

104TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 314

To amend the Rules of the House of Representatives to discourage frivolous ethics complaints.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 19, 1995

Mr. BURTON of Indiana (for himself, Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky, Mr. STEARNS, Mr. BARTLETT of Maryland, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. KINGSTON, Mr. HOSTETTLER, Mr. NEUMANN, Mr. HERGER, Mr. DOOLITTLE, Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. ISTOOK, Mr. JONES, Mr. MYERS of Indiana, Mr. SMITH of Texas, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. MCCOLLUM, Mr. CALLAHAN, and Mr. MOORHEAD) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules

RESOLUTION

To amend the Rules of the House of Representatives to discourage frivolous ethics complaints.

1 *Resolved,*

2 **SECTION 1. FRIVOLOUS ETHICS COMPLAINTS.**

3 (a) Clause 4(e)(2) of rule X is amended by adding
4 at the end the following:

5 “(G)(i) At any time, the committee may, by an af-
6 firmative vote of 8 of its 14 members, determine that a
7 complaint filed against a member is frivolous and baseless.

1 “(ii) The committee may make such a determination
2 if it deems that the complaint filed against a member has
3 no basis in fact, the alleged violation is of such a minor
4 and technical nature that it does not reflect discredit upon
5 the House or its Members, the complaint was filed for
6 purely partisan reasons and not out of concern for main-
7 taining the ethical standards of the House, or the com-
8 plaint is part of a pattern of abuse and misuse of the Com-
9 mittee on Standards of Official Conduct.

10 “(iii) In the case of any complaint deemed frivolous
11 and baseless, the committee shall determine the costs of
12 its inquiry and report such costs to the Committee on
13 House Oversight, the Clerk of the House, and the public.

14 “(iv) If a complaint deemed frivolous and baseless by
15 the committee is filed by a Member of Congress, that
16 member’s ‘Member’s Representational Account’ (MRA),
17 shall be charged for the costs of the committee’s inquiry.
18 If such complaint is filed by more than one member, each
19 member’s MRA shall be charged proportionately.

20 “(v) At its discretion, and by a majority vote of its
21 members, the committee may rule that a member or mem-
22 bers who have filed a frivolous and baseless complaint may
23 repay the costs of the inquiry over a period of greater than
24 1 year.

1 “(vi) Alternatively, the committee may, by an affirm-
2 ative vote of 8 of its 14 members, recommend to the
3 House that the Member or Members responsible for filing
4 a frivolous and baseless complaint be fined an appropriate
5 amount.”.

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