

# House of Representatives Parliamentary Procedure

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## **House of Representatives Parliamentary Procedure**

The following rules shall serve as the format for discussion at all House of Representatives meetings.

## **SECTION I. ORDER OF EVENTS**

The House of Representatives shall follow the following procedure for discussing legislation during all House of Representatives meetings.

### **1. Call to Order**

- a. The Speaker shall call the meeting to order with three taps of the gavel.
- b. No legislation may be considered until the House is called to order.
- c. During the call to order, a quorum shall be taken (usually by TopHat attendance):
  - i. A quorum, as indicated in the House Bylaws and Constitution, is 1/3 of all Representatives.
  - ii. In accordance with Article III Section 2 Subsection 6b of the SGA Constitution, the Speaker may not, at any point before or during a meeting's call to order, give his or her opinion on any matters of House business while standing before the assembly of Representatives.
- d. After the House has been called to order, the following sequence of events shall be taken.

### **2. Reading of Legislation**

- a. Order of Legislation
  - i. Old Business: Any unfinished legislation that remains to be voted on from the last house meeting and was not tabled shall have first priority in the order of legislation.
  - ii. New Business: The order of new legislation shall be up to the discretion of the Speaker for the purposes of efficiency and practicality.
- b. Reading of Legislation
  - i. The Clerk shall read the "Be it resolved" clause(s) of each resolution in its entirety, unless specifically requested otherwise by the Speaker or a sponsor of the legislation by a point of personal privilege.
  - ii. The Clerk shall read the highlighted changes in any amendment to the House Parliamentary Procedures, House Bylaws, or Constitution unless specifically requested otherwise by the Speaker or a sponsor of the amendment by a point of personal privilege.

### **3. Speaking on Legislation**

- a. Any one (1) sponsor of a piece of legislation shall enter the well and be permitted 10 minutes to speak on their legislation and answer any questions on the legislation.

- b. If there is any debate on who shall be allowed to speak on the legislation, the primary sponsor shall have priority to speak or the power to designate the speaker. In the case that the primary sponsor is not present, the Speaker shall decide any disputes.
- c. A non-Representative may only speak on legislation if a motion to suspend the rules is made and approved by 2/3 of the voting Representatives.
- d. While occupying the well, Representatives shall maintain proper decorum and treat the chamber and those within it with due respect.
- e. A Representative may not endlessly hoard the well; if the Representative in the well has made a statement about an issue on the table, and there are no further questions of the Representative in the well, the Representative shall yield the well.
- f. A Representative in the well may yield the well at any time and leave the well. A Representative in the well may yield their time to another sponsor specifically if they so choose.
- g. If a Representative wishes to return to the well after yielding to another Representative, he or she must indicate this by responding that they will yield the well with the intention to return to the well for explicit purposes.
- h. Questions:
  - i. When occupying the well, a Representative may choose to hear questions. The Representative in the well is not allowed to ask questions of the body as a whole if the question requires a response.
  - j. To ask a question of the Representative in the well, a fellow Representative must first be recognized by the Speaker. To be recognized by the Speaker, the Representative shall stand, address the Speaker as "Mr. or Madam Speaker," and remain standing until recognized by the Speaker.
    - iii. The Speaker cannot ignore any Representative who has a question for the lady or gentleman in the well. The Speaker must recognize every Representative who seeks recognition to ask a question of the lady or gentleman in the well until the Representative in the well indicates that they no longer wish to occupy the well, or until the time limits expire.
    - iv. All questions asked by Representatives to the Representatives in the well must be free of opinions and bias and must only seek to clarify the text or intent of the legislation.
    - v. Once recognized, a Representative may ask as many questions as they wish as long as the Representative in the well continues to yield and any individual question does not exceed 30 seconds.
    - vi. When recognized by the Speaker for a question, one may ask the Representative in the well to yield their time in the well. The Representative in the well may inquire as to the purpose of the request. After hearing the reason for the request to yield the well, the Representative in the well can choose to yield the well or not to yield the well.

