

§ 12. Select Committees

Select (or special) committees were used extensively by the House during the early Congresses. In the Jeffersonian era, it was common practice to refer each proposal to a select committee created to draft the appropriate legislative language for the measure. *Manual* § 401. By the Third Congress, 350 select committees had been named. However, as standing committees came to be recognized as the most appropriate forum for the development of legislation, the use of select committees declined steadily. By the 23d Congress, the number of select committees had been reduced to 35. By the 106th Congress, only the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence remained. Clause 11 of rule X. A select committee identified as permanent is reconstituted in each Congress upon adoption of the rules of the House. Select committees have been established with oversight jurisdiction only (for example, the Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming).

In the modern era, select committees are created primarily to investigate conditions or events. As pointed out elsewhere, all committee investigations must be undertaken in furtherance of a constitutionally assigned function of Congress. Deschler Ch 15 § 1; see § 10, *supra*.

Select committees have also been created to study and report on matters with a view toward legislative action. Most select committees of this type lacked authority to report legislation. Instead, they were directed to assess the adequacy of existing laws and, if necessary, to make legislative recommendations. However, several select committees have been empowered to report legislation directly to the House. Deschler Ch 17 § 6. For example, the Select Committee on Homeland Security was required to report to the House its recommendations on a bill establishing a Department of Homeland Security. In making its recommendation, the select committee was required to take into consideration recommendations by each committee to which such bill was initially referred. 107-2, H. Res. 449, June 19, 2002, p 10722. In the 108th Congress, the House established a successor to the Select Committee on Homeland Security, granting it jurisdiction over matters relating to the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (the law enacted on the recommendation of the predecessor select committee). For further discussion on the establishment of select committees, see *Guidelines for the Establishment of Select Committees*, Committee on Rules, 98-1, February, 1983.

Finally, select committees have been created to supervise certain routine housekeeping functions; for example, the Select Committee on the House Beauty Shop (95-1, H. Res. 1000), the Select Committee on the House Recording Studio (Pub. L. No. 84-624), the Select Committee on the House

Restaurant (95-1, H. Res. 472), and the Select Committee to Regulate Parking on the House Side of the Capitol (95-1, H. Res. 282).

§ 13. — Particular Uses of Select Committees

The House has established more than 40 select committees since passage of the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946. The table below identifies some of these committees for purposes of illustration. The table shows these committees by name (or paraphrase thereof), dates of creation and termination, and authority, including legislative authority. With the two exceptions noted—Campaign Expenditures and Small Business—the table excludes those committees existing before 1947 which were subsequently reconstituted.

Select Committees

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Aging		
Established Jan. 3, 1975; 93-2, H. Res. 988 Terminated Jan. 5, 1993, <i>Manual</i> § 784	Problems of the older American; income maintenance, housing, and health; welfare programs	To report annually to the House; no legislative authority
Astronautics and Space Exploration		
Established Mar. 25, 1958; 85-2, H. Res. 496 Terminated July 21, 1958; became standing Committee on Science and Astronautics	All aspects and problems relating to the exploration of outer space; resources, personnel, equipment, and facilities; legislation	To report to the House, by bill or otherwise
Assassinations		
Established Sept. 17, 1976; 94-2, H. Res. 1540 Terminated Jan. 3, 1979	Circumstances surrounding the death of John F. Kennedy and the death of Martin Luther King, Jr.	To report to the House on the result of its investigation (see H. Rept. 95-1828); no legislative authority

