Congressional Research Service
Informing the legislative debate since 1914

Questions of the Privileges of the House: An Analysis

Updated August 5, 2015

Congressional Research Service
https://crsreports.congress.gov
R44005

CRS REPORT
Prepared for Members and
Committees of Congress

Summary

A *question of the privileges of the House* is a formal declaration by a Member of the House asserting that a situation has arisen affecting "the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity and the integrity of its proceedings." Once a question of the privileges of the House is raised, the Speaker must, at some point, entertain the question and rule on its validity. The Speaker makes such a ruling with guidance from the House Parliamentarian based on House rule and precedent. If it is ruled to be valid, a question of the privileges of the House will be considered and possibly voted on by the House.

The notion of questions of privilege predates Congress, but the House demonstrated a reluctance to define such a question for over a century. The chamber eventually found it necessary to create a definition as part of a rule that would prevent Members from consuming floor time under the pretext of raising a question of the privileges of the House. Despite the creation of the rule, however, raising a question of the privileges of the House continues to allow any Member to be recognized and to have a resolution read on the floor, even if the question is later ruled not to be valid.

Questions recognized as valid comprise several categories, such as:

- questions related to the organization of the House and the rights of Members to their seats or leadership positions,
- questions related to the House's constitutional prerogatives, such as their power to originate revenue legislation,
- questions related to the conduct of Members, officers, and employees of the House,
- questions related to the integrity of the legislative process, both in committee and on the House floor, and
- questions related to the comfort, convenience, and safety of Members.

Certain categories of questions have been held not to constitute valid questions of the privileges of the House, such as questions that are tantamount to a change in House rules, questions that seek to alter or prescribe a special rule reported from the House Rules Committee, and questions expressing legislative sentiment.

From the 104th Congress through the 113th Congress, Members offered 140 questions of the privileges of the House, 73% of which were ruled valid. The number of valid questions offered each Congress varied significantly, with some Congresses considering as few as two and others considering more than 20. The minority party offered 72% of the total number of valid questions, and the proportion of questions offered by the minority remained consistent during most of the period.

How valid questions were disposed of during this time period varied significantly depending on whether the Member offering the question belonged to the majority or the minority party. A majority of questions offered by the majority party were agreed to, while a majority of the questions offered by the minority party were tabled, meaning that the House chose to dispose of the resolution adversely but without taking a vote on the resolution.

A contrast exists between the types of questions raised and the types of questions agreed to by the House. The greatest number of valid questions raised related to the conduct of Members, officers, and employees of the House (39%) and to the House's constitutional prerogatives, such as their

power to originate revenue legislation (23%). Of the resolutions agreed to, however, most (78%) related to the House's constitutional prerogatives, while a relative few (9%) related to conduct.

Contents

Introduction 1
Restrictions Governing When Questions of the Privileges of the House Can Come to the Floor 2
House Action in the Event That the Question Is Ruled Not Valid 3
House Action in the Event That the Question Is Ruled Valid 3
Decorum During Debate 4
Subjects Constituting Valid Questions of the House 5
Common Categories of Questions Held to Be Valid 6
Categories of Questions Held Not to Be Valid 9
Data on Questions Offered and House Action 10
Data on Categories of Questions Offered and Agreed To 12
Conclusion 14

Figures

Figure 1. Questions Offered Each Congress, Total and by the Minority 10
Figure 2. House Action on Questions Offered by the Majority Party 11
Figure 3. House Action on Questions Offered by the Minority Party 12
Figure 4. Categories of Questions Offered 13
Figure 5. Categories of Questions Agreed To 14

Appendixes

Appendix A. Scripts of Parliamentary Language Used on the Floor 16
Appendix B. Questions of the Privileges of the House (105th Congress-113th Congress [1995-2014]) 18

Contacts

Author Information 55

Introduction

A *question of the privileges of the House* is a formal declaration by a Member of the House asserting that a situation has arisen that affects "the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings."[1] When making the declaration, the Member submits a resolution providing detail on the situation and typically urging action of some sort.

A question of privilege has been held to take precedence over all questions except a motion to adjourn. In explaining this unique privilege, House Speaker Thomas Reed said:

> The rights and privileges of all the Members of the House, in the discharge of their functions, are sacred, and the House can undertake no higher duty than the conservation of all those rights and privileges intact. And even if the case arises under dubious circumstances, it is proper for the House to pause and give suitable heed to any question which any Member raises with regard to his rights and privileges as a Member. It is for the House alone to determine what they are.[2]

Once a question of the privileges of the House is raised, the Speaker must, at some point, entertain the question and rule on its validity.[3] The Speaker makes a ruling regarding whether a question constitutes a valid question of the privileges of the House with guidance from the House Parliamentarian based on House Rule IX and House precedent. If valid, a question of the privileges of the House will be considered on the House floor.

The first section of this report provides information on raising and considering such questions to provide assistance in anticipating potential House action. Information is provided on restrictions governing when a question can be raised and when the Speaker must rule on the question's validity. Further information is provided on actions the House may take after the Speaker's ruling on the question's validity, including how the House may consider and dispose of a valid question. **Appendix A** provides scripts of parliamentary language used on the House floor when such a question is raised.

The second section of this report focuses on the content of questions in an effort to provide guidance as to what the Speaker may determine constitutes a valid question. It includes information on, and examples of, types of questions that have been ruled valid and not valid. **Appendix B** provides a list of all valid questions offered in the past two decades.

