of the rules is required (Mar. 20, 1978, p. 7535), but the rules forbid the Speaker to entertain a motion to suspend the rules relating to the privilege of the floor (clause 2(b) of rule IV; V, 7283; VIII, 3634),

§ 887. Precedence of the motion to suspend the rules.

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the use of the Hall of the House (clause 1 of rule IV; V, 7270) or prohibiting the introduction of persons in the galleries (clause 7 of rule XVII; VI, 197). Where a special rule requires that the object of a motion to suspend the rules be announced on the floor at least one hour prior to the Chair's entertaining the motion, unanimous consent is required to permit the Chair to entertain the motion prior to that time (Sept. 28, 1996, p. —).

Prior to the 93d Congress, the rule gave to individuals preference on the first Monday of the month for making motions to suspend the rules, and preference on the third Mondays for committees to make the motion (V, 6790). In rare instances the Speaker has called the committees in regular order for motions to suspend the rules, but this method is not required (V, 6810, 6811). In the earlier practice the committee motion must have been formally and specifically authorized by the committee (V, 6805–6807); but after the motion was seconded and debate had begun it was too late to raise a question as to the authorization (V, 6808). Under the later practice authorization by a committee is not required (VIII, 3410). The committee may not present a bill which has not been referred to it (V, 6813) and is not within its jurisdiction (V, 6848). A bill offered on a committee suspension day, in the early practice, could carry with it only such amendments as were authorized by a committee (V, 6812), but in the modern practice the formality of committee approval is not required (June 22, 1992, p. 15617). If on a committee day an individual motion was made and seconded, it was then too late to make a point of order (V, 6809).

Prior to the 102d Congress, certain motions to suspend the rules were required to be seconded, if demanded, by a majority by tellers, but this requirement was eliminated from the rule in the 102d Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 1991, p. 39). This requirement for a second was adopted in 1874, was rescinded two years later, but was again adopted in 1880. The object of it was to prevent consumption of the time of the House by forcing consideration of undesirable propositions (V, 6797). The requirement (former clause 2 of rule XXVII) was amended in the 96th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 15, 1979, pp. 7–16) so that a second was not required where printed copies of the proposed measure were available. Copies of reports on bills considered under suspension are not required to be available in advance. The constitutional right of a Member to demand the yeas and nays, or the right of a Member under clause 1(b) of rule XX to demand a recorded vote, did not exist on the question of ordering a second under the former clause 2 of rule XXVII, which only permitted the ordering of a second by tellers if a quorum was present (V, 6032–6036; VIII, 3109; Dec. 16, 1981, p. 31851). The fact that a majority of the Members of the House did not pass between the tellers on the question of ordering a second did not conclusively show that a quorum was not present in the Chamber, and the Speaker could count the House to determine whether a quorum was actually present (Dec. 16, 1981, p. 31851). But where a quorum failed

on the vote for a second, under clause 6 of rule XX the yeas and nays were ordered (IV, 3053–3055; Dec. 21, 1973, pp. 43251–63). Where the Chair allocates the time in opposition to the motion to the ranking minority member of the reporting committee, a challenge that that member does not qualify by being opposed, in order to control such time, must be made when the time is allocated by the Chair (May 15, 1984, p. 12215; Speaker Wright, June 2, 1987, p. 14223). The motion to suspend the rules may be withdrawn at any time before the Chair puts the question and a voice vote is taken thereon (July 27, 1981, p. 17563; July 16, 1996, p. 17228).

(b) Pending a motion that the House suspend the rules, the Speaker may entertain one motion that the House adjourn. After the result of such a motion is announced, the Speaker may not entertain any other motion until the vote is taken on the suspension.

§ 890. Dilatory motions pending motions to suspend rules.

This provision (former clause 8 of rule XVI) was adopted in 1868 (V, 5743), and amended in 1911 (VIII, 2823). A motion for a recess (V, 5748–5751) and for a call of the House when there was no doubt of the presence of a quorum (V, 5747) were held to be dilatory motions within the meaning of the rule. But where a motion to suspend the rules has been made and, after one motion to adjourn has been acted on, a quorum has failed, another motion to adjourn has been admitted (V, 5744–5746).

(c) A motion that the House suspend the rules is debatable for 40 minutes, one-half in favor of the motion and one-half in opposition thereto.