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Campaign Expenditures		
Established May 29, 1928; 70-1, H. Res. 232 Reestablished by each Congress through 92-2	Election disputes; electoral fraud; excessive campaign expenditures of Presidential or congressional candidates	Reporting authority varied from Congress to Congress
Chemicals, Pesticides, and Insecticides Affecting Foods		
Established June 20, 1950; 81-2, H. Res. 323 Terminated Jan. 3, 1953	Chemicals, compounds, and synthetics in the production of food products; health factors; the agricultural economy; toxic residues; effect on soil and vegetation	To report to the House on its investigation with recommendations for legislation (see H. Rept. 82-2182); no legislative authority
Children, Youth and Families		
Established Sept. 29, 1982, 97-2, H. Res. 421 Reestablished by each Congress through 102-2	Income maintenance; health; nutrition; education; welfare; employment	To report to the House on the results of its investigations; no legislative authority
Committees		
Established Jan. 31, 1973; 93-1, H. Res. 132 Terminated Dec. 20, 1974; reestablished 1979; 96-1, H. Res. 118; records transferred to Committee on Rules, Apr. 1, 1980	Rules X and XI of the rules of the House; committee structure; number and size of committees; jurisdiction; committee procedure; meetings, staffing, and facilities	To report to the House by bill, resolution, or otherwise (see H. Rept. 96-866)

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Communist Aggression Established July 27, 1953; 83-1, H. Res. 346 Terminated Dec. 31, 1954	Seizure of Latvia and Estonia by the U.S.S.R.; treatment of the Baltic peoples during this period	To report to the House on its study together with recommendations (see H. Rept. 83-2650); no legislative authority
Congressional Operations Established Mar. 28, 1977; 95-1, H. Res. 420 Terminated Jan. 3, 1979	Organization and operation of the U.S. Congress; co-operation between the Houses; relationship with other branches of government	To report recommendations on subjects specified (see H. Rept. 95-1843); no legislative authority
Congressional Pages Established Sept. 30, 1964; 88-2, H. Res. 847 Terminated Jan. 4, 1965	General welfare and education of congressional pages	To report on the results of its investigations (see H. Rept. 88-1945); to make recommendations
Covert Arms Transactions with Iran Established Jan. 7, 1987; 100-1, H. Res. 12 Terminated Nov. 13, 1987	Investigation of the “Iran-Contra affair”; met jointly with Senate Select Committee	To report on the results of its investigations (see H. Rept. 100-433)
Crime Established May 1, 1969; 91-1, H. Res. 17 Terminated June 30, 1973	All aspects of crime in the United States; its elements, causes, and extent; reciprocity of information; urban crime	To report on its investigation with recommendations (see H. Rept. 93-358); no legislative authority

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Energy Established Apr. 21, 1977; 95-1, H. Res. 508 Terminated Jan. 3, 1979; jurisdiction transferred to Energy and Commerce, 97th Cong.	Message of the President dated Apr. 20, 1977, and other communications relating thereto; bills or resolutions sequentially referred thereto	To report to the House by bill or otherwise (see H. Rept. 95-543)
Energy Independence and Global Warming Established Mar. 8, 2007; 110-1, H. Res. 202 Terminated Jan. 3, 2011	Investigation into reducing U.S. dependence on foreign sources of energy and reducing activities that contribute to climate change and global warming	To report on policies, strategies, and new technologies related to its investigations
Ethics - Standards and Conduct of Members Established Oct. 19, 1966; 89-2, H. Res. 1013 Terminated Dec. 27, 1966; standing Committee on Standards of Official Conduct (now Ethics) created Apr. 13, 1967	Rules or regulations necessary or desirable to ensure proper standards of conduct by Members and by officers or employees of the House; reporting of statutory violations	To make recommendations to the House by report or resolution
Ethics Established Mar. 9, 1977; 95-1, H. Res. 383 Terminated Jan. 3, 1979	Certain bills and resolutions relating to ethical standards of Members contained in standing rules; regulations relating thereto; advisory opinions	To report to the House on the measure specified (see H. Rept. 95-1837); to report regulations; to recommend legislation

