

RULE SEVEN

COMMITTEES

7.1 - Open Meetings

All meetings of all committees and subcommittees shall be open to the public, subject to the authority of the Chair to maintain order and decorum. A Chair, with the approval of the Speaker, may close a committee or subcommittee meeting or portion thereof, and the record of such meeting may not disclose the identity of the witness appearing before the committee or subcommittee, if necessary to preserve physical security, including the protection of a witness.

7.2 - Notice of Meetings

(a) All committees and subcommittees shall provide, in a manner reasonably calculated to give actual notice to interested persons, at least forty-eight (48) hours notice of a meeting. Notice of the meeting shall be published through an appropriate, public medium such as the House web site or electronic mail. In case of emergency, with the approval of the Speaker, a meeting may be held with notice appropriate to the circumstances. The Speaker shall announce and describe the emergency.

(b) A notice shall state the date, time and place of a meeting and shall include a listing and sufficient title for identification of any and all bills to be considered by the committee or subcommittee holding the meeting. The bill author and the members of the committee or subcommittee shall be provided separate notice.

(c) If a committee or subcommittee is scheduled for a regular meeting, but does not plan to meet, a notice stating that no meeting is to be held shall be posted.

7.3 - Timing of Meetings

(a) Committees and subcommittees shall meet at the call of the committee Chair within the dates, times and locations designated by the Speaker.

(b) No committee or subcommittee shall sit during a floor session of the House without special leave from the Speaker.

7.4 - Authority of the Chair

(a) The committee or subcommittee Chair shall sign all vouchers or reports required or permitted by these Rules. The committee Chair shall sign all subpoenas as provided in Section 7.13.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, the Chair has all authority necessary to ensure the efficient operation of the committee or subcommittees, including, but not limited to, presiding over the committee or subcommittees, establishing the calendar for the committee or subcommittees, recognition of members or presenters, deciding all questions of order in committee or subcommittees and determining the order in which matters are considered in committee or subcommittees. All standing and special committees and subcommittees shall be governed by the House Rules applicable to committee proceedings.

(c) The Chair shall exercise all authority necessary to maintain order and decorum, including the authority to require all persons present to silence all electronic devices and to request the Sergeant at Arms to clear the committee room of a person or persons causing disruption.

(d) In case of a Chair's absence, the Vice-Chair shall assume all duties of the Chair until the Chair's return or replacement.

7.5 - Procedure

(a) When considering legislation or conducting other business, committees and subcommittees shall observe the following procedures:

1. The Chair shall cause to be created an official report recording the ayes and the nays as required by Section 7.7 of this Rule.

2. No person shall address the committee or subcommittee unless first recognized by the Chair for that purpose.

3. All motions offered in a committee or a subcommittee meeting shall require a second to receive further consideration.

4. A committee or subcommittee may only take up bills or resolutions for consideration if a quorum of the committee or subcommittee is present. A quorum is a majority of the members of the committee or subcommittee, excluding the ex officio

members of the committee or subcommittee, but the ex officio members may count toward the presence of a quorum in a committee or its subcommittees.

5. If and when a bill or resolution is taken up for consideration, the House author shall be recognized for explanation of the bill or resolution if he or she so desires.

6. The House author shall be given the opportunity to answer questions put by members of the committee or other persons recognized by the Chair.

7. The Chair shall provide opportunity for presentation of amendments to the bill or resolution by the House author, any member of the committee, or any other Member of the House, as governed by Section 7.6 of this Rule.

8. Amendments shall be considered in the order they appear in the bill or resolution, or in the order they are presented to the committee. The Chair shall resolve any conflict resulting from claimed priority of presentation.

9. The author of an amendment shall explain the amendment and be afforded the opportunity to answer questions about the amendment put by members of the committee, the author of the bill or resolution or other persons recognized by the Chair.

10. The Chair may recognize any person for comment on the proposed legislation or amendments thereto. The Chair may limit the amount of time for any such comment.

(b) The Chair of a parent committee may refer to a subcommittee or reassign from a subcommittee any legislation, proposal or inquiry; provided, however, no subcommittee shall be permitted to report directly to the House, but rather shall report to the parent committee.

(c) Except for legislation recommended by the Appropriations and Budget Committee, all legislation originating in the House which is recommended by a committee to the full House shall contain a complete Title and an Enacting or Resolving Clause.

7.6 - Amendments

(a) Committees and subcommittees may only consider amendments presented in final written form prior to adoption.

(b) Any Member of the House may offer an amendment to any bill or resolution being considered by any committee or subcommittee and shall be recognized to introduce the amendment. If not a member of the committee or subcommittee, a Member who offers an amendment must comply with the amendment filing deadline of this Rule and be present at the meeting at which the amendment is considered. If the Member is not present, the amendment may only be considered if taken up and offered by a member of the committee or subcommittee.

