

PREAMBLE AND RULES ADOPTED BY THE DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

PREAMBLE

In adopting the following rules for the Democratic Caucus, we affirm and declare that the following cardinal principles should control Democratic action:

- a. In essentials of Democratic principles and doctrine, unity.
- b. In nonessentials, and in all things not involving fidelity to party principles, entire individual independence.
- c. Party alinement only upon matters of party faith or party policy.
- d. Friendly conference and, whenever reasonably possible, party cooperation.

DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS RULES

1. All Democratic Members of the House of Representatives shall be prima facie members of the Democratic Caucus.

2. Any member of the Democratic Caucus of the House of Representatives failing to abide by the rules governing the same shall thereby automatically cease to be a member of the Caucus.

3. Meetings of the Democratic Caucus may be called by the chairman upon his own motion and shall be called by him whenever requested in writing by 50 members of the Caucus or at the request of the Party Leader. While the House is in session, the Democratic Caucus shall meet regularly at a time and place to be determined by the chairman, on the 3d Wednesday of each month, except January of odd numbered years. If the House not be in session on the 3d Wednesday, the monthly Caucus shall be held on the next succeeding Wednesday on which the House is in session. The chairman may cancel any monthly Caucus, but not two consecutive monthly Caucuses, provided members are given reasonable notice of such cancellation. Members of the Caucus shall not schedule committee meetings or hearings at times when the Caucus is to be in session.

At each such monthly Caucus, members shall have the right to place before the Caucus any question, provided written notice of such intention is (1) delivered to the office of the chairman, and (2) transmitted to all members of the Caucus not later than 5 p.m. on the 9th day immediately preceding the day of such Caucus. The chairman shall prescribe the order of business and shall provide members with an agenda at least 5 days before the Caucus. Amendments to the agenda shall be in order only if submitted to Caucus members at least 48 hours before the hour of convening and if supported in writing by 50 members.

4. A quorum of the Caucus shall consist of a majority of the Democratic Members of the House. If the absence of a quorum is established, the chairman may continue the meeting for purposes of discussion only, but no motion of any kind, except a motion to adjourn, shall be in order at such continued meeting.

5. General parliamentary law, with such special rules as may be adopted, shall govern the meetings of the Caucus.

6. In the election of officers and in the nomination of candidates for office in the House, a majority of those present and voting shall bind the membership of the Caucus.

7. In deciding upon action in the House involving party policy or principle, a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at a Caucus meeting shall bind all members of the Caucus: *Provided*, The said two-thirds vote is a majority of the full Democratic membership of the House: *And provided further*, That no member shall be bound upon questions involving a construction of the Constitution of the United States or upon which he made contrary pledges to his constituents prior to his election or received contrary instructions by resolutions or platform from his nominating authority.

8. Whenever any member of the Caucus shall determine, by reason of either of the exceptions provided for in the above paragraph, not to be bound by the action of the Caucus on those questions, it shall be his duty, if present, so to advise the Caucus before the adjournment of the meeting, or if not present at the meeting, to promptly notify the Democratic leader in writing, so that the party may be advised before the matter comes to issue upon the floor of the House.

9. That the five-minute rule that governs the House of Representatives shall govern debate in the Democratic Caucus, unless suspended by a vote of the Caucus.

10. No persons, except Democratic Members of the House of Representatives, a Caucus Journal Clerk, and other necessary employees, shall be admitted to the meetings of the Caucus without the express permission of the chairman.

11. The Caucus shall keep a journal of its proceedings, which shall be published after each meeting, and the yeas and nays on any question shall, at the desire of one-fifth of those present, be entered on the journal.

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ADDENDUM

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Democratic Caucus that—

1. The chairman of a full committee shall not be the chairman of more than one subcommittee on such full committee and shall insofar as practicable permit subcommittee chairmen of other subcommittees to handle legislation on the floor which has been reported by their subcommittee.

2. No Member shall be chairman of more than one legislative subcommittee. A subcommittee chairman shall be entitled to select and designate at least one staff member for said subcommittee, subject to the approval of a majority of the Democratic members of said full committee. Said staff member shall be compensated at a salary commensurate with the responsibilities prescribed by said subcommittee chairman. The staff member's compensation shall be provided out of appropriated amount, if any, rather than statutory amounts allowed each committee.