#### 4. Debate on Legislation

- a. Immediately following the speaking and question period on legislation, the house shall be open to discussion. The Speaker shall ask “Is there any discussion?”
  - i. NONE: If no one rises to speak, the Speaker shall assume there is no discussion to be had and proceed to motions by asking, “Seeing none, are there any motions?” (See section III for motions.)
  - ii. DISCUSSION: If discussion is to be had, the following procedures shall apply:
    1. The entirety of discussion on any one piece of legislation, not including motions, shall be limited to 5 minutes, and each Representative who wishes to speak shall be limited to 30 seconds of speaking per speech.
    2. Any Representative who wishes to speak shall be given the opportunity to speak before anyone is permitted to speak twice.
    3. Any number of Representatives may rise to be recognized by the Speaker at one time.
    4. A Representative may only speak a maximum of three times on a single piece of legislation each time it is considered in the House.
    5. Any Representative who wishes to speak on legislation must adhere to the following procedure:
      - a. After the Speaker asks a question to the effect of “Is there any discussion?”, or recognizes the end of the previous Representative’s speech, the Representative shall stand, address the Speaker as “Mr. or Madam Speaker,” and remain standing until recognized by the Speaker. To ensure fair administration of the discussion period, the Speaker shall not recognize any Representative who stands while the previous Representative is still speaking.
      - b. No Representative shall be allowed to speak or input their opinion on a matter until recognized by the Speaker.
      - c. Once a Representative is recognized to speak, all other Representatives who simultaneously stood should take their seats once again until the Representative is finished speaking. After the Representative has finished speaking and has taken his or her seat, any Representative may rise again to be recognized.
      - d. When speaking for or against legislation, all Representatives must stand where they are and direct their input to the Speaker only and not toward any other Representative including the sponsors of the legislation.
  - iii. MOTIONS: After discussion is finished or the time limit expires, subsidiary motions can be heard (see section III for motions). The only exceptions

are Moving the Previous Question which is used to end discussion abruptly, and Limiting/Extending Debate which is used to change the time limits of discussion.

These motions may be made during the discussion.

1. NONE: If no motions are made, the Speaker may move directly to a vote stating, “Hearing no motions, we will now move directly to a vote on this legislation. All those in favor...”
2. SUBSIDIARY MOTIONS: If a motion is to be made, the rules and procedures for motions shall be followed as outlined in section III. Motions.

## **5. Voting on Legislation**

- a. Process for Voting on Legislation:
  - i. Once any discussion is finished and any subsidiary motions voted on, the legislation shall be put up for a vote.
  - ii. If at any time before a vote takes place, the primary sponsor of legislation desires to remove their legislation from the docket, he or she shall have the freedom to do so.
  - iii. Resolutions, and bills, unless otherwise specified, require a simple majority vote to pass.
  - iv. Amendments to the House of Representatives Bylaws, or Parliamentary Procedures require a two-thirds majority vote to pass.
  - v. Constitutional Amendments require a two-thirds majority vote to pass.
  - vi. After the vote on a piece of legislation, the next piece of legislation repeats the process starting with the reading of legislation.
- b. Rules for Voting on Legislation:
  - i. A simple majority means more than half of the Representatives who cast their vote as aye or nay, not a majority of those present.
  - ii. A two-thirds majority means two-thirds of the Representatives who voted aye or nay, not two-thirds of the Representatives present.
  - iii. Abstentions are not included in the simple or two-thirds majority vote calculations.
  - iv. Vote totals shall be announced after every vote other than voice votes. After a sustained call for division during a voice vote, a tallied vote shall occur. During a tallied vote, the votes shall be counted individually, and the result of the vote announced to the body.
  - v. Representatives shall vote in the manner deemed most appropriate by the Speaker, usually via online platform such as TopHat.

## **6. Expedited Procedure**

The purpose of expedited procedure is for the House to consider legislation under simplified parliamentary procedure to allow for maximum legislative efficiency.