The final section of the report provides extensive data on questions raised in the past two decades, such as the number of valid questions raised per Congress and the proportion of questions offered by the minority party. In addition, this section provides data on how valid questions were

---

[1] As stated in House Rule IX. House rules provide for questions of personal privilege that are not covered in this report. For more information on questions of personal privilege, see CRS Report 98-411, *Questions of Privilege in the House*, by James V. Saturno.

[2] Speaker Thomas B. Reed, quoted in Asher C. Hinds, *Hinds' Precedents of the House of Representatives of the United States* (Washington: GPO, 1907), (hereafter *Hinds'*) vol. III, §2524. Questions of privilege encompass both questions of the privileges of the House as well as questions of personal privilege that are not covered in this report. For more information on questions of personal privilege, see CRS Report 98-411, *Questions of Privilege in the House*, by James V. Saturno.

[3] While questions of the privileges of the House are typically offered on the House floor when the question is raised, a Member may also introduce such a resolution through the hopper. According to House precedent, "matters properly involving questions of the privileges of the House retain their privilege and may be reached by use of a motion to discharge even though referred through the hopper." *Deschler's Precedents of the United States House of Representatives*, H. Doc. 94-661, 94th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington: GPO, 1977), vol. 5, ch. 18, §5, p. 28 (hereafter *Deschler's*).

disposed of, which varied significantly depending on whether the Member offering the question belonged to the majority or the minority party. This section also includes information on the categories of questions offered, as well as the categories of questions ultimately agreed to by the House.

Restrictions Governing When Questions of the Privileges of the House Can Come to the Floor

House Rule IX states that under most circumstances, a Member must give notice of his or her intention to raise a question of the privileges of the House. Within two legislative days of giving such notice, the Member will be recognized to offer the resolution.[4] In practice, the Member will be notified of the date and time when he or she should rise to offer the resolution after having given notice.[5]

Under specific circumstances, however, a question of the privileges of the House has precedence to interrupt the daily flow of business. In these situations, the Speaker will make an immediate ruling as to the validity of the question, and if valid, the question is privileged for immediate floor consideration. The three circumstances comprise:

1. A resolution that has been reported from committee;
2. A resolution that has been offered on the floor by the majority leader or the minority leader; or
3. A resolution that has been offered as privileged under the Origination Clause, which is the House's constitutional right to originate all revenue measures (Article I, Section 7, clause 1, of the Constitution).[6]

Despite this privilege, under House precedent some restrictions govern when a question can be raised on the floor. For example, a question of the privileges of the House cannot be raised in Committee of the Whole.[7] Also, a Member rising to a question of privilege is not permitted to take the floor from another Member who has already been recognized for debate.[8] Likewise, a question of privilege may not interrupt a roll call or yea-or-nay vote,[9] and a Member may not rise to a question of privileges during a call of the House in the absence of a quorum unless it relates

[4] The rule was amended in the 103rd Congress (1993) to authorize the Speaker to designate a time within two days for the consideration of a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or minority leader after that Member has announced an intention to do so. In the 106th Congress the rule was changed to permit the announcement of the resolution to be dispensed with by unanimous consent (H.Res. 5 [106th Congress], January 6, 1999.

[5] Under House precedent, a Member's announcement of intent to offer such a resolution may take precedence over a special rule reported from the House Committee on Rules, but if a special rule is pending, announcements are counted against debate on the resolution, absent unanimous consent to the contrary. U.S. Congress, *Constitution, Jefferson's Manual, and Rules of the House of Representatives*, H.Doc. 112-161, 112th Cong., 2nd sess. (Washington: GPO, 2013), §709 (hereafter *House Manual*).

[6] House precedents note an occasion on which the presiding officer deferred ruling on the validity of a question of the privileges of the House while he "looked into [the matter] further." *Deschler's*, vol. 3, ch. 11, §6.2, p. 45.

[7] *Deschler's*, vol. 3, ch. 11, §4.3. The Committee of the Whole is the House of Representatives operating on the House floor as a committee on which every Member of the House serves. For more information see CRS Report RS20147, *Committee of the Whole: An Introduction*, by Judy Schneider.

[8] *Hinds'*, vol. V, §5002. However, a Member who has been previously recognized for debate may yield time for preliminary debate on the question. *Deschler's*, vol. 3, ch. 11, §23.3.

[9] *Hinds',* vol. IV, §§6051, 6058.

to the immediate proceedings.[10] Moreover, in the event that a question of privilege is pending, another Member will not be recognized to raise a different question of the privileges of the House.[11]

House Action in the Event That the Question Is Ruled Not Valid

If the Speaker rules that the question does not qualify as a valid question of the privileges of the House, the House may move to different business. Any Member who disagrees with the ruling, however, may appeal, allowing the House to decide if the decision of the Speaker will stand as the judgment of the House.[12] If the appeal is successful, the House would consider the question of the privileges of the House. Very often, however, a motion is made to table the appeal, and the House votes instead on the motion to table.

In the event that a question has been ruled not valid, a Member may attempt to introduce a different resolution that may meet the criteria of a valid question of the privileges of the House. Alternatively, the Member may instead use other means of communicating concern, such as periods designated for non-legislative debate (special order speeches, one-minute speeches, and morning hour debate).[13] Information on the content of questions ruled valid and not valid can be found below.

House Action in the Event That the Question Is Ruled Valid

Once the Speaker rules the question to be valid (or the House overrules the Speaker's ruling that the resolution is not valid), the House may take any number of actions on the resolution, either immediately or after debate occurs.