3. No Member shall be a member of more than two committees with legislative jurisdiction.

4. The following committees shall be exempt from the three immediately preceding provisions: House Administration; Standards of Official Conduct; House Restaurant; House Parking; House Recording; House Beauty Shop; and Joint Committees.

5. The Committee on Committees shall recommend to the Caucus nominees for chairman and membership of each committee and such recommendation need not necessarily follow seniority.

6. The Committee on Committees shall make recommendations to the Caucus, one committee at a time. Upon a demand supported by 10 or more Members, a separate vote shall be had on any committee chairman or any Member of the committee. If any such motion prevails, the committee list of that particular committee shall be considered recommitted to the Committee on Committees. Further, such demand, if made and properly supported, shall be debated for no more than 40 minutes with the time equally divided between proponents and opponents. If the Caucus and the Committee on Committees be in disagreement after completion of the procedure herein provided, the Caucus may make final and complete disposition of the matter.

7. Recommendation to the Caucus that the Committee on Organization, Study and Review be continued by the Caucus for the purposes of review as circumstances may indicate, with no powers other than those of recommending action to the Caucus.

8. Upon a letter from a Member, signed by 50 percent or more of said Member's State Democratic Delegation, including said Member, said Member shall automatically be considered for nomination by the Committee on Committees for the position to which said Member aspires. The Chairman of the Committee on Committees shall see that such Member's name is placed in nomination.

9. All committees shall provide in their rules of procedure for the application of the 5-minute rule in the interrogation of witnesses until such time as each Member of the committee who so desires has had an opportunity to question the witness. [Incorporated into H. Res. 5, 1-22-71.]

10. Committee ratios should be established to create firm working majorities on each committee. In determining the ratio on the respective standing committees, the Speaker should provide for a *minimum* of 3 Democrats for each 2 Republicans. On those committees on which the Resident Commissioner of Puerto Rico serves, said Commissioner shall be considered, in the 92d Congress, as a Member of the Minority and the Democratic Membership should be increased accordingly.

11. Recommend that the Select Committee on Small Business be made a permanent select committee of the House without legislative jurisdiction except to make investigations and reports. [Incorporated into H. Res. 5, 1-22-71.]

12. In those instances where the Speaker has the power to appoint Members to joint and select committees, boards, and commissions, due consideration should be given to sharing the workload and responsibility among qualified Members of the House who have indicated an interest in the subject matter of the committee, board, or commission, and have expressed a willingness to actively participate in its deliberations and operations. All Members serving on joint and select committees, boards and commissions by virtue of appointment by the Speaker shall be considered to have completed their tenure and their positions deemed to be vacant until filled by appointment or reappointment by the Speaker.

13. Upon the written request of 10 Democratic Members of any committee *or upon the written request of a majority of the Democratic Members, whichever is less*, addressed to the chairman thereof to hold a Caucus of the Democratic Members, said chairman shall call such Caucus within 10 days of such request. Said request shall contain the subject matter for discussion at such Caucus. [Italicized matter adopted on 4-21-71.]

14. Whereas, the inflationary impact which continues without restraint is a critical burden on the elderly on retirement; and

Whereas, the cost of living has skyrocketed since the last social security increase and whereas further increases in the cost of living this year will continue to widen the gap between the social security benefits and the cost of living; and

Whereas, a congressional committee has recently reported that over 25 percent of the elderly over 65 are living in poverty; and

Whereas, the Nixon administration has proposed a 6 percent across-the-board increase which provides no substantial plan for making social security responsive to the needs of the elderly; and

Whereas, the increase in social security benefits should not be deferred: Now, therefore, be it *Resolved* by the Democratic Caucus of the House of Representatives of the 92d Congress

That it is the sense of this Caucus:

- (1) That across-the-board increases in social security benefits of not less than 10 percent should be enacted;
- (2) That the social security minimum payment and that the retirement earnings test be increased to the highest practicable level;
- (3) That these amendments be made effective January 1, 1971.

That the Ways and Means Committee expedite a meaningful increase in social security benefits, if the committee, as a result of its study, reaches the same conclusion;

That this decision should not be delayed by other legislative considerations or unrelated amendments.

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