- a. Requirements for Expedited Procedure:
  - i. A motion for expedited procedure shall only be in order:

1. If the House has more than seven items of business (including legislation and nominations) on the agenda for a single meeting, or;
    2. If the House has been in session for more than one hour and thirty minutes, regardless of the number of items on the agenda, or;
    3. If approved at any other time under suspension of the rules (i.e. by a two-thirds majority vote);
  - ii. A motion for expedited procedure is an interruptible motion, requires a second and a simple majority vote of affirmation, and is not debatable, except that the Representative making the motion shall receive up to thirty seconds to explain the reasoning for the motion.
  - iii. If a motion for expedited procedure is not passed, the vote may not be reconsidered, and another such motion may not be made for the next fifteen minutes of the House session.
  - iv. Unless the House votes to move out of expedited procedure, the motion shall apply to the rest of the meeting at which it is made and sustained. After the meeting in which expedited procedure is invoked is adjourned, the full House of Representatives Parliamentary Procedure returns to full effect.
- b. Effect of a Sustained Motion for Expedited Procedure:
- i. If a motion for expedited procedure is approved by the House, the following rules shall apply, and shall supersede any contrary rules provided for in the normal parliamentary procedures:
    1. The sponsors of legislation shall be limited to four minutes to explain the legislation and two minutes to take questions.
    2. Debate on legislation shall be limited to six speakers, for up to thirty seconds each.
    3. No Representative may speak more than once during discussion on legislation or a motion to amend.
    4. All motions, except for motions to amend, shall be non-debatable and must be voted on immediately.
    5. Motions to amend shall be debated under the following rules:
      - a. The proposed text of the amendment shall be presented by voice to the Clerk. However, if the amendment is longer than one sentence or is not a strike (or series thereof), then the amendment must be presented to the Clerk in writing, either in person or electronically.
      - b. The sponsor of the amendment shall receive one minute to argue in favor of the amendment.
      - c. Up to four speakers, for up to thirty seconds each, may then speak in affirmation or negation of the amendment.
    6. The invocation of expedited procedure shall not limit the right of the assembly to move the previous question, limit debate, suspend the rules, or extend debate on any motion or legislation.

7. The invocation of expedited procedure shall not modify any House rules other than as explicitly provided above.
- ii. If a motion to move out of expedited procedure is not passed, the vote may not be reconsidered, and another such motion may not be made for the next fifteen minutes of the House session.
- c. Moving out of Expedited Procedure:
  - i. After expedited procedure has been invoked, the House may move out of expedited procedure upon a seconded motion and simple majority vote of affirmation. A motion to move out of expedited procedure is an interruptible motion, requires a second and a simple majority vote of affirmation, and is not debatable, except that the Representative making the motion shall receive up to thirty seconds to explain the reasoning for the motion.
  - ii. Once a Representative is recognized, any other Representatives who simultaneously stood should take their seats once again until the Representative is finished speaking. After the Representative has finished and any necessary steps have been taken to sustain or overrule the motion, any Representative may rise again to be recognized.
  - iii. When making a motion, all Representatives must stand where they are and direct their motion to the Speaker only and not toward any other Representatives.

## **SECTION II. MOTIONS**

1. Rules on Motions:
  - a. Any Representative who wished to make a motion must adhere to the following procedure:
    - i. The Representative shall stand, address the Speaker as “Mr. or Madam Speaker,” and remain standing until recognized by the Speaker. No Representative shall be allowed to speak or make their motion until recognized by the Speaker.
  - b. Seconding:
    - i. Any Representative may second a motion that requires it after the motion has been made.
    - ii. If a second is required and not immediately heard, the Speaker shall ask if there is a second: “A motion has been made to --. Is there a second?”
    - iii. If a second is required and not received, the motion will immediately die, and the floor shall be open to hear more motions. The Speaker shall say, “Hearing no second, the motion to -- will not be considered. Are there any other motions?”
  - c. Debating:



i. If a motion is debatable, a discussion is permitted following the same guidelines as discussion on legislation:

1. The entirety of discussion on any one motion shall be limited to 5 minutes, and each Representative who wishes to speak shall be limited to 30 seconds of speaking per speech.
2. Any Representative who wishes to speak shall be given the opportunity to speak before anyone is permitted to speak twice.
3. A Representative may only speak a maximum of three times on a single motion each time it is considered under a piece of legislation.
4. Any Representative who wishes to speak on a motion must adhere to the following procedure:
  - a. The Representative shall stand, address the Speaker as “Mr. or Madam Speaker,” and remain standing until recognized by the Speaker.
  - b. No Representative shall be allowed to speak or input their opinion on a motion until recognized by the Speaker.
  - c. Once a Representative is recognized to speak, all other Representatives who simultaneously stood should take their seats once again until the Representative is finished speaking. After the delegate has finished, any Representative may rise again to be recognized.
  - d. When speaking for or against a motion, all Representatives must stand where they are and direct

their input to the Speaker only and not toward any other Representatives including the sponsors of the legislation.