§ 891. The 40 minutes of debate on motion to suspend the rules.

This provision (former clause 2 of rule XXVII) was adopted 1880 (V, 6821). It was amended and redesignated from clause 3 to clause 2 of rule XXVII in the 102d Congress to conform to the repeal of the former clause 2, relating to the requirement of a second (H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 1991, p. 39). Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found in former clause 2 of rule XXVII. Former clause 2 consisted of paragraph (b) and another provision currently found in clause 1(a) of rule XIX permitting 40 minutes debate on an otherwise debatable question on which the previous question has been ordered without debate (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. —). Before the adoption of this provision in 1880 (V, 6821) the motion to suspend the rules was not debatable (V, 5405, 6820). The 40 minutes of debate is divided between the mover and a Member opposed to the bill, unless it develops that the mover is opposed to

the bill, in which event some Member in favor is recognized for debate (VIII, 3416). Where recognition for the 20 minutes in opposition is contested, the Speaker will accord priority first on the basis of true opposition, then on the basis of committee membership, and only then on the basis of party affiliation, the latter preference inuring to the minority party (VIII, 3415; Nov. 18, 1991, p. 32510; Sept. 27, 1996, p. —). The Chair will not examine the degree of opposition to the motion by a member of the committee who seeks the time in opposition (Aug. 3, 1999, p. —). When the mover and the opponent divide their time with others, the practice as to alternation of recognitions is not insisted on so rigidly as in other debate (II, 1442). Debate should be confined to the object of the motion and may not range to the merits of a bill not scheduled for suspension on that day (Nov. 23, 1991, p. 34189).

This paragraph formerly included a provision dealing with the Speaker's authority to postpone further proceedings on motions to suspend the rules and pass bills or resolutions. It was added in the 93d Congress (H. Res. 998, Apr. 9, 1974, pp. 10195–99), amended in the 95th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 4, 1977, pp. 53–70), and amended further in the 96th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 15, 1979, pp. 7–16). It was deleted entirely in the 97th Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 5, 1981, pp. 98–113) when all of the Speaker's postponing authorities were consolidated into clause 5 of rule I (current clause 8 of rule XX).

Discharge motions, second and fourth Mondays

2. (a) Motions to discharge committees shall be in order on the second and fourth Mondays of a month.

§ 892. Motion to discharge a committee.

(b)(1) A Member may present to the Clerk a motion in writing to discharge—

(A) a committee from consideration of a public bill or public resolution that has been referred to it for 30 legislative days; or

(B) the Committee on Rules from consideration of a resolution that has been referred to it for seven legislative days and that proposes a special order of business for the consideration of a public bill or public resolution that has been reported by a standing committee or

has been referred to a standing committee for 30 legislative days.

(2) Only one motion may be presented for a bill or resolution. A Member may not file a motion to discharge the Committee on Rules from consideration of a resolution providing for the consideration of more than one public bill or public resolution or admitting or effecting a non-germane amendment to a public bill or public resolution.

(c) A motion presented under paragraph (b) shall be placed in the custody of the Clerk, who shall arrange a convenient place for the signatures of Members. A signature may be withdrawn by a Member in writing at any time before a motion is entered on the Journal. The Clerk shall make signatures a matter of public record, causing the names of the Members who have signed a discharge motion during a week to be published in a portion of the Congressional Record designated for that purpose on the last legislative day of the week and making cumulative lists of such names available each day for public inspection in an appropriate office of the House. The Clerk shall devise a means for making such lists available to offices of the House and to the public in electronic form. When a majority of the total membership of the House shall have signed the motion, it shall be entered on the Journal, printed with the signatures thereto in the Record, and referred to the Calendar of Motions to Discharge Committees.

(d)(1) On the second and fourth Mondays of a month (except during the last six days of a session of Congress), immediately after the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, a motion to discharge that has been on the calendar for at least seven legislative days shall be privileged if called up by a Member whose signature appears thereon. When such a motion is called up, the House shall proceed to its consideration under this paragraph without intervening motion except one motion to adjourn. Privileged motions to discharge shall have precedence in the order of their entry on the Journal.