A question of the privileges of the House is considered under the "hour rule," which means generally that a maximum of one hour of debate may occur on the resolution.[14] Debate time is divided between (a) the proponent of the resolution and (b) the majority leader, the minority leader, or a designee, as determined by the Speaker. Each controls 30 minutes of time and may yield portions of that time to Members wishing to speak on the resolution. Members must confine remarks in debate to the question raised.[15] While uncommon, during consideration of the resolution, amendments may be offered but only (1) if the amendment is offered by the Member raising the question of privilege, (2) if the Member raising the question yields to a Member for

[10] *Hinds',* vol. III, §2545.

[11] William Holmes Brown, Charles W. Johnson, and John V. Sullivan, *House Practice: A Guide to the Rules, Precedents and Procedures of the House* (Washington: GPO, 2011), p. 720 (hereafter *House Practice*).

[12] Under early custom, the Speaker would not rule on whether a question constituted a question of the privileges of the House but would instead submit the question to the House. *Hinds',* vol. III, §2718, and *House Manual* §713.

[13] For more information on periods designated for non-legislative debate in the House, see CRS Report RS21174, *Special Order Speeches and Other Forms of Non-Legislative Debate in the House*, by Judy Schneider.

[14] *Deschler's*, vol. 3, ch. 11, §7.1. The House, by unanimous consent, can always structure the consideration of a question of the privileges of the House in a way that varies from House rules. For example, on July 15, 2008, a Member asked unanimous consent that when considering the resolution, the previous question be ordered without intervening motion except one motion to refer and one motion to table (which have precedence in the order stated) and that the Speaker may postpone further proceedings on such a vote on either motion. Also, on October 8, 1998, by unanimous consent, the House allowed two hours of debate on a question of privileges of the House. In addition, on September 18, 1997, the House agreed by unanimous consent to debate the resolution for 20 minutes.

[15] *Deschler's*, vol. 3, ch. 11, §7.2.

the purpose of offering an amendment, or (3) in the event that the previous question (described below) is not successful.[16]

At the end of the hour (or before), a Member may "move the previous question," which is a non-debatable motion that seeks to bring debate on the resolution to a close.[17] If the House defeats the previous question, another hour of debate would occur, and amendments could be offered. If the House votes to agree to the previous question, a vote on agreeing to the resolution typically follows.

To prevent further consideration of the resolution and/or a vote on agreement, a Member may make a motion to lay the resolution on the table. While the motion to table may be offered while the resolution is under debate, it is often made immediately after consideration begins. While tabling a resolution is considered a final adverse disposition of that particular resolution, the question may be rephrased and presented anew on a subsequent day.[18]

Instead of voting on the resolution, the House may choose to refer the resolution to a committee. A Member may offer this motion, which is debatable for up to an hour, in an attempt to send the resolution to committee for further work or consideration and may even include specific instructions to the underlying committee. The motion may refer the resolution to one or more standing committees without regard to the usual rules governing committee jurisdiction, or it may seek to refer to a committee that is established pursuant to the motion.

A Member could make a motion to postpone consideration of the resolution, although this is uncommon for questions of the privileges of the House in the modern Congress. A motion to postpone is debatable for up to an hour. If agreed to by the House, a motion to postpone the resolution would suspend consideration of the measure either indefinitely or until a specific time, depending on the language used in the motion.

Additionally, a sponsor may choose to withdraw a resolution after it has been offered. This does not require unanimous consent; the Member has the right to withdraw the resolution offered even after debate has occurred.[19]

Decorum During Debate

By their nature, questions of the privileges of the House address perceived threats to the dignity or integrity of the chamber that have the potential to be controversial and contentious. House rules and precedents require that decorum be maintained during debate. Rule XVII, clause 1(b) states that remarks in debate shall be confined to the question under debate. The Speaker often

[16] While also uncommon during consideration of the resolution, a motion to recommit is in order pending or after the ordering of the previous question, although it is not debatable after the ordering of the previous question. *House Manual*, §713.

[17] The Member offering the resolution, not the Member who may be named in the resolution, has the right to close debate. For example, on July 24, 2002, Representative James Traficant, who was named in the resolution, made a parliamentary inquiry related to his right to close. Specifically, he asked, "Mr. Speaker, do I go last, since I am the subject of the demise?" The presiding officer noted that it was the Member raising the resolution (Representative Joel Hefley) who had the right to close debate.

[18] *House Practice*, p. 735. For example, in the 105th Congress, Representative Richard Gephardt raised a question of the privileges of the House concerning an election contest in the 46th district of California that was disposed of by a motion to table. The next day, he raised a virtually identical question of privilege that omitted three commas from the legislative text that had appeared in the resolution of the day prior (H.Res. 315 [105th Congress] and H.Res. 318 [105th Congress], respectively). The second resolution was also tabled.

[19] For example, on October 27, 2000, Representative Don Young withdrew such a resolution after considerable debate had occurred.

states that Members should refrain from references in debate to conduct of other sitting Members and, in addition, specifies that indecent language either against the proceedings of the House or its membership is out of order.[20] When a question of the privileges of the House is raised, the prohibition on debate referencing the conduct of a Member or the House may become complicated. Because of this, the Speaker often states that an exception to the general rule is in order but that it is closely limited. Specifically, the Speaker states that, while a wide range of discussion is permitted during debate on such a resolution, the rule still "prohibits the use of language which is personally abusive." The Speaker states that this extends to language that is "profane, vulgar, or obscene and to comportment which constitutes a breach of decorum."[21]

Once a question of the privileges of the House is no longer pending, the House prohibition against references in debate to the official conduct of other Members where such conduct is not under consideration is restored, and the prohibition applies to debate that includes reciting the content of a resolution raising a question of the privileges of the House that is no longer pending.

