

ELECTING CERTAIN MEMBERS TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Ms. CHENEY. Mr. Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 1072

Resolved, That the following named Members be, and are hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE: Mr. Balderson.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS: Mr. Green of Tennessee.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY: Mr. Garcia of California.

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES: Mr. Stauber.

Ms. CHENEY (during the reading). Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be considered as read and printed in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Wyoming?

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

COMMUNICATIONS OUTREACH MEDIA AND MAIL STANDARDS ACT

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on House Administration, the Committee on Oversight and Reform, and the Committee on Rules be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 7512) to rename the House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards as the House Communications Standards Commission, to extend the authority of the Commission to regulate mass mailings of Members and Member-elect of the House of Representatives to all unsolicited mass communications of Members and Members-elect of the House, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. SPANBERGER). Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7512

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Communications Outreach Media and Mail Standards Act" or the "COMMS Act".

SEC. 2. RENAMING HOUSE COMMISSION ON CONGRESSIONAL MAILING STANDARDS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 5(a) of the Act entitled "An Act to amend title 39, United States Code, to clarify the proper use of the franking privilege by Members of Congress, and for other purposes", approved December

18, 1973 (2 U.S.C. 501(a)), is amended by striking "House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards" and inserting "House Communications Standards Commission".

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) TITLE 39.—Title 39, United States Code, is amended by striking "House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards" and inserting "House Communications Standards Commission" each place it appears in the following sections:

(A) Section 3210(a)(5), (a)(6)(D), (b)(3), (d)(5), and (d)(6)(A).

(B) Section 3216(e)(1) and (e)(2).

(C) Section 3220(b).

(2) OTHER PROVISIONS.—Section 311 of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1991 (2 U.S.C. 503) is amended by striking "House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards" and inserting "House Communications Standards Commission" each place it appears in subsections (a)(3), (e)(1)(B), and (f).

(c) REFERENCES IN OTHER DOCUMENTS.—Any reference in any rule, regulation, or other document to the House Commission on Congressional Mailing Standards shall be deemed to be a reference to the House Communications Standards Commission.

SEC. 3. AUTHORITY OF COMMISSION OVER OFFICIAL MASS COMMUNICATIONS.

(a) AUTHORITY TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE REGARDING DISSEMINATION OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 5(d) of the Act entitled "An Act to amend title 39, United States Code, to clarify the proper use of the franking privilege by Members of Congress, and for other purposes", approved December 18, 1973 (2 U.S.C. 501(d)), is amended—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking "The Commission" and inserting "(1) The Commission"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(2) In addition to the guidance, assistance, advice, and counsel described in paragraph (1), the Commission shall provide—

"(A) guidance, assistance, advice, and counsel, through advisory opinions or consultations, in connection with any law and with any rule or regulation of the House of Representatives governing the dissemination of mass communications other than franked mail; and

"(B) guidance, assistance, advice, and counsel in connection with any law and with any rule or regulation of the House of Representatives governing the official content of other official communications of any quantity, whether solicited or unsolicited."

(2) AUTHORITY TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS.—Section 5(e) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 501(e)) is amended—

(A) in the first sentence, by striking "Any complaint" and all that follows through "is about to occur" and inserting the following: "Any complaint that a violation of any provision of law or any rule or regulation of the House of Representatives to which subsection (d) applies is about to occur"; and

(B) in the sentence beginning with "Notwithstanding any other provision of law", by striking "a violation of the franking laws or an abuse of the franking privilege by any person listed under subsection (d) of this section as entitled to send mail as franked mail," and inserting "a violation of any provision of law or any rule or regulation of the House of Representatives to which subsection (d) applies,".

(3) MASS COMMUNICATION DEFINED.—Section 5 of such Act (2 U.S.C. 501) is amended by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(h) In this section, the term 'mass communication' means a mass mailing described in section 3210(a)(6)(E) of title 39, United

States Code, or any other unsolicited communication of substantially identical content which is transmitted to 500 or more persons in a session of Congress, as provided under regulations of the Commission, except that such term does not include—

"(1) any communication from an individual described in subsection (d) to another individual described in subsection (d), a Senator, or any Federal, State, local, or Tribal government official;

"(2) any news release to the communications media;

"(3) any such mass mailing or unsolicited communication made in direct response to a communication from a person to whom the mass mailing or unsolicited communication was transmitted; or

"(4) in the case of any such unsolicited communication which is transmitted in a digital format, a communication for which the cost of the content is less than a threshold amount established under regulations of the House Communications Standards Commission."

(b) AUTHORITY TO REVIEW ALL UNSOLICITED MASS COMMUNICATIONS.—

(1) REQUIRING REVIEW BEFORE DISSEMINATION.—Section 311(f) of the Legislative Branch Appropriations Act, 1991 (2 U.S.C. 503(f)) is amended—

(A) by striking "any mass mailing" and inserting "any mass communication";

(B) by striking "mail matter" and inserting "matter"; and

(C) by striking "such proposed mailing" and inserting "such proposed communication".

(2) EXCEPTION FOR CERTAIN COMMUNICATIONS.—Section 311(f) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 503(f)) is amended—

(A) by striking "A Member" and inserting "(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), a Member"; and

(B) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(2) Paragraph (1) does not apply in the case of any type of mass communication which is designated as exempt from the requirements of such paragraph as provided under regulations of the House Communications Standards Commission."

(3) DEFINITION.—Section 311(g) of such Act (2 U.S.C. 503(g)) is amended—

(A) by striking "and" at the end of paragraph (1);

(B) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (2) and inserting "; and"; and

(C) by adding at the end the following new paragraph:

"(3) the term 'mass communication' means a mass mailing described in section 3210(a)(6)(E) of title 39, United States Code, or any other unsolicited communication of substantially identical content which is transmitted to 500 or more persons in a session of Congress, as provided under regulations of the House Communications Standards Commission, except that such term does not include—

"(A) any communication from a Member of the House of Representatives to another Member of the House of Representatives, a Senator, or any Federal, State, or local government official;

"(B) any news release to the communications media;

"(C) any such mass mailing or unsolicited communication made in direct response to a communication from a person to whom the mass mailing or unsolicited communication was transmitted; or

"(D) in the case of any such unsolicited communication which is transmitted in a digital format, a communication for which the cost of the content is less than a threshold amount established under regulations of