(2) When a motion to discharge is called up, the bill or resolution to which it relates shall be read by title only. The motion is debatable for 20 minutes, one-half in favor of the motion and one-half in opposition thereto.

(e)(1) If a motion prevails to discharge the Committee on Rules from consideration of a resolution, the House shall immediately consider the resolution, pending which the Speaker may entertain one motion that the House adjourn. After the result of such a motion to adjourn is announced, the Speaker may not entertain any other dilatory motion until the resolution has been disposed of. If the resolution is adopted, the House shall immediately proceed to its execution.

(2) If a motion prevails to discharge a standing committee from consideration of a public bill or public resolution, a motion that the House proceed to the immediate consideration of such

bill or resolution shall be privileged if offered by a Member whose signature appeared on the motion to discharge. The motion to proceed is not debatable. If the motion to proceed is adopted, the bill or resolution shall be considered immediately under the general rules of the House. If unfinished before adjournment of the day on which it is called up, the bill or resolution shall remain the unfinished business until it is disposed of. If the motion to proceed is rejected, the bill or resolution shall be referred to the appropriate calendar, where it shall have the same status as if the committee from which it was discharged had duly reported it to the House.

(f)(1) When a motion to discharge originated under this clause has once been acted on by the House, it shall not be in order to entertain during the same session of Congress—

(A) a motion to discharge a committee from consideration of that bill or resolution or of any other bill or resolution that, by relating in substance to or dealing with the same subject matter, is substantially the same; or

(B) a motion to discharge the Committee on Rules from consideration of a resolution providing a special order of business for the consideration of that bill or resolution or of any other bill or resolution that, by relating in substance to or dealing with the same subject matter, is substantially the same.

(2) A motion to discharge on the Calendar of Motions to Discharge Committees that is ren-

dered out of order under subparagraph (1) shall be stricken from that calendar.

This clause (former clause 3 of rule XXVII) was adopted December 8, 1931 and amended January 3, 1935 (VII, 1007). It displaced a rule providing for a motion to instruct a committee to report a public bill or resolution. The first discharge rule was adopted in the 61st Congress (June 17, 1910, pp. 8439, 8445). It was amended during the 62d Congress (Apr. 4–5, 1911, pp. 18, 80). It was further amended in the 62d Congress (H. Res. 407, Feb. 3, 1912, p. 1685), the 68th Congress (H. Res. 146, Jan. 18, 1924, p. 1143), and the 69th Congress (H. Res. 6, Dec. 7, 1925, p. 383). This provision was redesignated from clause 4 to clause 3 in the 102d Congress to conform to the repeal of the former clause 2 of rule XXVII, relating to the requirement of a second; it was at the same time amended to enable debate on a resolution discharged from the Committee on Rules (H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 1991, p. 39). Under the previous form of the rule, where the Committee on Rules was discharged from further consideration of a resolution the House immediately voted on adoption of the resolution (Speaker Rayburn, Jan. 24, 1944, p. 631).

In the 103d Congress, after a successful petition under this clause placed on the calendar a motion to discharge the Committee on Rules from further consideration of a resolution to require publication of the names of Members who had signed pending discharge petitions, the clause was so amended (H. Res. 134, Sept. 28, 1993, p. 22698). In the 104th Congress the clause was amended to ensure the periodic publication of such names (sec. 219, H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. 468). Before the 103d Congress signatures on a motion to discharge a committee were not made public until the requisite number had signed the motion (VII, 1008; Apr. 12, 1934, p. 6489). In the 105th Congress the clause was amended to clarify that, to be a proper object of a discharge petition, a resolution providing a special rule must address the consideration of only one measure and must not propose to admit or effect a nongermane amendment (H. Res. 5, Jan. 7, 1997, p. —).

The phrase “a majority of the total membership of the House” was construed to mean 218 Members (Speaker Byrns, Apr. 15, 1936, p. 5509), not including Delegates or the Resident Commissioner. The word “days” has been construed to mean “legislative days” (Speaker Bankhead, Dec. 10, 1937, p. 1300). The rule does not authorize signature of discharge motions by proxy (VII, 1014). When a Member withdraws his signature from a discharge petition at any time before it garners 218 signatures and is entered on the Journal, the withdrawal is printed in the Record (Apr. 23, 1998, p. —).