Debate on questions of the privileges of the House has sometimes become more raucous than is typical on the House floor. One example occurred during debate on a question of privileges of the House related to the actions of a committee chairman who had requested that the Capitol Police remove minority-party committee Members from a committee room.[22] A Member objected to the remarks of another Member and demanded that the "words be taken down" because they violated the House's rules on decorum. The offending Member then asked unanimous consent to withdraw his remarks.[23]

Another example occurred in the 113th Congress when a Member raised a question condemning the behavior of a committee chairman during a hearing. Dozens of Members gathered behind the Member raising the question, holding electronic devices displaying pictures of the specified committee chairman during the hearing. The presiding officer suspended consideration several times, informing Members that consideration would be delayed until Members lowered their displays and decorum was restored, and he reminded Members that under House precedent, Members may not stage an exhibition.[24]

Subjects Constituting Valid Questions of the House

House precedent states, "The tradition of Anglo-American parliamentary procedure recognizes the privileged status of questions related to the honor and security of a deliberate body and its Members."[25] While the notion of questions of privilege predates Congress, the House

[20] For example, see House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 148 (July 24, 2002), p. H5375.

[21] Ibid.

[22] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 149 (July 18, 2003), p. H7154.

[23] "A Member may demand that the words of another Member be taken down. This typically takes place during debate when one Member believes another Member has violated the rules of decorum in the House. The request requires that the Member's remarks be read to the House so that the Speaker may determine whether they are offensive or otherwise violate the rules of the House. If the Speaker determines that the words are out of order, the violator is customarily given a chance to withdraw or amend them, and the Member may ask the House for *unanimous consent* to strike the words from the *Congressional Record*. If there is objection, a motion may be offered to strike the words from the debate. Upon the demand that the words be taken down, the alleged violator must immediately sit down and await the Speaker's decision. A Member whose words have been ruled out of order may not speak again on the same day without the House's permission, but the Member can vote." As stated in CRS Report RL32207, *Commonly Used Motions and Requests in the House of Representatives*, by Christopher M. Davis.

[24] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 160 (March 13, 2014), p. H2408.

[25] *Deschler's*, vol. 3, ch. 11, §1.

demonstrated a historical reluctance to define such a question as early as 1795.[26] The principle was not articulated in House rules until 1880, and even then, it was only to restrict the process of considering such questions. According to the House rules manual, the rule governing questions of the privileges of the House was adopted to "codify long established practice that the House had hitherto been unwilling to define."[27] The manual goes on to say that the rule "was adopted 'to prevent the large consumption of time which resulted from Members getting the floor for all kinds of speeches under the pretext of raising a question of the privileges of the House.'"[28]

House Rule IX states simply that valid questions shall be those "affecting the rights of the House collectively, its safety, dignity, and the integrity of its proceedings." House precedent can provide guidance as to what the Speaker may determine constitutes a valid question of the privileges of the House, and several categories of examples are provided below to assist in determining what may be ruled valid.[29] This information may be helpful when crafting a resolution or when anticipating whether questions noticed might be ruled valid. The Office of the Parliamentarian of the House should be consulted for specific and authoritative guidance.

At the outset, it is important to note a few general requirements for valid questions of the House. To begin with, when presenting a matter, the text in the resolution must "show on its face an invasion of those rights" articulated in the House rule and so presumably may not rely on argument made verbally.[30] Second, the situation that has affected the rights of the House must be actual events and not potential forthcoming events.[31] Listed below in the section *Categories of Questions Held Not to Be Valid* are general categories of questions that have historically been found not to be valid.

Common Categories of Questions Held to Be Valid

Questions Relating to Organization

Questions may relate to the organization of the House and the rights of Members to their seats or their leadership positions. For example, a resolution providing for an investigation into the election of a Member presented a question of privilege,[32] as did a resolution proposing the exclusion of a delegate from his seat.[33] Valid questions have also included a resolution declaring a vacancy in the House because a Member-elect is unable to take the oath of office or to expressly

[26] Congress debated the concept of a question of privilege, referred to then as a "breach of privilege," in 1795 during a case against Robert Randall for contempt in attempting to bribe House Members, and House precedent states, "The House, in 1795, declined to take action that would seem to imply a definition of its privileges." *Hinds',* vol. II, §1603. "Breach of privilege" is the term commonly used to refer to questions of privilege prior to the establishment of the House rule in 1880 that solidified the term "question of privilege."

[27] *House Manual*, §699. *Hinds',* vol. II, §1603.

[28] *House Manual*, §700. *Hinds',* vol. III, §2521.

[29] Some of these categories appear in *House Practice*, and some appear in the *House Manual*.

[30] *Hinds',* vol. III, §2548.

[31] Ibid., vol. III, §2556.

[32] Ibid., vol. III, §2586.