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Ethics		
Established Jan. 7, 1997; 105-1, H. Res. 5 Terminated Jan. 21, 1997	Continue investigation of a Member by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct (now Ethics), begun in the prior Congress	To resolve the inquiry and report to the House (see H. Rept. 105-1; H. Res. 31)
Events Surrounding the 2012 Terrorist Attack in Benghazi		
Established May 8, 2014; 113-2, H. Res. 567 Reestablished in the 114th Congress Terminated Jan. 3, 2017	Policies, decisions, and activities relating to the attacks on U.S. facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice	To prepare a final report (see H. Rept. 114-848); no legislative authority
Export Controls		
Established Sept. 7, 1961; 87-1, H. Res. 403 Terminated May 31, 1962	The Export Control Act of 1949; assessment of accomplishments under that Act; improvements in administration and enforcement; congressional oversight	To report on its investigation together with any recommendations (see H. Rept. 87-1753); no legislative authority
Foreign Aid		
Established July 22, 1947; 80-1, H. Res. 296 Terminated May 3, 1948	Basic needs of foreign nations and peoples; relief in terms of food and clothing; resources and facilities; agencies	To report to the House as deemed appropriate; no legislative authority
Government Research		
Established Sept. 11, 1963; 88-1, H. Res. 504 Terminated Jan. 3, 1965	Research programs of Federal agencies; expenditures for research programs; costs of government research	To report its findings to the House with recommended legislation (see H. Rept. 88-1143)

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Homeland Security Established June 19, 2002; 107-2, H. Res. 449 Terminated after final disposition of specified bill (Nov. 25, 2002)	Develop recommendations on such matters that relate to the establishment of a department of homeland security as may be referred to it by the Speaker and on recommendations submitted to it by standing committees to which the Speaker referred a bill establishing such department	To report its recommendation to the House on a bill establishing a department of homeland security (see H. Rept. 107-609)
Homeland Security Established Jan. 7, 2003; 108-1, H. Res. 5 Terminated Jan. 3, 2005	Develop recommendations on such matters that relate to the Homeland Security Act of 2002 as may be referred to it by the Speaker; to conduct oversight of laws, programs, and Government activities relating to homeland security; to conduct a study of the operation and implementation of the rules of the House, including rule X, with respect to homeland security	To report its recommendations to the House by bill or otherwise on matters referred to it by the Speaker; to report its recommendations on changes to House rules to the Committee on Rules
Hunger Established Feb. 22, 1984; 98-2, H. Res. 15 Reestablished each Congress through 102-2; Reestablishment rejected Feb. 4, 1993; 103-1, H. Res. 18	International programs; world food security; malnutrition; food production and distribution; agribusiness role	To conduct studies and make recommendations about possible legislation

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Hurricane Katrina Established Sept. 15, 2005; 109-1, H. Res. 437 Terminated Mar. 16, 2006	The local, state, and Federal preparation for, and response to, Hurricane Katrina	To conduct an investigation and report its findings to the House by Feb. 15, 2006
Intelligence Established Feb. 19, 1975; 94-1, H. Res. 138 Terminated Feb. 11, 1976; became permanent select committee, July 14, 1977, H. Res. 658 (clause 11 of rule X; <i>Manual</i> § 785)	Proposals concerning the intelligence and intelligence-related programs and activities of the U.S. Government; oversight; proposed legislation and other matters relating to the CIA	To report to the House on the nature and extent of intelligence activities of U.S. departments and agencies by legislation or otherwise (see H. Rept. 94-833)
Katyn Forest Massacre Established Sept. 18, 1951; 82-1, H. Res. 390 Terminated Dec. 22, 1952	The massacre of thousands of Polish officers in the Katyn Forest in territory then under the control of the U.S.S.R.	To report to the House on completion of its hearings (see H. Rept. 82-2505); no legislative authority
Lobbying Activities Established Aug. 12, 1949; 81-1, H. Res. 298 Terminated end of the 81st Cong.	Lobbying activities intended to influence legislation; activities of Federal agencies intended to influence legislation	To submit reports on the results of its study (see H. Rept. 81-3239); no legislative authority
Narcotics Abuse and Control Established July 29, 1976; 94-2, H. Res. 1350 Reestablished each Congress through 102-2	International traffic in narcotics; prevention; enforcement; organized crime; drug abuse; treatment; rehabilitation	To report to the House on its investigations; no legislative authority