The rule does not apply to a bill that has been reported by a committee during the interval between the placing of a motion to discharge on the calendar and the day when such motion is called up for action in the House (Apr. 23, 1934, p. 7156). The Committee on Rules may not be discharged

from further consideration of a resolution providing for an investigating committee (Apr. 23, 1934, p. 7161).

The death or resignation of a Member who has signed a motion does not invalidate his signature (May 31, 1934, p. 10159). It may be withdrawn by his successor (Dec. 7, 1943, p. 10388; Jan. 17, 1946, p. 96; Mar. 5, 1946, p. 1968; July 30, 1946, pp. 10464, 10491; Mar. 2, 1948, pp. 1993, 2001; Jan. 16, 1950, p. 436). The seven days that the motion must be on the calendar before it may be called up begins to run as of the day the motion is placed on the calendar (Dec. 14, 1937, p. 1517). A discharge petition in the 102d Congress received the requisite number of signatures on the same day it was filed (May 20, 1992, p. 12222), and subsequently by unanimous consent the House dispensed with the motion to discharge and agreed to consider the object of the petition (a special order of business resolution) on a date certain under the same terms as if discharged by motion (June 4, 1992, p. 13618). In the 103d Congress a discharge petition also received the requisite number of signatures on the same day it was filed (Feb. 24, 1994, p. 2999).

The right to close 20 minute debate on a motion to discharge a committee is reserved to the proponents of the motion (VII, 1010a); and the chairman of the committee being discharged, if opposed to the motion, has been recognized to control the 10 minutes in opposition (Aug. 10, 1970, p. 27999).

Where a measure not requiring consideration in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union is brought before the House by a successful motion to discharge, the Member moving its consideration is recognized in the House under the hour rule (Aug. 10, 1970, p. 28004).

The point of order provided in clause 4 of rule XXI (former clause 5(a) of rule XXI) does not apply to an appropriation in a bill taken away from a committee by the motion to discharge (VII, 1019a).

Under Jefferson's Manual (§ 364, *supra*) a line of Members waiting to sign a discharge petition should proceed to the rostrum from the far right-hand aisle and should not stand between the Chair and Members engaging in debate (Oct. 24, 1997, p. —).

Adverse report by the Committee on Rules, second and fourth Mondays

3. An adverse report by the Committee on Rules on a resolution proposing a special order of business for the consideration of a public bill or public joint resolution may be called up under clause 6(e) of rule XIII as a privileged question by a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner on a day when

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by Rules Committee.

it is in order to consider a motion to discharge committees under clause 2.

This provision was initially adopted January 18, 1924, amended December 8, 1931 (VIII, 2268), January 3, 1949 (p. 16), January 3, 1951 (p. 18), January 4, 1965 (p. 24) (inserting the so-called “21-day rule”), January 10, 1967 (H. Res. 7, p. 28) (deleting the “21-day rule” in effect in the 89th Congress), January 3, 1975 (H. Res. 988, 93d Cong., Oct. 8, 1974, p. 34470). Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found only in former clause 4(c) of rule XI. It is currently found in both this provision and clause 6(e) of rule XIII (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. —).

District of Columbia business, second and fourth Mondays

4. The second and fourth Mondays of a month shall be set apart for the consideration of such District of Columbia business as may be called up by the Committee on Government Reform after the disposition of motions to discharge committees and after the disposal of such business on the Speaker’s table as requires reference only.

§ 894. District of Columbia.

The first rule allocating a fixed day for District of Columbia business was adopted in 1870. In 1890 the rule (former clause 8 of rule XXIV) was amended (IV, 3304). It was again amended December 8, 1931 (VII, 872). In the 104th Congress it was amended to reflect that the jurisdiction of the former Committee on the District of Columbia had been subsumed within the amalgamated jurisdiction of the newly designated Committee on Government Reform and Oversight (and in the 106th Congress to reflect a change in the name of a committee) (sec. 202, H. Res. 6, Jan. 4, 1995, p. —; H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. —). Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found in former clause 8 of rule XXIV (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. —).