[33] Ibid., vol. III, §2594.

resign because of an incapacitating illness,[34] as well as questions dismissing an election contest.[35] Questions have also related to removal of a committee chairman pending an investigation.[36]

Questions Relating to Constitutional Prerogatives

Matters related to the House's constitutionally granted powers have been recognized as valid questions of the privileges of the House. Often, Members raise questions related to the Origination Clause (which requires that revenue bills originate in the House) and typically state that the Senate has infringed on the House's privilege to originate revenue measures.[37] Such questions are typically presented by the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee (since that committee has jurisdiction over revenue measures).[38]

Questions have also involved constitutional functions such as impeachment, as well as the power to expel Members. The House merely having a constitutional power or duty, however, does not allow any matter related to those duties to be raised as a question of the privileges of the House. For example, a question of the privileges of the House raised in 1996, stating that the House ought to pass an adjustment to the public debt limit, was found not to be valid. The presiding officer quoted an earlier ruling that a resolution presenting a legislative proposition as a question of constitutional privilege under the 14th Amendment did not qualify as a question of the privileges of the House and stated:

> It is a strained construction to say that because the Constitution gives a mandate that a thing shall be done, it therefore follows that any Member can insist that it shall be brought up at some particular time and in the particular way which he chooses. If there is a constitutional mandate, the House ought by its rules to provide for the proper enforcement of that, but it is still a question for the House how and when and under what procedure it shall be done.[39]

Questions Relating to Conduct

Certain questions relating to the conduct of Members, officers, and employees have been held to be valid. For example, a proposition to remove an officer of the House for misconduct has been recognized as a valid question,[40] as have resolutions directing investigations into Member

---

[34] H.Res. 80 (97th Congress), February 24, 1981.

[35] During the 105th Congress, Members offered a number of resolutions in relation to the election contest for the 46th District of California.

[36] For example, in the 111th Congress, H.Res. 805 sought to remove Representative Charles Rangel as chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

[37] Article I, Section 7, clause 1, of the U.S. Constitution prescribes that the House, not the Senate, must originate measures that contain revenue provisions. The Senate may author revenue provisions but only as amendments to House-originated measures that already contain revenue provisions. Questions can also be raised to assert that not just a Senate bill but a conference report accompanying a House bill originated revenue provisions (H.Res. 568, 106th Congress). It should be noted, however, that a question of privilege under Section 7 of Article I of the Constitution may be raised only when the House is in possession of the papers (*House Manual*, p. 411). For more information on what constitutes a revenue provision, see CRS Report RL31399, *The Origination Clause of the U.S. Constitution: Interpretation and Enforcement*, by James V. Saturno.

[38] For example, on December 12, 2012, Chairman Dave Camp offered a resolution stating that two legislative measures sent from the Senate infringed on the privileges of the House and directed that the measures be returned to the Senate (H.Res. 829 [112th Congress]). This process is often referred to as blue-slipping. For more information on the blue-slip procedure, see CRS Report RS21236, *Blue-Slipping: Enforcing the Origination Clause in the House of Representatives*, by James V. Saturno

[39] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 142 (January 24, 1996), p. H802.

[40] *Hinds'*, vol. I, §284.

misconduct such as illegal solicitation of political contributions in the House office building by unnamed sitting Members[41] and improper conduct by a former Member with regard to the House page program and insufficient response thereto by the House leadership.[42] Questions also commonly seek the release of information gathered by the House Committee on Ethics during a pending or completed investigation into Member or staff conduct.

Questions Relating to Integrity of Proceedings

Questions of the privileges of the House have included matters related to the integrity of the legislative process, both in committee and on the House floor.

Questions related to alleged improprieties in committee procedure have dealt with the use of an allegedly forged document at a committee hearing, as well as the unilateral release of committee records in violation of its adopted rules.[43] A question was ruled valid that condemned a committee chairman for adjourning a hearing before allowing the ranking Member to make a statement or ask questions.[44] While a charge of unfair and improper action on the part of a committee has been held to involve a question of privilege,[45] this does not extend to any committee action considered objectionable. For example, an allegation that a committee had refused either to give hearings or to allow petitions to be read before it was not considered a valid question of the privileges of the House.[46]

Questions addressing improprieties on the House floor have dealt with the presence on the floor of unauthorized persons,[47] the conduct of those in the press gallery,[48] and the integrity and regularity of an electronic vote.[49]

These have also extended to the integrity and accuracy of House documents and messages,[50] as well as entries in the *Journal* and the *Congressional Record*.[51] For example, a resolution providing for the correction in the *Congressional Record* of an exchange between two Members was considered valid.[52] A question alleging factual inaccuracy in the contents of a speech recorded in the *Congressional Record* (without alleging an error in the *Congressional Record*, however) was not recognized as a valid question.[53]

Questions Relating to Comfort, Convenience, and Safety

Certain matters related to the comfort and conveniences of Members have constituted valid questions of the privileges of the House. A proposition concerning the comfort and convenience

[41] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 131 (July 10, 1985), p. H18397.

[42] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 152 (September 29, 2006), p. H21334.

[43] *House Manual*, §704.

[44] H.Res. 517 (113th Congress).

[45] *Hinds'*, vol. III, §2605.

[46] Ibid., vol. III, §2607.

[47] Ibid., vol. III, §§2624-2626.

[48] Ibid., vol. III, §2627.

[49] H.Res. 611 (110th Congress).

[50] *Hinds'*, vol. III, §§2613 and 2631.

[51] *Hinds'*, vol. II, §1363, and *House Manual*, §704, respectively.

[52] H.Res. 260 (96th Congress).

[53] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 149 (October 20, 2003), pp. H9704-5.

of Members in relation to the construction of an elevator for the House, as well as a proposal for the removal of desks from the hall, were held to be valid.[54] A resolution directing that the clerk employ additional laborers in the bathroom, however, was not recognized as a valid question, nor was a resolution relating to a new House restaurant.[55]

Matters relating to Members' physical safety have constituted valid questions, such as resolutions directing investigations into structural deficiencies in the Capitol, the ceiling in the hall, and alleged fire safety deficiencies.[56] This category of Members' safety expands beyond physical safety to cybersecurity. For example, a resolution alleging that computers were compromised directed the Sergeant at Arms to ensure that House personnel be alerted to the dangers of electronic security breaches.[57]

Categories of Questions Held Not to Be Valid

House precedent demonstrates that certain categories of questions have been held not to constitute valid questions of the privileges of the House.