5. Any secondary subsidiary motions to be made can be brought up during discussion on a motion (ONLY moving the previous question or limiting/extending debate on a motion).
6. After discussion on a motion is finished or the time limit expires, the motion must be voted on.

d. Voting:

- i. Once any allowable discussion is finished, the motion shall be put up for a vote.
- ii. The number of votes necessary for the passing of a motion vary.
- iii. After the vote on any motion other than those to end discussion, the floor shall be open once again to hear other motions.
- iv. Rules for Voting on Motions as mirrored in section II.5.
- v. Voting on Legislation:
  1. A simple majority means more than half of the Representatives who cast their vote as aye or nay, not a majority of those present.
  2. A two-thirds majority means two-thirds of the Representatives who voted aye or nay, not two-thirds of the Representatives present.
  3. Abstentions are not included in the simple or two-thirds majority vote calculations.
  4. Vote totals shall be announced after every vote other than voice votes. After a sustained call for division during a voice vote, a tallied vote shall occur. During a tallied vote, the votes shall be counted individually, and the result of the vote announced to the body.

5. Representatives shall vote in the manner deemed most appropriate by the Speaker, usually Tophat.
- vi. The action taken after an affirmative vote varies depending on the motion made (see below).
- e. Rescinding a Motion: If a Representative does not understand the object or the effects of the motion they made or misspoke when making a motion, they have the privilege of immediately rescinding their motion before it is discussed or voted on. Once discussion or voting has begun, the motion cannot be rescinded.
2. Subsidiary Motions: All subsidiary motions require a second. Subsidiary motions cannot be used to interrupt and cannot be made until recognized by the chair. If a motion is debatable, a discussion on the motion is permitted but not required. If a motion is non-debatable, an immediate vote on the motion is required.
  - a. Lay on the Table: "I move to lay the question on the table." This motion would dispose of a main motion (legislation) until a motion to bring it from the table is made. The object of this motion is to move to enable the assembly to address more important motions. If tabled, legislation will remain on the table until the end of the next meeting. After this time, the legislation may only be brought back before the House through the Joint Committee on Research and Refinement, or through suspension of the rules. This motion should not be used to postpone a motion, rather a motion to postpone should be used. It is preferable to avoid moving to table a motion.
    - i. Rules:
      1. Is NOT debatable and must be voted on immediately.
      2. CANNOT have subsidiary motions applied to it.
      3. It can ONLY be applied to:
        - a. A main motion (legislation)
      4. Requires a SIMPLE MAJORITY vote
    - b. Move the Previous Question: "I move the previous question." This motion would bring the assembly to an immediate vote on the question, whether it is a main or subsidiary motion.
      - i. Rules:
        1. Is NOT debatable and must be voted on immediately.
        2. CANNOT have subsidiary motions applied to it.
        3. It can ONLY be applied to:
          - a. A main motion (legislation)
          - b. Debatable subsidiary options including:
            - i. Postpone to a Certain Time
            - ii. Recommit to Committee
            - iii. Amend
        4. Requires a 2/3 MAJORITY vote