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Newsprint Established Feb. 26, 1947; 80-1, H. Res. 58 Terminated Dec. 31, 1948	Need for adequate supplies of newsprint and related products; production possibilities and prospects	To submit reports with recommendations (see H. Rept. 80-2471); no legislative authority
Offensive and Undesirable Literature Established May 12, 1952; 82-2, H. Res. 596 Terminated Dec. 31, 1952	The extent to which books, magazines, and comic books contain immoral, obscene, or otherwise offensive matter; availability through the U.S. mails; adequacy of existing laws	To report to the House with recommendations, including recommendations for legislation (see H. Rept. 82-2510); no legislative authority
Outer Continental Shelf Established Apr. 12, 1975; 94-1, H. Res. 412 Terminated Jan. 3, 1979; succeeded by another select committee on the same subject (96-1, H. Res. 53), which terminated July 31, 1980	A bill relating to the management of oil and natural gas in the Outer Continental Shelf; marine and coastal environments; certain related matters on this subject on referral to it by the Speaker	To report the bill and other legislation referred to it; transmit its findings and make a full report to the House (see H. Rept. 96-1214)
Population Established Sept. 28, 1977; 95-1, H. Res. 70 Terminated end of the 95th Cong.	Causes of changing population conditions; population characteristics relative to limited resources; population planning; global population-related issues	To report on the results of its investigation (see H. Rept. 95-1842); no legislative authority
Professional Sports Established May 18, 1976; 94-2, H. Res. 1186 Terminated Jan. 3, 1977	Need for legislation with respect to professional sports	To report to the House on the results of its inquiry (see H. Rept. 94-1786); no legislative authority

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
Right of Member To Be Sworn In		
Established Jan. 10, 1967; 90-1, H. Res. 1 Terminated Feb. 23, 1967	The right of Adam Clayton Powell (N.Y.) to be sworn in in the 90th Congress and to a seat therein	To report to the House within five weeks (see H. Rept. 90-27); no legislative authority
Small Business		
Established Dec. 4, 1941; 77-1, H. Res. 294 Reestablished each Congress until 1970; became a standing committee 1975; 94-1, H. Res. 988; clause 1 of rule X; <i>Manual</i> § 736	Assistance to small business; small business protection; financial aid; small business participation in Federal procurement	Reported to the House on results of its investigations; no legislative authority before becoming a standing committee
Survivors' Benefits		
Established Aug. 4, 1954; 83-2, H. Res. 549 Terminated Jan. 15, 1956	Benefits provided under Federal law for dependents of deceased members and former members of the armed forces	To prepare such legislation; to report on the results of its investigation (see H. Rept. 83-9282)
Tax-exempt Foundations and Organizations		
Established Apr. 4, 1952; 82-2, H. Res. 561 Terminated Dec. 16, 1954	Educational and philanthropic foundations and related organizations exempt from Federal income taxation; use of foundations	To report to the House on the results of its investigation (see H. Rept. 82-2681); no legislative authority
Transactions on Commodity Exchanges		
Established Dec. 18, 1947; 80-1, H. Res. 404 Terminated Dec. 31, 1948	Purchases and sales of commodities; commodities for future delivery; activities of Federal agencies and individuals therein as affecting the price of commodities	To report to the House on completion of its investigation (see H. Rept. 80-2472); no legislative authority

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
U.S. Military Involvement in Southeast Asia Established June 8, 1970; 91-2, H. Res. 976 Terminated July 6, 1970	All aspects of U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia	To report on its investigation (see H. Rept. 91-1276); no legislative authority
U.S. National Security and Military/Commercial Concerns with China Established June 18, 1998; 105-2, H. Res. 463; reestablished Jan. 6, 1999, 106-1, H. Res. 5; extended Mar. 24, Apr. 29, May 13, 1999, 106-1, H. Res. 129, H. Res. 153, H. Res. 170 (respectively) Terminated May 31, 1999	Investigate technology transfers to China; successor select committee assigned to produce unclassified version of report filed by predecessor committee	To report on its investigation (see H. Rept. 105-851) (declassified, in part, pursuant to H. Res. 5 (106-1)); no legislative authority
U.S. Servicemen Missing in Action in Southeast Asia Established Sept. 11, 1975; 94-1, H. Res. 335 Terminated Mar. 13, 1977	U.S. servicemen identified as missing in action; recovery of bodies of known dead; international inspection teams	To report to the House on its investigation (see H. Rept. 94-1764); no legislative authority
Voting Irregularities of Aug. 2, 2007 Established Aug. 3, 2007; 110-1, H. Res. 611 (funding provided by H. Res. 723) Terminated Jan. 3, 2009	The circumstances surrounding a vote on Aug. 2, 2007	To conduct an investigation and produce an interim report by Sept. 30, 2007, and a final report by Sept. 15, 2008

