

HOUSE AND CONGRESSIONAL OFFICES

Members may send through the mails, under their frank, certain documents and materials as provided by 39 U.S.C. 3210, subject to the limitations prescribed in rule XXIV, § 1113. **House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards.** *supra*. The House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards, composed of six Members, provides advice in connection with franking privileges (sec. 5, P.L. 93–191).

Rooms in the House Office Buildings are assigned pursuant to the Act of May 28, 1908 (2 U.S.C. 2004–2011) and pursuant to regulations of the House Office Building Commission (see regulations promulgated Oct. 7, 1996). The commission also issues regulations governing the House Office Buildings, House garages, and the Capitol Power Plant (see regulations promulgated December, 1995). The commission is composed of the Speaker and two Members of the House (traditionally the Majority and Minority Leaders) (2 U.S.C. 2001).

The preparation, utilization, and distribution (to committees and Members) of reports by the Government Accountability Office, and its authority to assign its employees to duty with congressional committees, are regulated by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970, §§ 231–236 (84 Stat. 1140; 31 U.S.C. 711–720). This office was formerly known as the General Accounting Office (31 U.S.C. 702 note).

The Office of Compliance was established by the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1381). The office is composed of five individuals appointed jointly by the Speaker, the Majority Leader of the Senate, and the Minority Leaders of the House and the Senate. The office has regulatory, enforcement, and educational responsibilities under the Act. The office replaced the Review Panel of the Office of Fair Employment Practices at the beginning of the 105th Congress (see § 1101, *supra*). However, the review panel was reconstituted in the same form as at the end of the 104th Congress to provide for the completion of ongoing proceedings in the 105th Congress (Feb. 25, 1997, p. 2439).

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The organization of the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress and its responsibilities to assist Members and committees were provided in the Legislative Reorganization Acts of 1946 and 1970 (60 Stat. 836; 84 Stat. 1140; 2 U.S.C. 166).

§ 1117. Congressional Research Service.

The Office of the Legislative Counsel of the House of Representatives evolved from a Legislative Drafting Service established for the Congress by the Act of February 24, 1919 (40 Stat. 1057, 1141). The provisions of law setting forth the purpose and functions of the current office and providing for its administration are contained in title V of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 (P.L. 91–510; 2 U.S.C. 281) as amended by the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1972 (P.L. 92–51). As stated in section 502 of such title V, the purpose of the office is to advise and assist the House, and its committees and Members, in the achievement of a clear, faithful, and coherent expression of legislative policies.

§ 1118. Legislative Counsel.

The Congressional Budget Office was established by the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 601). The office is headed by a director, who is appointed by the Speaker and the President pro tempore. Section 202 of the Act (2 U.S.C. 602) outlines the functions of the office, which include providing assistance to the House and Senate Committees on the Budget and Appropriations and the Senate Committee on Finance in the discharge of matters within their jurisdiction and to other committees to assist them in complying with the provisions of the Act.

§ 1119. Congressional Budget Office.

The Office of the Law Revision Counsel, to develop a codification of the laws of the United States, was authorized in the 93d Congress by the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974 (sec. 205, H. Res. 988, Oct. 8, 1974, p. 34470, made permanent law by P.L. 93–544 (2 U.S.C. 285)).

§ 1120. Law Revision Counsel.

The Office of Technology Assessment, to assist the Congress in indicating the beneficial and adverse impacts of the application of technology, was authorized by the Technology Assessment Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 472). The office received funding for 1996 to conduct an orderly shutdown (tit. I, P.L. 104–53) and has not received funding since then.

§ 1121. Technology Assessment.

A Parliamentarian has been appointed by the Speaker in every Congress since 1927. Before 1927 the “Clerk at the Speaker’s Table” performed the function of the Parliamentarian. In the 95th Congress the House formally and permanently established an Office of the Parliamentarian to be managed, supervised, and administered by a nonpartisan Parliamentarian appointed by the Speaker (H. Res. 502, Apr. 20, 1977, p. 11415, made permanent law by sec. 115 of P.L. 95–94; see 2 U.S.C. 287). The compilation and preparation of the precedents of the House of Representatives were authorized

§ 1122. Office of the Parliamentarian.

in the 93d Congress by the Committee Reform Amendments of 1974 (sec. 208, H. Res. 988, Oct. 8, 1974, p. 34470, made permanent law by P.L. 93–554, 2 U.S.C. 28a), and the printing and distribution of the precedents were authorized by Public Law 94–551 (2 U.S.C. 28b–e). See also 2 U.S.C. 28, 29.

At its organization the 104th Congress established an office to assist the Speaker in the management of legislative activity on the floor of the House (Sec. 223(b), H. Res. 6, 104th Cong., Jan. 4, 1995, p. 469, enacted into permanent law by the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1996 (sec. 103, P.L. 104–53)).