The Committee on Government Reform and Oversight (now Government Reform) may not, on a District day, call up a bill reported from another committee (IV, 3311). If certain of the committee’s bills are on one of the calendars of the Committees of the Whole, a motion to go into committee to consider them is in order (IV, 3310). Bills reported from the District Committee (now Government Reform) are not so privileged as to prevent their being taken up under call of committees on Wednesday (VII, 937). Business unfinished on one District day does not come up on the next

unless called up (IV, 3307; VII, 879, 880). The question of consideration may not be demanded against District business generally, but may be demanded against any bill as it is presented (IV, 3308, 3309).

On District days it is in order to go into the Committee of the Whole to consider revenue or general appropriation bills (VI, 716–718; VII, 876, 1123). Consideration of conference reports is in order on District Monday (VIII, 3202). District of Columbia business is in order on the second and fourth Mondays of the month before or after other business (such as motions to suspend the rules), and the fact that the House has considered some District of Columbia business before motions to suspend the rules does not affect the eligibility of further such business after suspensions have been completed (Sept. 17, 1984, p. 25523).

Private Calendar, first and third Tuesdays

5. (a) On the first Tuesday of a month, the Speaker shall direct the Clerk to call the bills and resolutions on the Private Calendar after disposal of such business on the Speaker's table as requires reference only. If two or more Members, Delegates, or the Resident Commissioner object to the consideration of a bill or resolution so called, it shall be recommitted to the committee that reported it. No other business shall be in order before completion of the call of the Private Calendar on this day unless two-thirds of the Members voting, a quorum being present, agree to a motion that the House dispense with the call.

(b)(1) On the third Tuesday of a month, after the disposal of such business on the Speaker's table as requires reference only, the Speaker may direct the Clerk to call the bills and resolutions on the Private Calendar. Preference shall be given to omnibus bills containing the texts of bills or resolutions that have previously been objected to on a call of the Private Calendar. If two

§ 895. Interruption of the regular order on Tuesdays for consideration of the Private Calendar.

or more Members, Delegates, or the Resident Commissioner object to the consideration of a bill or resolution so called (other than an omnibus bill), it shall be recommitted to the committee that reported it. Two-thirds of the Members voting, a quorum being present, may adopt a motion that the House dispense with the call on this day.

(2) Omnibus bills shall be read for amendment by paragraph. No amendment shall be in order except to strike or to reduce amounts of money or to provide limitations. An item or matter stricken from an omnibus bill may not thereafter during the same session of Congress be included in an omnibus bill. Upon passage such an omnibus bill shall be resolved into the several bills and resolutions of which it is composed. The several bills and resolutions, with any amendments adopted by the House, shall be engrossed, when necessary, and otherwise considered as passed severally by the House as distinct bills and resolutions.

(c) The Speaker may not entertain a reservation of the right to object to the consideration of a bill or resolution under this clause. A bill or resolution considered under this clause shall be considered in the House as in the Committee of the Whole. A motion to dispense with the call of the Private Calendar under this clause shall be privileged. Debate on such a motion shall be limited to five minutes in support and five minutes in opposition.

RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Rule XV, clause 5

§ 896-§ 897

This provision (former clause 6 of rule XXIV) was adopted in the 62d Congress in lieu of special orders under which pension and private business formerly had been considered. The rule was amended on April 23, 1932 (VII, 846) and was adopted in its present form on March 27, 1935 (pp. 4480-89, 4538). When the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was transferred from former clause 6 of rule XXIV and the archaic reference to the "Calendar of the Committee of the Whole House" was changed to the "Private Calendar" (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. —). A Member serving as an "official objector" for the Private Calendar has periodically included in the Record an explanation of how bills on the Private Calendar are considered (see, *e.g.*, Dec. 5, 1995, p. —; June 17, 1997, p. —). Clause 4 of rule XII prohibits consideration of certain private bills. Under former clause 6(e)(2) of rule XV (current clause 7(b) of rule XX), the Speaker may in his discretion recognize a Member to move a call of the House prior to the call of the Private Calendar (July 8, 1987, p. 18972).

During the consideration of omnibus bills the Chair declines to recognize Members for unanimous-consent requests to address the House (May 7, 1935, p. 7100); motions to strike out the last word are not in order, and requests for extension of time under the five-minute rule are not entertained (Speaker Byrns, Mar. 17, 1936, pp. 3890, 3894).