Select Committees—Continued

COMMITTEE	JURISDICTION—INVESTIGATIVE AUTHORITY	REPORTING AUTHORITY
White County Bridge Commission		
Established May 25, 1955; 84-1, H. Res. 244 Terminated Apr. 25, 1956	Financial position of the White County Bridge Commission; monies received and expenditures made; anticipated toll-free use	To report to the House with recommendations (see H. Rept. 84-2052); no legislative authority
World War II Veterans		
Established Aug. 28, 1950; 81-2, H. Res. 474 Terminated Feb. 2, 1951	Abuses in education, training and loan guarantee programs of World War II veterans	To report on the results of its investigation (see H. Rept. 2501); no legislative authority

§ 14. Joint Committees**Generally**

Joint committees are composed of Members from both Houses. Jefferson noted that joint committees were used by the two Houses of the English Parliament. *Manual* § 325. Since the First Congress, a joint committee has been used to make arrangements for the inauguration of the President and Vice President. *Manual* § 1112; 3 Hinds § 1986. The early congresses formed joint standing committees on the Library and Printing, which exist to this day. *Manual* §§ 1110, 1111; 4 Hinds §§ 4337, 4347. For a current list of joint committees, see *Manual* §§ 1108-1112.

Joint committees, or committees of the House and Senate acting jointly, have been used to investigate problems relating to immigration (4 Hinds § 4415), to resolve a dispute relating to the electoral count (3 Hinds § 1953), and to investigate the revision and codification of the laws (4 Hinds § 4410).

Jurisdiction, Functions, and Duties

Joint committees are used for study and investigation, supervision and oversight, and sometimes for purely ceremonial activities. Joint committees generally function in areas beyond the jurisdiction of any particular committee of either House. Deschler Ch 17 § 7. Joint committees may report to both Houses if so directed (4 Hinds §§ 4421, 4422), or to either House (4 Hinds § 4432; 7 Cannon § 2167).

A joint committee created by concurrent resolution may be instructed by the two Houses acting concurrently or, if so authorized, by either House acting independently. 4 Hinds § 4421. However, a joint committee created by statute is not susceptible to control by one House; and its duties may not be enlarged or diminished by either House acting independently. 7 Canon § 2164. A joint committee created by concurrent resolution must be re-established by a subsequent Congress.

Composition; Voting

Recent joint committees have featured an equal number of Members from both Houses, with the chair alternating between the House and Senate, and with each member having one vote. Deschler Ch 17 § 7.

The table below shows the major joint committees that were established during the post-1946 era, their composition, and their jurisdiction and functions:

Joint Committees

Committees	Jurisdiction and Functions
Atomic Energy Established 1946; 42 USC § 2251 House members: 9 Senate members: 9 Terminated Jan. 4, 1977	Development, use, and control of atomic energy; to report legislation and make recommendations within its jurisdiction; legislative jurisdiction abolished 1977; 95-1, H. Res. 5
Congressional Operations Established 1970; 2 USC §§ 411-417 House members: 5 Senate members: 5 Inactive since 94th Cong.; Select Committee on Congressional Operations created, 95-1, H. Res. 420	Identification of court proceedings affecting Congress; organization and operation of the Congress; supervision of the Office of Placement and Management; no legislative jurisdiction
Defense Production Established 1950; 50 USC App § 2161 House members: 5 Senate members: 5 Terminated Mar. 1, 1992; no appointments after Sept. 30, 1978	Review of programs established by the Defense Production Act of 1950; Federal emergency preparedness and mobilization policy; integrity of defense contracts and the procurement process; to report to the House and Senate on its studies, with recommendations