(c) Any Member offering an amendment, including a member of the committee or subcommittee, must submit the proposed amendment in electronic form to the Chair by 4:30 p.m. the legislative day before the meeting of the committee or subcommittee. This rule may be suspended for amendments submitted by Members who are not members of the committee or subcommittee by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of a quorum of the committee or subcommittee. The Chair may, at his or her discretion, waive or set a later deadline than contained in this rule for amendments submitted by members of the committee or subcommittee.

(d) Amendments to any bill or resolution under consideration by a committee or subcommittee shall be germane to the subject of the introduced bill or resolution and as approved by any committee shall be incorporated into the printed bill or resolution the same as if included in the introduced bill or resolution.

7.7 - Voting

(a) All votes in committees or subcommittees shall be conducted in open public meetings of that committee, except that two-thirds (2/3) of the members of any standing or special committee, including ex officio members, may report a bill or resolution out of committee by signing a written report. If a written report is prepared by a member other than the Chair of the committee, a written notice that a report is being prepared shall be given to the Chair prior to the circulation of the report for signatures.

(b) Only the vote on recommendation for final passage out of committee to the full House concerning a bill or resolution shall be by recorded vote. Recommendation for final passage out of committee shall require a majority vote of a quorum of the members of the committee. As used in this section,

"recommendation for final passage out of committee" means a "Do Pass", "Do Pass as Amended" or a "Do Not Pass" motion. A "Do Pass" motion takes precedence over any other motions for final passage.

(c) Only those committee members present may vote on any matter. No person shall cast a vote on behalf of any committee member eligible to vote in any House committee.

7.8 - Committee Recommendations

(a) "Do Pass". When any committee returns a bill or resolution with the recommendation of "Do Pass", the same shall be printed and placed on the Calendar in numerical order by bill or resolution number under the heading "Bills on General Order", "Joint Resolutions on General Order", "Bills on Consent Calendar" or "Joint Resolutions on Consent Calendar", as the case may be.

(b) "Do Not Pass". When any committee returns a bill or resolution with the recommendation of "Do Not Pass", this shall constitute final action.

(c) If a committee does not return a bill or resolution with the recommendation of either "Do Pass" or "Do Not Pass", the bill or resolution remains the property of the committee, unless the bill or resolution is placed directly on the Calendar by the Speaker or is discharged pursuant to Section 7.12.

7.9 - Public Hearing

(a) After assignment to a standing or special committee, a bill or resolution shall be considered in a public hearing followed by a recommendation vote under the following procedures:

1. submission of a written request that is signed by a majority of the members of the committee or subcommittee if the principal author is a member of the committee or subcommittee, or

2. submission of a written request that is signed by a majority of the members of the committee or subcommittee plus the principal author if the principal author is not a member of the committee or subcommittee to which the measure in question was assigned.

(b) Ex officio members of a committee or subcommittee may sign such written requests and shall count towards the necessary signatures as required by this section.

(c) The written request for a hearing and recommendation vote shall be submitted to the Chief Clerk of the House. The Chief Clerk shall determine if the written request contains the necessary signatures as required by this section. If the written request contains the necessary signatures, the Chief Clerk shall forward the written request to the appropriate committee or subcommittee Chair who shall set the date and time of the hearing.

(d) The notice of the date and time of such hearing shall be publicly announced by the Chair. Such time and date shall not be less than three (3) legislative days from the date such request was received by the Chair, unless such time and date would prohibit consideration of the bill or resolution in accordance with Section 7.5 or 7.10 of this Rule.

7.10 - Consideration of House Bills and Joint Resolutions

(a) After assignment to a standing or special committee, the principal author of a bill or resolution introduced on or prior to the filing deadline of the First Regular Session and the principal author of a bill or resolution introduced after the filing deadline of the First Regular Session and on or prior to the filing deadline of the Second Regular Session shall be entitled to have such bill or joint resolution considered by a vote of the committee at least four (4) legislative days prior to the final date for Third Reading in the First Regular Session or for Third Reading in the Second Regular Session respectively under the following procedures:

1. submission of a written request that is signed by a majority of the members of the committee if the principal author is a member of the committee or one of the subcommittees of the committee, or

2. submission of a written request that is signed by a majority of the members of the committee plus the principal author if the principal author is not a member of the committee or subcommittee to which the measure in question was assigned.

(b) Ex officio members of a committee may sign such written requests and shall count towards the necessary signatures as required by this section.