A motion to amend the rules of the House does not present a question of privilege.[58] For example, a resolution to permit the delegate of the District of Columbia to vote on a specific legislative matter was held to be tantamount to a change in the rules and therefore determined not to constitute a question of the privileges of the House.[59]

Also, a question of the privileges of the House may not be invoked to alter or prescribe a special order of business for the House (also referred to as a special rule).[60] For example, in 2010 the presiding officer ruled that a resolution prescribing House consideration of specific legislation was not a valid question of the privileges of the House:

> Under such an approach, each individual Member of the House could constitute himself or herself as a virtual Rules Committee. Any Member would be able to place before the House at any time whatever proposed order of business he or she might deem advisable, simply by alleging an insult to dignity or integrity secondary to some action or inaction. In such an environment, anything could be privileged, so nothing would enjoy true privilege.[61]

A resolution that alleges the failure of the House to take specified legislative actions brings it discredit, impairs its dignity and the integrity of its proceedings, and lowers it in public esteem does not present a question of the privileges of the House. The presiding officer stated:

> To rule that a question of the privileges of the House under rule IX may be raised by allegations of perceived discredit brought upon the House by legislative action or inaction, would permit any Member to allege an impact on the dignity of the House based upon virtually any legislative action or inaction.[62]

---

[54] *Hinds'*, vol. III, §2630.

[55] Ibid., vol. III, §2635 and vol. III, §2636 (respectively).

[56] *House Manual*, §705.

[57] H.Res. 1263 (110th Congress).

[58] *House Manual*, §706.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Ibid.

[61] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 156 (September 23, 2010), p. H6901.

[62] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 142 (January 24, 1996), p. H802.

A resolution expressing legislative sentiment does not present a question of the privileges of the House. In response to such a resolution, the presiding officer stated:

> A resolution expressing the legislative sentiment that the President should take specified action to achieve desired public policy end does not present the question affecting the rights of the House, collectively, its safety, dignity, or integrity of its proceedings as required under rule IX.[63]

Similarly, in response to a question raised that made several assertions about a governor and called upon that governor and others to take action, the presiding officer stated:

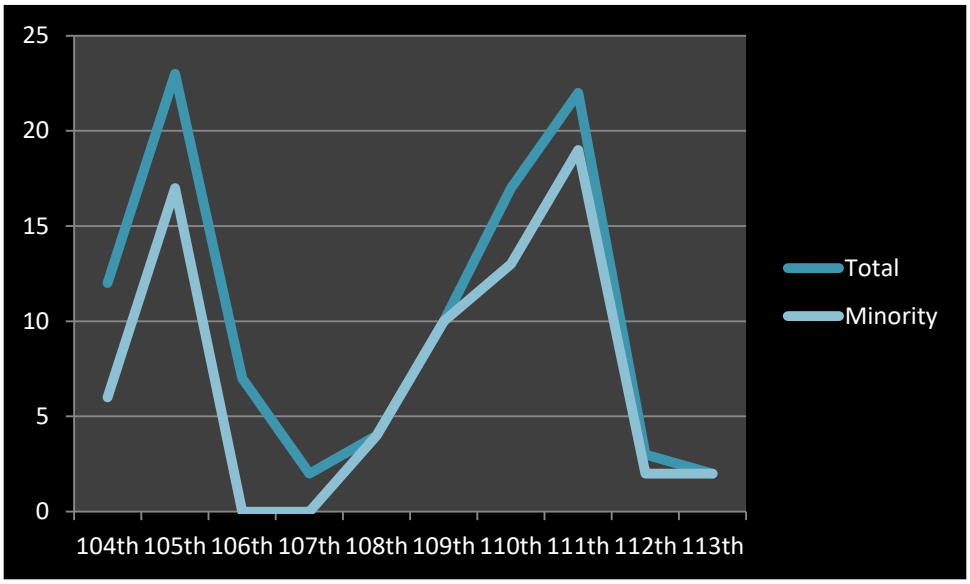
> A resolution merely asserting the position of the House with regard to an external issue cannot be the basis of a question of privilege.... According privilege to such a resolution would allow any Member to place before the House at any time whatever topic he or she might deem advisable. In such an environment, anything could be privileged, so nothing would enjoy true privilege.[64]

Data on Questions Offered and House Action

From the 104th Congress through the 113th Congress (1995-2014), Members offered 140 questions of the privileges of the House.[65] Of the total number offered, 102 of the questions (73%) were ruled valid and were therefore considered by the House. The number of valid questions offered each Congress varied significantly, with some Congresses considering as few as two and others considering more than 20. The minority party offered 72% of the total number of valid questions, and the proportion of questions offered by the minority remained consistent during most of the period, as illustrated in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1. Questions Offered Each Congress, Total and by the Minority

104th Congress-113th Congress



Source: Congressional Research Service (using the *Legislative Information System* and the *Congressional Record*).

[63] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 144 (October 10, 1998), p. H10404

[64] House debate, *Congressional Record*, vol. 157 (October 6, 2011) p. H6657.