An omnibus private bill is normally passed over by the Clerk when the Private Calendar is called on the first Tuesday of the month, but the House may prescribe, by special order, that such omnibus bills shall be passed over (June 27, 1968, p. 19106). During the consideration of the First Omnibus Bill of 1968, seven roll calls occurred and seven of the 15 bills carried therein were stricken by motion (Sept. 17, 1968, pp. 27165-84). Amendments to the bill were strictly limited by the rule to those striking out or reducing amounts of money carried in the bill or to provide limitations, and debate on those permissible motions was under the five-minute rule. After the passage of an omnibus bill, it is resolved into the various private bills of which it is composed and each is engrossed and messaged to the Senate as if individually passed; thus it is possible, after passage of the omnibus bill, to lay on the table a private House or Senate bill which was included therein (by unanimous consent) (Sept. 17, 1968, p. 27184).

On the third Tuesday of the month, the calendar is not called unless the Speaker so directs (Oct. 16, 1990, p. 29646); and when he does direct the Clerk to call the Private Calendar, omnibus bills on the Calendar are called before individual bills thereon (Feb. 17, 1970, pp. 3605-13). A motion to dispense with the call of the Private Calendar on the third Tuesday of each month, when the call of the Calendar is within the discretion of the Chair, is likewise in order in the Chair's discretion (although this clause only specifically provides for a motion to dispense with the call on the first Tuesday of each month), since no rule or precedent prohibits the mo-

tion and it is consistent with the discretionary authority of the Chair to dispense with the call of the entire Calendar (appeal from the Chair's ruling laid on the table) (Nov. 17, 1981, p. 27770).

Corrections Calendar, second and fourth Tuesdays

6. (a) After a bill has been favorably reported and placed on either the Union or House Calendar, the Speaker, after consultation with the Minority Leader, may direct the Clerk also to place the bill on the "Corrections Calendar." At any time on the second and fourth Tuesdays of a month, the Speaker may direct the Clerk to call a bill that has been on the Corrections Calendar for three legislative days.

(b) A bill called from the Corrections Calendar shall be considered in the House, is debatable for one hour equally divided and controlled by the chairman and ranking minority member of the primary committee of jurisdiction, and shall not be subject to amendment except those recommended by the primary committee of jurisdiction or offered by the chairman of the primary committee or a designee. The previous question shall be considered as ordered on the bill and any amendments thereto to final passage without intervening motion except one motion to recommit with or without instructions.

(c) The approval of three-fifths of the Members voting, a quorum being present, shall be required to pass a bill called from the Corrections Calendar. The rejection of a bill so called, or the sustaining of a point of order against it or

against its consideration, does not cause its removal from the Calendar to which it was originally referred.

This clause (former clause 4 of rule XIII) was amended in the 104th Congress to abolish the Consent Calendar and establish in its place a Corrections Calendar (H. Res. 168, June 20, 1995, p. 16574). Later in the 104th Congress several technical changes were effected, and paragraph (b) was amended to admit amendments by a designee of the chairman of the primary committee (H. Res. 254, Nov. 30, 1995, p. 14974). In the 105th Congress paragraph (a) was amended to permit bills to be called from the Calendar at any time on a “corrections day” and in any order (H. Res. 5, Jan. 7, 1997, p. —). Before the House recodified its rules in the 106th Congress, this provision was found in former clause 4 of rule XIII (H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 1999, p. —). The Speaker may discharge a bill from the Corrections Calendar at any time (June 24, 1996, p. —). In the 105th Congress the House established a Corrections Calendar Office to assist the Speaker in management of the Calendar (H. Res. 7, Jan. 7, 1997, p. —).

The original form of former clause 4 of rule XIII, providing for the former § 899. Former Consent Calendar. Consent Calendar, was adopted March 15, 1909, amended January 18, 1924; December 7, 1925; December 8, 1931; and April 23, 1932 (VII, 972). Bills must have been on the printed calendar three legislative working days in order to be eligible for consideration (VII, 992, 994). When a House bill was on the Consent Calendar, by unanimous consent the House committee could have been discharged from the consideration of a Senate bill on the same subject, and the Senate bill considered in lieu of the House bill (VII, 1004). The status of bills on the Consent Calendar was not affected by their consideration from another calendar and such bills could have been called up for consideration from the Consent Calendar while pending as unfinished business in the House or Committee of the Whole (VII, 1006).

