

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 504

Amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to require that legislation and conference reports be available on the Internet for 72 hours before consideration by the House, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 20, 2007

Mr. BAIRD (for himself, Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, Mr. MATHESON, Mr. MOORE of Kansas, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. JONES of North Carolina, and Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Rules

RESOLUTION

Amending the Rules of the House of Representatives to require that legislation and conference reports be available on the Internet for 72 hours before consideration by the House, and for other purposes.

1 *Resolved,*

2 **SECTION 1. PURPOSE.**

3 The purpose of this resolution is to:

4 (1) Modernize the operations of the House of
5 Representatives using information technology that
6 has transformed and increased the efficiency of
7 many aspects of American society such as financial

1 services and markets, transportation, manufac-
2 turing, agriculture, and commerce with consumers
3 and businesses.

4 (2) Slow the explosive growth of the
5 \$8,000,000,000,000 national debt of the United
6 States, reduce excessive annual budget deficits, and
7 control the size and scope of government by ensuring
8 that there is adequate scrutiny of proposals for new
9 and amended laws, taxes, and expenditures.

10 (3) Enhance public participation in American
11 democracy and improve the quality of proposed leg-
12 islation by allowing the opportunity for its review by
13 State and local government officials, small business
14 owners, large business leaders, journalists, scientists,
15 academics, labor leaders, nonprofit organization
16 leaders, authors of weblogs, and interested citizens.

17 (4) Help restore public trust in government and
18 enhance respect for the House of Representatives
19 and the Congress by ensuring that their operations
20 are conducted with the openness, order, and dignity
21 befitting the world's oldest democracy.

22 **SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO RULE XIII REGARDING AVAIL-**
23 **ABILITY OF LEGISLATION AND REPORTS.**

24 (a) Clause 4 of rule XIII of the Rules of the House
25 of Representatives is amended—

1 (1) in its side heading, by inserting “legislation
2 and” before “reports”;

3 (2) in paragraph (a) by striking subparagraph
4 (1) and inserting the following new subparagraph:

5 “(1) Except as specified in subparagraph (2), it shall
6 not be in order to consider in the House a measure or
7 matter until 72 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and
8 holidays except when the House is in session on such a
9 day) after the text of such measure or matter (and, if the
10 measure or matter is reported, the text of all accom-
11 panying reports) have been made available to Members,
12 Delegates, the Resident Commissioner, and the general
13 public pursuant to subparagraph (3).”;

14 (3) by adding at the end of paragraph (a) the
15 following new subparagraph:

16 “(3) Without further amendment before floor consid-
17 eration, the full text of the measure or matter and each
18 committee report thereon shall be posted continuously by
19 means of the Internet in such a manner that they are con-
20 veniently accessible using existing technology, anony-
21 mously and at no cost, in a format that is searchable by
22 text.”; and

23 (4) in paragraph (e), by striking “the third cal-
24 endar day” and inserting “at least 72 hours” and by
25 striking “on” and inserting “after”.

1 (b) Rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Represent-
 2 atives is further amended—

3 (1) in clause 5(b), by striking “and the Resi-
 4 dent Commissioner” and inserting “the Resident
 5 Commissioner, and the general public”; and

6 (2) in clause 6(c), by striking “or” at the end
 7 of subparagraph (1), by striking the period at the
 8 end of subparagraph (2) and inserting “; or”, and
 9 by adding at the end the following new subpara-
 10 graph:

11 “(3) a rule or order proposing a waiver of
 12 clause 4(a) of rule XIII or of clause 8(a) or 8(b) of
 13 rule XXII, unless a question of consideration of the
 14 rule is adopted by a vote of two-thirds of the Mem-
 15 bers voting, a quorum being present.”.

16 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO RULE XXII REGARDING AVAIL-**
 17 **ABILITY OF CONFERENCE REPORTS AND**
 18 **AMENDMENTS REPORTED IN DISAGREE-**
 19 **MENT.**

20 Clause 8 of rule XXII of the Rules of the House of
 21 Representatives is amended—

22 (1) by striking subparagraph (a) and inserting
 23 the following new paragraph:

24 “(a)(1) It shall not be in order to consider a con-
 25 ference report until 72 hours (excluding Saturdays, Sun-

1 days and holidays except when the House is in session on
2 such a day) after the conference report and the accom-
3 panying joint explanatory statement have been available
4 to Members, Delegates, the Resident Commissioner, and
5 the general public pursuant to subparagraph (2).

6 “(2) Without further amendment before floor consid-
7 eration, the full texts of the conference report and the ac-
8 companying signed joint explanatory statement shall be
9 posted continuously by means of the Internet in such a
10 manner that they are conveniently accessible using exist-
11 ing technology, anonymously and at no cost, in a format
12 that can be searched by text.”;

13 (2) in paragraph (b), by striking subparagraphs
14 (1) and (2) and inserting the following new subpara-
15 graphs:

16 “(1) It shall not be in order to consider a motion to
17 dispose of a Senate amendment reported in disagreement
18 by a conference committee until at least 72 hours (exclud-
19 ing Saturdays, Sundays and holidays except when the
20 House is in session on such a day) after the report in dis-
21 agreement and any accompanying statement have been
22 available to Members, Delegates, the Resident Commis-
23 sioner, and the general public pursuant to subparagraph
24 (2).

1 “(2) Without further amendment before floor consid-
2 eration, the full texts of a Senate amendment reported in
3 disagreement and any accompanying statement shall be
4 posted continuously by means of the Internet in such a
5 manner that they are conveniently accessible using exist-
6 ing technology, anonymously and at no cost, in a format
7 that can be searched by text.”.

8 **SEC. 4. PROTECTION OF CLASSIFIED INFORMATION.**

9 Nothing in this resolution or any amendment made
10 by it shall be interpreted to require or permit the declas-
11 sification or posting on the Internet of classified informa-
12 tion in the custody of the House of Representatives. Such
13 classified information shall be made available to Members
14 in a timely manner as appropriate under existing laws and
15 rules.

16 **SEC. 5. SENSE OF THE HOUSE REGARDING AMENDMENTS.**

17 It is the sense of the House that, with the objective
18 of preventing circumvention of clause 4(a) of rule XIII of
19 the Rules of the House of Representatives that the Com-
20 mittee on Rules should develop standardized policies and
21 procedures to require that proposed amendments (except
22 those offered under an open rule) that are major in size,
23 scope, or cost be posted on the Internet for an appropriate
24 number of hours.

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