- c. Limit or Extend Debate: "I move to limit/extend the debate to ..... " This motion would limit or extend the time period for discussion on a piece of legislation or other subsidiary motion.
  - i. Rules:
    - 1. NOT debatable and must be voted on immediately.
    - 2. CANNOT have subsidiary motions applied to it.
    - 3. It can ONLY be applied to:
      - a. A main motion (legislation)
      - b. Debatable subsidiary motion including:
        - i. Postpone to a Certain Time ii. Recommit to Committee iii. Amend
    - 4. Requires a SIMPLE MAJORITY vote
- d. Postpone to a Certain Time: "I move to postpone the legislation to/until ..... " This motion would delay action on legislation until a different day, meeting, hour, or until after a certain event. Then, when that time comes, the consideration of the question is picked up where it was left off when it was postponed.
  - i. Rules:
    - 1. DEBATABLE and can be discussed (see Section III.1.C. for "Debating.")
    - 2. CAN have appropriate subsidiary motions applied to it.
    - 3. It can ONLY be applied to:
      - a. A main motion (legislation) 4. Requires a SIMPLE MAJORITY vote
- e. Recommit to Committee: "I move to recommit this legislation to committee " This motion would send the legislation from the House back to its committee of origin if it is the House's opinion that more work needs to be done on the legislation. The original committee cannot send the same piece of legislation back to the House without significant alteration and an affirming vote by the committee.
  - i. Rules:
    - 1. DEBATABLE and can be discussed (see section III.1.C. for "Debating.")
    - 2. CAN have appropriate subsidiary motions applied to it.
    - 3. It can ONLY be applied to:
      - a. A main motion (legislation)
    - 4. Requires a SIMPLE MAJORITY vote
- f. Amend: "I move to amend this legislation to say..." This motion would amend the legislation to reflect whatever changes are suggested by the Representative making the motion.
  - i. Rules:
    - 1. If seconded, the Representative who motions for the amendment shall be allowed 1 minute to explain their amendment and take questions.

2. DEBATABLE and can be discussed (see section III.1.C. for “Debating.”) 4.  
CAN have appropriate subsidiary motions applied to it.
5. It can ONLY be applied to:
  - a. A main motion (legislation) 6.  
Requires a SIMPLE MAJORITY vote

### 3. INCIDENTAL MOTIONS:

- a. The following interjections may be made by a Representative at any time without being recognized by the Speaker. These motions are not debatable and cannot be amended or added to by any subsidiary motions. The second and votes required to sustain a motion vary based on the motion in question.
  - i. “Point of order.” – An interjection pointing out an infraction of the rules. Upon hearing this interjection, the Speaker shall ask the interjector to explain the reasoning behind the interjection. The Speaker shall then help correct the infraction if needed. NO second or vote is required. An appeal can be made and must be seconded and receive a 2/3 majority vote to overrule the Speaker’s decision on a point of order.
  - ii. “Point of Information/Inquiry.” – An interjection to request more information or clarify anything within a piece of legislation or within any governing documents such as House bylaws or parliamentary procedures. This motion should not replace the question-and-answer period when a Representative is speaking on their legislation but can supplement it if the period for questions has passed and further clarification is required during discussion. A point of information/inquiry can be directed toward the Speaker of the House, House Clerk, Parliamentarian, sponsor or cosponsor of legislation in question, or Representative who made the motion currently in discussion. NO second or vote is required.
  - iii. “Division.” – After a voice vote, before the gavel falls, a Representative may call for a tallied vote, by saying division. The Speaker may sustain the call for division if he or she stands in doubt as to the result of the voice vote. The Speaker may override a call for

division if he or she does not stand in doubt.  
NO second or vote is required to call a division.  
An appeal can be made and must be seconded  
and receive a 2/3 majority vote to overrule the  
Speaker's decision on a division.

iv. "Appeal." – This interjection may be  
used after any discretionary decision of the  
Speaker is made on an issue to call into  
question the Speaker's decision. Upon hearing  
this interjection, the Speaker shall

ask the interjector to explain the reasoning  
behind the interjection. The Speaker shall  
also be given a chance to explain their  
ruling if necessary. Both parties shall be  
given no more than 2 minutes each to  
speak before a vote is required. This  
motion requires a second and a 2/3  
majority vote of affirmation to overrule a  
Speaker's decision.

v. "I move to suspend the rules which..." –  
This motion may be used to temporarily  
change a rule within House of  
Representatives Parliamentary Procedure.  
Rules provided for in the House Bylaws, or  
Constitution cannot be suspended unless  
explicitly provided for therein. After the  
meeting in which the rules are suspended is  
adjourned, the full House of  
Representatives Parliamentary Procedure  
returns to full effect. This motion requires a  
second and a 2/3 majority vote of  
affirmation to be sustained.

vi. "I Object to the Consideration of..." –  
After legislation has been read, any  
Representative may object to the  
consideration of the legislation. Such a  
motion is made if a member believes that  
the consideration of the legislation in  
question is strongly undesirable and will  
harm the organization. This motion does  
NOT require a second and is not debatable  
but does require a 2/3 majority vote against  
the consideration of the legislation.

