

chair may be taken and the House adjourned. And whenever, during business, it is observed that a quorum is not present, any member may call for the House to be counted, and being found deficient, business is suspended. *2 Hats., 125, 126.*

In the House the Speaker takes the Chair at the hour to which the House stood adjourned and there is no requirement that the House proceed immediately to establish a quorum, although the Speaker has the authority under clause 7 of rule XX to recognize for a call of the House at any time. The question of a quorum is not considered unless properly raised (IV, 2733; VI, 624), and it is not in order for the Speaker to recognize for a point of no quorum unless the Speaker has put the pending question or proposition to a vote. Although it was formerly the rule that a quorum was necessary for debate as well as business (IV, 2935–2949), in the 94th Congress the House restricted the Chair's ability to recognize the absence of a quorum (clause 7 of rule XX). Clause 5(c) of rule XX permits the House to operate with a "provisional quorum" where the House is without a quorum due to catastrophic circumstances. Title III of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 2006, amended Federal election law to require States to hold special elections for the House within 49 days after a vacancy is announced by the Speaker in the extraordinary circumstance that vacancies in representation from the States exceed 100 (P.L. 109–55; 2 U.S.C. 8).

#### SEC. VII—CALL OF THE HOUSE

On the call of the House, each person rises up as he is called, and answereth; the absentees are then only noted, but no excuse to be made till the House be fully called over. Then the absentees are called a second time, and if still absent, excuses are to be heard. *Ord. House of Commons, 92.*

They rise that their persons may be recognized; the voice, in such a crowd, being an insufficient verification of their presence. But in so small a body as the Senate of the United States, the trouble of rising cannot be necessary.

§ 311. Parliamentary rules for call of the House.

Orders for calls on different days may subsist at the same time. *2 Hats., 72.*

Rule XX provides for a call of the House. Members do not rise on answering, and quorum calls are normally conducted by electronic device (clause 2(a) of rule XX). Clause 5(c) of rule XX permits the House to operate with a “provisional quorum” where the House is without a quorum due to catastrophic circumstances.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### SEC. IX—SPEAKER

\* \* \* \* \*

When but one person is proposed, and no objection made, it has not been usual in Parliament to put any question to the House; but without a question the members proposing him conduct him to the chair. But if there be objection, or another proposed, a question is put by the Clerk. *2 Hats., 158.* As are also questions of adjournment. *6 Gray, 406.* Where the House debated and exchanged messages and answers with the King for a week without a Speaker, till they were prorogued. They have done it *de die in diem* for fourteen days. *1 Chand., 331, 335.*

On October 23, 2000, the House of Commons, pursuant to a Standing Order, elected a new Speaker after rejection of twelve other nominees offered one at a time as amendments to the question. The amendments were offered after refusal of the “Father of the House of Commons” to entertain a motion to change the Standing Order to require a preliminary secret ballot. On March 22, 2001, and on October 29, 2002, the House of Commons adopted Standing Order 1B, requiring that the election of a new Speaker be by secret ballot (*Standing Orders of the House of Commons—Public Business 2003*).

For a discussion of the election of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, see § 27, *supra*.