The former rule did not preclude the Speaker from recognizing Members to suspend the rules before completion of the Consent Calendar (decided by the House, VIII, 3405; also held by Speaker Clark, Oct. 5, 1914, p. 16182, and by Speaker Gillett, Sept. 4, 1919, p. 5128). Recognition to suspend the rules did not preclude the continuation of the call of the calendar later in the day (VII, 991). The call of the Consent Calendar on days devoted to its consideration took precedence of the motion to go into the Committee of the Whole to consider revenue or appropriation bills (VII, 986), and a contested-election case could not supplant the call of the Calendar (VII, 988), but the Speaker could recognize a Member to call up a conference report before directing the call of the Consent Calendar (May 4, 1970, pp. 13991–95).

Calendar Call of Committees, Wednesdays

7. (a) On Wednesday of each week, business shall not be in order before completion of the call of the committees (except as provided by clause 4 of rule XIV) unless two-thirds of the Members voting, a quorum being present, agree to a motion that the House dispense with the call. Such a motion shall be privileged. Debate on such a motion shall be limited to five minutes in support and five minutes in opposition.

(b) A bill or resolution on either the House or the Union Calendar, except bills or resolutions that are privileged under the Rules of the House, may be called under this clause. A bill or resolution called up from the Union Calendar shall be considered in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union without motion, subject to clause 3 of rule XVI. General debate on a measure considered under this clause shall be confined to the measure and may not exceed two hours equally divided between a proponent and an opponent.

(c) When a committee has occupied the call under this clause on one Wednesday, it shall not be in order on a succeeding Wednesday to consider unfinished business previously called up by that committee until the other committees have been called in their turn unless—

- (1) the previous question has been ordered on such unfinished business; or
- (2) the House adopts a motion to dispense with the call under paragraph (a).

(d) If any committee has not been called under this clause during a session of a Congress, then at the next session of that Congress the call shall resume where it left off at the end of the preceding session.

(e) This rule does not apply during the last two weeks of a session of Congress.

(f) The Speaker may not entertain a motion for a recess on a Wednesday except during the last two weeks of a session of Congress.

The first portion of this rule (former clause 7 of rule XXIV) was adopted March 1, 1909, and amended March 15, 1909. The last sentence of paragraph (b) (first proviso of former clause 7 of rule XXIV) and paragraph (c) (second proviso of former clause 7 of rule XXIV) were adopted January 18, 1916. Paragraph (d) (the last proviso of former clause 7 of rule XXIV) was adopted December 8, 1931 (VII, 881), and was amended in the 102d Congress to specify that the alphabetical call of the committees under Calendar Wednesday resumes where left off between sessions within a Congress (H. Res. 5, Jan. 3, 1991, p. 39). The rule applies to unprivileged bills only, and when a bill otherwise unprivileged is given a privileged status by unanimous consent or by rule it is automatically rendered ineligible for consideration on Calendar Wednesday (VII, 932–935). House Calendar bills have no preference over Union Calendar bills (VII, 938). The motion to dispense with a call of committees under this rule is privileged and may be made prior to the consideration of District of Columbia business under clause 4 of this rule (June 11, 1973, pp. 19028–30).

When a bill on the Union Calendar is called up on Calendar Wednesday the House automatically resolves itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union (VII, 939; Jan. 25, 1984, p. 358), and when a Union Calendar bill is the unfinished business the Speaker declares the House in Committee of the Whole without motion (VII, 940, 942).

The question of consideration may be raised on a bill on the House Calendar on Calendar Wednesday, even after one Wednesday has been devoted to its consideration (VIII, 2447), and the question of consideration is properly raised on Union Calendar bills in the House before automatically going into Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union (VII, 952).