#### 4. PRIVILEGED MOTIONS

- a. The following motion may be made by a Representative without being recognized by the Speaker. This motion does NOT require a second or a vote and is NOT debatable.
  - i. “Point of personal privilege...” This interjection may be used to request something unrelated to the question at hand. Representatives may use this interjection to petition any sort of preference such as lighting, air conditioning temperatures, or microphone use. This also includes reading more than just the “Be it resolved” clauses. (See section II.2.b. Reading the Legislation.) The Speaker shall decide, at his or her discretion, whether to sustain the interjection. An appeal can be made and must be seconded and receive a 2/3 majority vote to overrule the Speaker’s decision on a point of personal privilege.
- b. The following motions may be used by any Representative when recognized by the Speaker if there is not a question at hand, unless otherwise provided. These motions DO require a second and a simple majority vote of affirmation. These motions are NOT debatable.
  - i. “I move the House temporarily recess.” – This motion may be used to initiate a small break in business, including while legislation is at hand. This motion does not end the meeting for the day. This motion suspends the meeting for a brief period, not exceeding ten minutes.
  - ii. “I move the House adjourn.” – This motion may be used to end a meeting. Once one of these motions is sustained, the meeting is over, and the House cannot begin another meeting for the rest of the day.
  - iii. “I move the House adjourn sine die.” – This motion may be used to end a session. After this motion is sustained, the House may not begin another meeting until the next academic semester.

## 5. RESTORATIVE MOTIONS

- a. The following motions can be made to allow an assembly to change its mind on a matter. These allow the assembly to bring up a question again. These motions require a second and a simple majority vote to be sustained.
  - i. “I move to reconsider the vote...” – This motion may be used to void a previous vote, and re-vote on that question. Only votes taken during the same meeting can be reconsidered. Votes to sustain a motion or affirm legislation may only be reconsidered immediately after voting has taken place. This motion requires a second and a simple majority vote of affirmation to be sustained. This motion is NOT debatable, but the Representative making the motion shall be permitted up to 30 seconds to explain his/her reasoning for the motion.
  - ii. “I move to take off the table...” – This motion would take off the table a main motion (legislation) previously tabled. This motion can only apply to legislation that has already been tabled. This motion requires a second and a simple majority vote of affirmation to be sustained. This motion is NOT debatable.

### **SECTION III. NOTES**

1. Any question not specifically addressed in these Parliamentary Procedures shall be up to the discretion of the Speaker with the counsel of the Clerk and/or Parliamentarian and the guidance of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR), The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure (TSC), Demeter’s Manual of Parliamentary Law and Procedure (Demeter), and/or Mason’s Manual of Legislative Procedure.

### **SECTION IV. Official Testimonies and Confirmations**

1. Order of Official Testimonies



- a. Nominees requiring legislative confirmation and persons delivering official reports may address the House without requiring a motion to suspend rules, provided:
    - i. The Speaker's approval is obtained before the House meeting
    - ii. The Speaker has notified the House's members of the scheduled testimony
- 2. Speaking Rules for Official Testimonies
  - a. The person giving testimony shall have up to 10 minutes to speak, unless there is a motion to extend
  - b. Representatives may ask questions following the same procedures outlined in Section I.3
- 3. Chamber Access During Confirmations
  - a. Upon completion of testimony and questions, nominees shall exit the chamber
  - b. Nominees may only re-enter the chamber upon the Speaker's invitation
- 4. Voting on Confirmations
  - a. After testimony and questions for confirmation hearings:
    - i. The House shall move to the time of discussion following procedures in Section I.4
    - ii. Confirmation votes require a simple majority unless otherwise specified in governing documents
    - iii. Vote totals shall be announced following procedures in Section I.5