Joint Committees—Continued

Committees	Jurisdiction and Functions
Deficit Reduction Established 2011; Pub. L. No. 112-25 House members: 6 Senate members: 6 Terminated Jan. 31, 2012	Report recommendations to Congress to reduce the deficit by at least \$1.5 trillion over the period of fiscal years 2012 to 2021
Economic Established 1946; 15 USC § 1021 House members: 10 Senate members: 10 <i>(Manual § 1108)</i>	Economic Report by the President; means of promoting national policy on employment; short-term and medium-term economic goals; to report to the House and Senate (by March 1) and to each Budget Committee (by March 15)
Housing Established 1947; H. Con. Res. 104 House members: 7 Senate members: 7 Terminated 80th Cong.	Housing needs in U.S.; building material shortages; building costs; building codes and zoning laws; housing loans and insurance; veterans' preferences; findings to be reported to the House and Senate
Inaugural Ceremonies Established 1789; reestablished every other Congress by concurrent resolution House members: 3 Senate members: 3	The necessary arrangements for the inauguration of the President-elect and the Vice President-elect
Library Established 1806; 2 USC § 132b House members: 5 Senate members: 5 <i>(Manual § 1110)</i>	Management and expansion of the Library of Congress; rules and regulations for the government of the Library; development of Botanic Garden; gifts for the benefit of the Library; statues and other works of art in the Capitol
Organization of Congress Two separate joint committees Established 1965; S. Con. Res. 2 Terminated Dec. 31, 1967 Established 1992; H. Con. Res. 192; (Reestablished Pub. L. No. 102-392) Terminated Dec. 31, 1993 House members: 12 Senate members: 12	Organization and operation of Congress; relationship between the two Houses and between the Congress and other branches of government; committees; to report to the House and Senate

Joint Committees—Continued

Committees	Jurisdiction and Functions
Printing Established 1846; 44 USC § 901 House members: 5 Senate members: 5 (<i>Manual</i> § 1111)	Inefficiencies or waste in the printing, binding, and distribution of government publications; arrangement and style of the <i>Congressional Record</i> ; printing of the legislative program for each day; listing of committee meetings and hearings
Taxation Established 1926; 26 USC § 8002 House members: 5 Senate members: 5 (<i>Manual</i> § 1109)	Operation and effects of Federal system of internal revenue taxation; to report to the Committee on Ways and Means, and, in its discretion, directly to the House
Washington Metropolitan Problems Established 1957; H. Con. Res. 172 House members: 3 Senate members: 3 Terminated 86th Cong.	Growth and expansion of the District of Columbia and its metropolitan area; effectiveness of agencies and instrumentalities concerned therewith; to report to the House and Senate

D. Procedure in Committees**§ 15. Committee Rules; Applicable House Rules****Generally**

House committees are required to follow the procedures prescribed by the rules of the House “so far as applicable.” Clause 1(a) of rule XI; *Manual* § 787. They are also bound by those provisions of *Jefferson’s Manual* that are consistent with the rules of the House. *Manual* §§ 792, 1105. Finally, they are bound by their written rules which are adopted by each standing committee under clause 2(a) of rule XI. *Manual* § 791. Committee rules must be published in the *Congressional Record* and made publicly available in electronic form within 30 days after the chair of the committee is elected and are compiled by the Committee on Rules each Congress as a committee print. *Manual* § 791. If a committee meets pursuant to a rule which has not been published, the proceedings may be held insufficient to support a perjury conviction for alleged false testimony given to that committee. *United States v. Reinecke*, 524 F.2d 435 (D.C. Cir. 1975).

Clause 1(a)(2) of rule XI states that each subcommittee of a committee is a part of that committee and subject to its authority, direction, and rules.