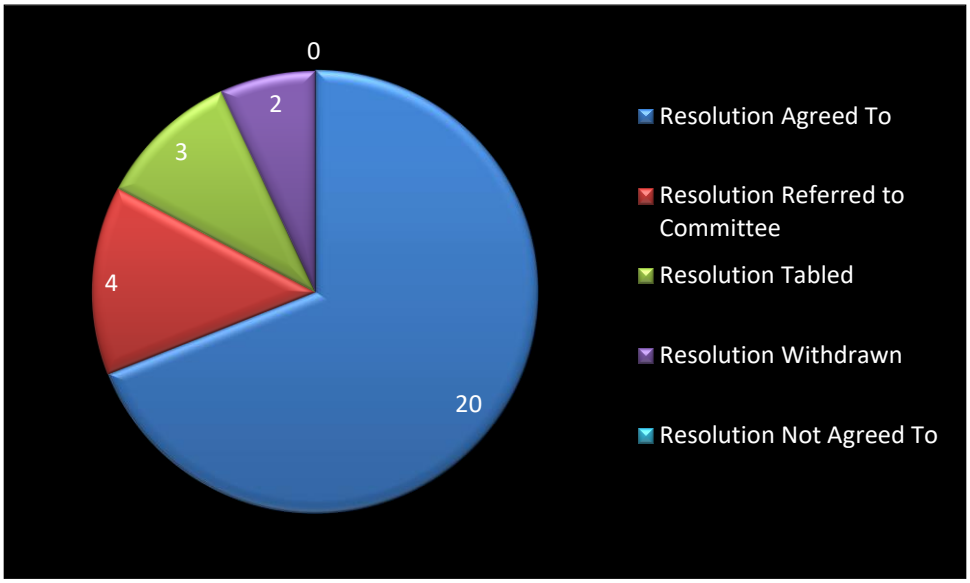
[65] This does not, however, include resolutions that were "noticed" or submitted, but never offered.

How valid questions were disposed of varied significantly depending on whether the Member offering the question belonged to the majority or the minority party. Of the questions offered by majority Members, 69% were agreed to, 14% were referred to committee, 10% were tabled, and 7% were withdrawn. All questions offered by the majority party that were voted on were agreed to, perhaps suggesting that in some cases if a majority party resolution was not likely to receive an affirmative vote, it did not receive a vote but was disposed of alternatively (e.g., by referring the resolution to committee).

Of the valid questions offered by the minority party, a large majority (82%) were tabled, meaning that the House chose to dispose of the resolution adversely but without taking a vote on the resolution. This may be done to avoid either political or practical situations that are inopportune for the majority party. For example, it prevents a vote that might be used by the minority as a "messaging vote." Also, a motion to table may be made in order to stop consideration of the resolution so that the House may engage in the business previously planned by the majority party. Of the other questions offered by the minority, 12% were referred to committee, 4% were agreed to, and 2% were not agreed to.

Figure 2. House Action on Questions Offered by the Majority Party

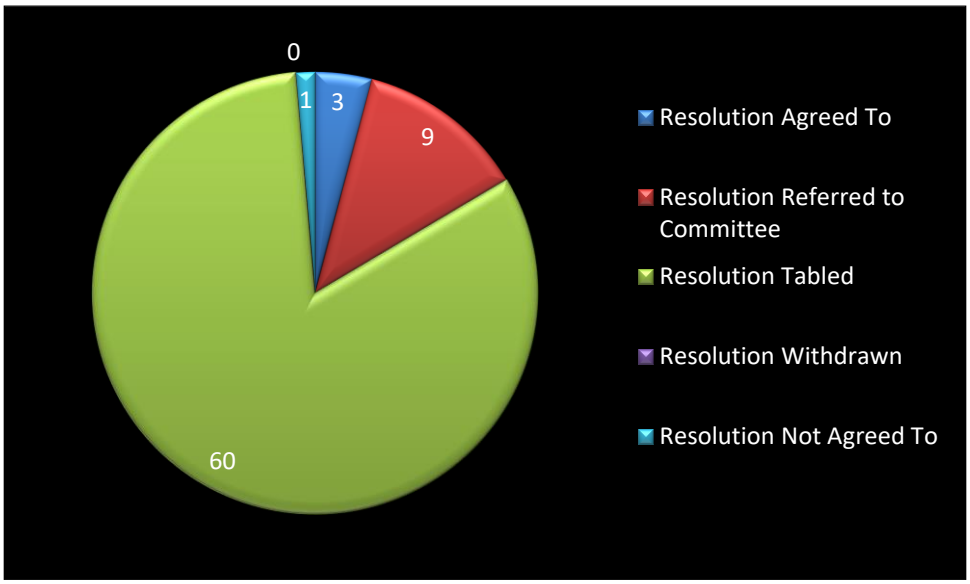
104th Congress-113th Congress



Source: Congressional Research Service (using the *Legislative Information System* and the *Congressional Record*).

Figure 3. House Action on Questions Offered by the Minority Party

104th Congress-113th Congress



Source: Congressional Research Service (using the *Legislative Information System* and the *Congressional Record*).