(c) The written requests provided for by this section shall be submitted to the Chief Clerk of the House. The Chief Clerk shall determine if the written request contains the necessary signatures. If the written request contains the necessary signatures, the Chief Clerk shall forward the written request to the appropriate committee chair.

7.11 - Bill Summary

(a) All bills and resolutions whose adoption will have a fiscal impact, including the affecting of revenues, expenditures or fiscal liability shall not be scheduled for floor consideration unless accompanied by a bill summary which shall include a fiscal analysis. The fiscal analysis contained within a bill summary shall state in dollars the estimated increase or decrease in revenues or expenditures and the present and future fiscal implications of the bill. The bill summary shall not express comment or opinion relative to the merits of the legislation proposed, but should point out technical or mechanical defects.

(b) All bills affecting any retirement system authorized by law shall be accompanied by a bill summary which shall include an estimate of the cost and actuarial analysis of the measure upon being reported favorably by any standing committee unless the actuarial analysis for the bill is governed by the Oklahoma Pension Legislation Actuarial Analysis Act. The estimate and actuarial analysis shall be prepared by the actuary of the Legislative Service Bureau.

(c) If any bill of the type delineated in subsections (a) and (b) of this section is scheduled for floor consideration without a bill summary having been prepared, it shall be the right of any Member to raise a point of order on the Floor and the Presiding Officer may, in his or her discretion, order return of the bill to the appropriate committee. The accuracy of a fiscal or actuarial analysis contained within the bill summary shall not be a basis for a point of order under these Rules.

7.12 - Discharge from Committee

(a) Any bill or resolution may be discharged from any standing committee of the House upon a written request signed by two-thirds (2/3) of the Members of the House.

(b) The written request for discharge of a bill or resolution shall be submitted to the Chief Clerk of the House. The Chief Clerk shall determine if the written request contains the necessary signatures as required by this section. If the written request contains the necessary signatures, the Chief Clerk shall forward the written request to the Speaker who shall place the bill or resolution on the appropriate Calendar. The Chief Clerk shall publish the signatures on the House web site.

7.13 - Oversight Powers and Responsibilities of Committees and Subcommittees

(a) Committees and subcommittees are authorized:

1. to maintain a continuous review of the work of the state agencies concerned with their subject areas and the performance of the functions of government within each subject area,

2. to invite public officials, public employees and private individuals to appear before the committees or subcommittees to submit information,

3. to request reports from departments and agencies performing functions reasonably related to the committees' jurisdictions,

4. to complete the interim projects assigned by the Speaker, and

5. to conduct such other business as directed by the Speaker.

(b) Each committee or subcommittee has the reasonable right and authority to inspect and investigate the books, records, papers, documents, data, operation and physical plant of any public agency in this state.

(c) In order to carry out the duties of the committee and its subcommittees, the Chair of each committee with approval of the Speaker may issue subpoenas duces tecum and other necessary process to compel the attendance of witnesses either before the committee or subcommittee or at deposition and the production of any books, letters or other documentary evidence required by such committee. The Chair, Vice-Chair, or a member designated by the Chair or Vice-Chair may administer all oaths and affirmations to witnesses who appear before such committees to testify in any matter requiring evidence.

7.14 - Conference Committees

(a) The House Chairs, Vice-Chairs and members of a conference committee shall be appointed by the Speaker. Once appointed, the Chair of the committee shall determine its procedures, subject to the provisions of this section.

(b) Signatures on conference committee reports may only be solicited by and given to members of the committee, the author or co-author of the bill or resolution, or House staff members.

7.15 - Conference Committee Reports

(a) A conference committee report shall be considered by the House only when a majority of both the House and Senate members of the committee have signed the report. The House shall consider the report only if it is limited to matters germane to the bill or resolution.

(b) Motions to adopt or reject a conference committee report shall be set on a separate conference committee calendar. A motion to adopt or reject a conference committee report shall be subject to debate. Such debate shall be limited to one (1) hour, equally divided between the proponents and the opponents of the motion, provided that no Member may speak for more than ten (10) minutes.

(c) No House conference committee report shall be filed unless it is accompanied by a separate summary of the changes made to the bill or resolution sent to conference.

(d) Prior to consideration, a House conference committee report shall lie over twenty-four (24) hours after it is filed. A summary of changes including a fiscal analysis of the conference committee report must be available prior to consideration of the report by the House. No House conference committee report shall be considered for adoption if Members of the House have not been provided a printed or electronically transmitted copy of the report twenty-four (24) hours before consideration of the report. The requirements of this paragraph shall not be applicable on the last two (2) days of any legislative session once the date of sine die adjournment has been established.

7.16 - Publication of Records

All records required by the provisions of this Rule shall be made available on the House web site at least for the duration of the Session.