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HUGH N. HALPERN, STAFF DIRECTOR  
(202) 225-9191  
[www.rules.house.gov](http://www.rules.house.gov)



**Committee on Rules**  
**U.S. House of Representatives**  
**H-512 The Capitol**  
**Washington, DC 20515-6269**

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MINORITY OFFICE  
H-152, THE CAPITOL  
(202) 225-9091

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**Statement of the Honorable David Dreier, Chairman**  
**Committee on Rules**  
**Before the Committee on House Administration**  
**Regarding Committee Budgets for the 2d Session of**  
**the 112th Congress**

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Thank you Chairman Lungren and Ranking Member Brady for the opportunity to testify today on the status of the Committee on Rules' budget for this congress.

As I have testified previously, the Rules Committee has a unique role in this institution, simultaneously serving as both the Speaker's "traffic cop" and "first responder;" we facilitate the day-to-day operations of the House, but are always on call to respond when there is a critical need. As a result, we operate on much tighter deadlines than other committees and have no margin for error.

***The Committee's Activity this Congress***

So far this Congress, the Committee has reported 76 rules to the House that provided for consideration of 89 separate measures. Additionally, the Committee has reported 3 "original jurisdiction" measures that were also considered by a rule.

In terms of amendments, we have also been busy. To date, we have processed 918 amendments and an additional 103 revisions. This has translated to far more amendments in order on the Floor, with the 112th Congress outpacing the number of amendments offered in the last congress by nearly 2 to 1.

The Committee has also been fulfilling functions for the entire House. For instance, our web site, which recently was named one of the best websites in Congress by the Congressional Management Foundation, serves as the official repository for electronic versions of text for the House. We have been working closely with the Clerk to transfer the hosting of this function, but will still be working with the Majority Leader to update

and provide content for the site once the official repository comes online after the first of the year.

We are also working hard to assist in the transition to electronic documents and reduce printing costs for the House. For instance, we have leveraged our internal CORE D software to produce our resolutions in the House-standard XML format, enabling GPO to print directly from our files rather than having to re-key the data into their typesetting system. We hope to have similar functionality for committee reports online after January first.

### ***The Committee's Budget and its Impact on Operations***

Like other committees, our budget for LY2011 reflects a 5 percent reduction from last-year's levels. I am happy to report that we have been able to continuing meeting the needs of the institution by reducing staff and continuing our investments in information technology.

Due in part to the time it takes to hire staff in a new congress after a change in Majorities, we were not fully staffed until the spring, easing the impact of this cut for this year. Understanding our fiscal situation, we have maintained our staffing level significantly below our overall staff ceiling, but are able to fulfill our mission. We are using that additional budgetary flexibility to aggressively pre-fund some of our IT investments this year.

This year also marks the first time that the Minority on the Rules Committee has controlled a full 1/3 of the budget. While I'm sure that Ms. Slaughter will more fully address their experience, I believe that both the Minority and Majority have been able to operate under this arrangement without any difficulties.

Looking forward to next year, we understand that most committees will face an additional 6.4 percent cut in committee funding. Because majorities of both parties have been consistently making investments to streamline the operations of the Rules Committee, I believe that we can absorb this additional cut without impacting the level of service that we provide the House.

I do have some concerns that this additional cut could impact the Minority more severely than us, just given the relative sizes of our budgets. I have committed to my Ranking Member that we will ensure that their essential needs are met, even within our lower overall budget.

### ***Looking Forward***

While I recognize our fiscal situation as keenly as anyone, I do want to caution the Committee about further cuts to the Rules Committee's budget beyond the nearly 11.5

percent this Congress. Our work is highly specialized, and, frankly, the conditions under which we perform are not always optimal. Our staffs frequently work extremely long hours and are always on call. It is not unusual to have personal or family obligations interrupted by a change in plans or last-minute crisis.

Nearly 80% of our budget is salary. The Rules Committee has the benefit of a number of veteran staff, working along side some very talented new team members. In order to retain staff with the ability to execute their mission as flawlessly as our work demands in the time frames set out by the Speaker, we need to be able to compensate them fairly.

At the moment, we are able to do that. However, if we continue to face significant cuts year after year, there will come a point where it will impact our operations. And when the Rules Committee's operations are curtailed, that is reflected in a bill that won't come to the floor or a problem to which we cannot respond.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, and I am happy to answer any questions the Committee may have.