§ 1123. Office of Floor Assistants. This office is responsible for responding to inquiries from, and coordinating visits with, foreign legislative bodies; providing assistance to delegations of Members on official visits to foreign nations; coordinating the activities and responsibilities of the House in connection with participation in various interparliamentary exchanges and organizations; and enabling the House to host meetings with senior government officials and other dignitaries in order to discuss matters relevant to United States relations with other nations (2 U.S.C. 130–2).

§ 1124. Office of Interparliamentary Affairs. The House Recording Studio was established by the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1957 (2 U.S.C. 123b) and provides Members with audio and video recording services. The studio is under the direction and control of the Committee on the House Recording Studio, which consists of three Members appointed by the Speaker (2 U.S.C. 123b(c)).

§ 1125. House Recording Studio. The United States Capitol Preservation Commission was established in 1988 (2 U.S.C. 2081) to provide improvements in, preservation of, and acquisitions for the Capitol and to provide works of fine art and other property for display in the Capitol. In the 106th Congress the Commission was given responsibility for the planning, engineering, design, and construction of the Capitol Visitor Center (sec. 310, Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2000). Membership on the Commission consists of the Speaker, the President pro tempore (co-chairs), the chair and vice chair of the Joint Committee on the Library, the chairs and ranking minority members of the Committee on Rules and Administration and the Committee on House Administration, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the House and Senate, three Members of the Senate, and three Members of the House.

§ 1125a. United States Capitol Preservation Commission. The General Counsel appointed under clause 8 of rule II is authorized by law to appear in any proceeding before a State or Federal court (except the United States Supreme Court) without compliance with admission requirements of such court (2 U.S.C. 130f(a)). Furthermore, the law requires the

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Attorney General to notify the General Counsel of various decisions and policies (2 U.S.C. 130f(b)).

This office is responsible for mitigation and preparedness operations, crisis management and response, resource services, and recovery operations (2 U.S.C. 130i). The Speaker, in consultation with the Minority Leader, provides policy direction for, and oversight of, the office. The Speaker may request the head of any Federal department or agency to detail to the office, on a reimbursable basis, any of the personnel of the department or agency. The day-to-day operations of the office are carried out by the director, under the supervision of a House of Representatives Continuity of Operations Board, comprising the Clerk, the Sergeant-at-Arms, and the Chief Administrative Officer. The Clerk chairs the board.

**§ 1125c. Office of
Emergency Planning,
Preparedness, and
Operations.**

This office was established in the 70th Congress when the House requested the Secretary of the Navy to detail a medical officer to be in attendance at the Hall of the House during sessions of the House (H. Res. 253, Dec. 5, 1928, p. 101). Currently, the office provides primary care and emergency, environmental, and occupational health services in direct support of Members of Congress and the Supreme Court, staff, pages, visiting dignitaries, and tourists (*Office of Attending Physician in the U.S. Congress*, CRS, Dec. 12, 2001).

**§ 1125d. Office of
Attending Physician.**

This office, which dates from 1793, operates and maintains the buildings and grounds of the Capitol complex. For a detailed explanation of the current duties and statutory evolution of the office, see *Architect of the Capitol: Appointment, Duties, and Operations*, CRS, March 17, 2005. Section 6701 of Public Law 110–28 established within the office a Chief Executive Officer for Visitor Services with responsibility for the operation and management of the Capitol Visitor Center.

**§ 1125e. Office of
Architect of the
Capitol.**

Established for the 109th (H. Res. 135, Mar. 14, 2005, p. __), 110th (H. Res. 24, Jan. 30, 2007, p. __) and 111th Congresses (sec. 4(b), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. __), the commission provides advice and consultation to selected countries. The commission consists of 20 Members appointed by the Speaker and Minority Leader.

**§ 1125f. House
Democracy Assistance
Commission.**

Established for the 110th (H. Res. 1451, Sept. 24, 2008, p. __) and 111th Congresses with modifications to its authority (sec. 4(c), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. __), the commission promotes internationally recognized human rights. Any Member may join the commission, which is lead by co-chairs appointed by the Speaker and Minority Leader, respectively.

**§ 1125g. Tom Lantos
Human Rights
Commission.**

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Established for the 110th (H. Res. 895, Mar. 11, 2008, p. __) and 111th
§ 1125h. Office of Congressional Ethics. Congresses with a modification on its authority to en-
gage consultants (sec. 4(d), H. Res. 5, Jan. 6, 2009, p. __), the office investigates “self-initiated” alleged ethics
violations and reports its recommendations to the Committee on Standards
of Official Conduct.