During the 61st and 62d Congresses it was held that the call of committees rested where the call left off on the preceding day, whether the last call was on a Wednesday or during the morning hour on another day, thus making but one committee call under the two rules. But under the later practice there have been two distinct calls of committees, one under

clause 4 of rule XIV (former clause 4 of rule XXIV), the morning hour, and another under Calendar Wednesday (VII, 944). Prior to the adoption of paragraph (c) (the second proviso of former clause 7 of rule XXIV), it was held that one committee could not occupy more than two Calendar Wednesdays (except for unfinished business) until other committees were called, notwithstanding the fact that the call rested on said committee (VII, 944), but the adoption of the second proviso of the rule has defined the status of debate and unfinished business more explicitly. It was formerly held that a bill undisposed of on Calendar Wednesday became the unfinished business on the following Calendar Wednesday (VII, 965), but since the adoption of paragraph (c) (the second proviso of former clause 7 of rule XXIV), one committee can occupy but one Calendar Wednesday for the consideration of its business (unless the House by two-thirds vote shall otherwise determine).

The same rule of debate applies to House Calendar bills called up on Calendar Wednesday as on other days, and the Member in charge of the bill may move the previous question at any time (VII, 955).

The previous question having been ordered on a bill undisposed of when the House adjourns Tuesday, the bill goes over as unfinished business until Thursday, and is not in order for consideration on Calendar Wednesday (VII, 890–894). The previous question having been ordered on a bill on Calendar Wednesday, the bill becomes the unfinished business on Thursday (VII, 895, 967).

It is in order to consider a vetoed bill on Calendar Wednesday, since such a question is privileged under the Constitution of the United States (VII, 912), but a bill privileged by reason of the Rules of the House cannot be called up on Calendar Wednesday (VII, 932); for example, a general appropriation bill (VII, 904), or a bill under consideration by reason of a special order, unless the special order expressly sets aside Calendar Wednesday (VII, 773), or a conference report (VII, 899). A motion to reconsider an action taken on a bill on Tuesday may be entered, but may not be considered on Calendar Wednesday (VII, 905). Privileged bills may be reported but not considered on Calendar Wednesday (VII, 907), except by unanimous consent (Jan. 25, 1984, p. 357). The Speaker has entertained a unanimous-consent request for business (to send a bill to conference) before the call of committees on Calendar Wednesday (Mar. 28, 1984, p. 6869). District of Columbia business is eligible for consideration on Calendar Wednesday (VII, 937). Once the call of committees on Calendar Wednesday is completed, other business may be conducted (VII, 921).

The Committee on Rules cannot report a rule which is aimed strictly or directly toward setting aside Calendar Wednesday, but the committee is not thereby prevented from reporting a resolution couched in general terms which may indirectly accomplish that ultimate result, such as a resolution providing for six days' suspension of the rules (VIII, 2267).

The motion to grant a committee an additional Wednesday under paragraph (c) (the second proviso of former clause 7 of rule XXIV) is in order prior to the Wednesday on which the committee is called (VII, 946).

It has been held that if no Member opposed to the bill desires to claim the hour specified in the rule for general debate against the bill, the time may be claimed by some Member who is in favor of the bill (VII, 962), but this principle has been questioned (VII, 961).

Clause 2(b) of rule XIII (former clause 2(1)(1) of rule XI), requiring the chairman of each committee to report or cause to be reported promptly measures approved by his committee and to take such necessary steps to bring the matter to a vote, is sufficient authority for the chairman to call up a bill on Calendar Wednesday, but any other committee member must obtain specific authority of his committee to call up a reported bill on Calendar Wednesday (IV, 3128; VII, 928, 929; Feb. 22, 1950, p. 2162; Feb. 1, 1984, p. 1193; Sept. 12, 1984, p. 25100). Prior to the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946 and the subsequent adoption of former clause 2(1)(1)(A) of rule XI, authority to call up a bill on Calendar Wednesday must have been given to a chairman by his committee (IV, 3127). A Member not authorized to do so may not call up such bill under the Calendar Wednesday rule (IV, 3128; VII, 928, 929).

RULE XVI

MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

Motions

1. Every motion entertained by the Speaker shall be reduced to writing on the demand of a Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner and, unless it is withdrawn the same day, shall be entered on the Journal with the name of the Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner offering it. A dilatory motion may not be entertained by the Speaker.

The first sentence of this clause was made up in 1880 of old rules adopted in 1789 and 1806 (V, 5300). The last sentence of this clause (former clause 10 of rule XVI) was adopted in 1890 (V, 5706) to make permanent a principle already enunciated in a ruling of the Speaker, who had declared that the "object of a parliamentary body is action, and not stoppage of action" (V, 5713). When the House recodified its rules, it consolidated clause 1