Data on Categories of Questions Offered and Agreed To

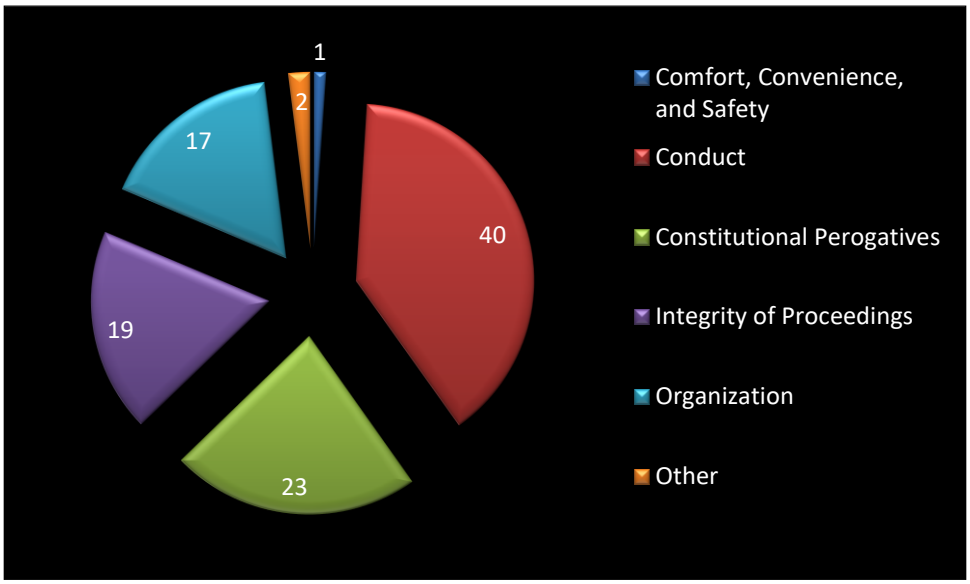
As mentioned above, from the 104th Congress through the 113th Congress (1995-2014), Members offered 102 questions that were ruled valid. As displayed in **Figure 4**, the greatest number of questions related to conduct (39%) and to the House's constitutional prerogatives (23%), followed by questions related to the integrity of proceedings (19%) and questions relating to organization (17%).[66] One question dealt with comfort, convenience, and safety, and two did not fit into any of these general categories.[67]

[66] Some questions presented language related to both conduct and integrity of proceedings, such as a resolution condemning a Member of leadership and noting concerns regarding the integrity of proceedings. In such cases, since the action being condemned was related to the integrity of proceedings, the question was included under the integrity of proceedings category.

[67] The two questions in the category of "other" required the Speaker to appoint a bipartisan task force to make recommendations on how to restore public confidence in the ethics process (H.Res. 213 and H.Res. 153 [109th Congress]).

Figure 4. Categories of Questions Offered

104th Congress-113th Congress



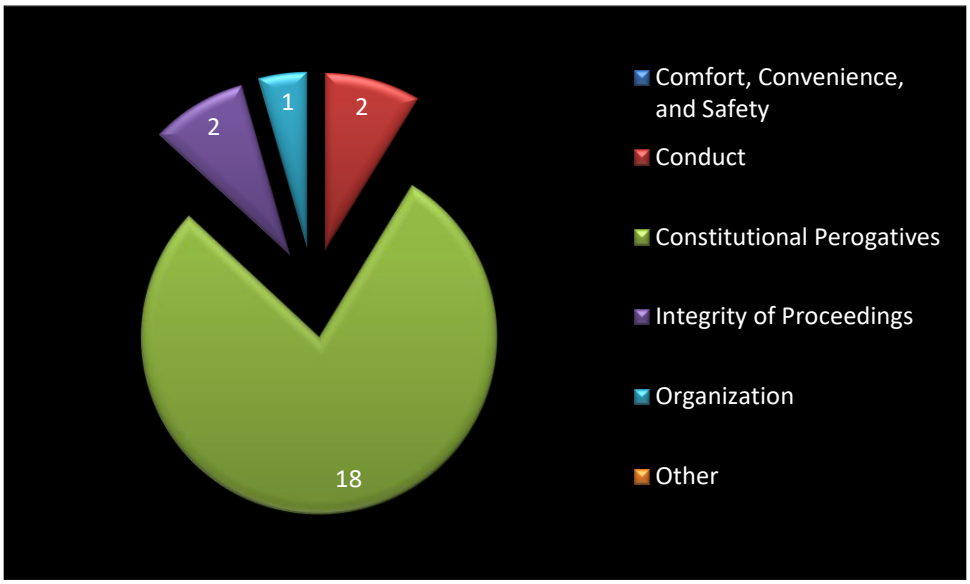
Source: Congressional Research Service (using the *Legislative Information System* and the *Congressional Record*).

Notes: Some questions presented language related to both conduct and integrity of proceedings, such as a resolution condemning a Member of leadership and noting concerns regarding the integrity of proceedings. In such cases, since the action being condemned was related to the integrity of proceedings, the question was included under the integrity of proceedings category. The two questions in the category of "other" required the Speaker to appoint a bipartisan task force to make recommendations on how to restore public confidence in the ethics process (H.Res. 213 and H.Res. 153 [109thCongress]).

Of the 102 questions considered by the House in the period between the 104th Congress and the 113th Congress, 23 of those were agreed to by the House, as shown in **Figure 5**. Of those 23 questions, 18 (78%) related to the House's constitutional prerogatives. (Thirteen related to the House's constitutional authority to originate revenue measures, four dealt with impeachment, and one was to expel a Member.) Two of the measures agreed to were related to conduct, two related to integrity of proceedings, and one related to comfort, convenience, and safety.

Figure 5. Categories of Questions Agreed To

104th Congress-113th Congress



Source: Congressional Research Service (using the *Legislative Information System* and the *Congressional Record*).

Conclusion

An examination of questions of the privileges of the House illuminates several characteristics of their use, content, and consideration.

- **Questions possess several distinctive features.** The notion of questions of privilege predates Congress. The House, however, demonstrated a historical reluctance to define such a question for over a century until the chamber found it necessary to create a definition as part of a rule that would "prevent the large consumption of time which resulted from Members getting the floor for all kinds of speeches under the pretext of raising a question of the privileges of the House."[68]

  Despite the creation of the rule, raising a question of the privileges of the House allows any Member to be recognized and to have a resolution read on the floor, even if the question is later ruled not to be valid. This represents an uncommon opportunity, particularly for Members of the minority party, to draw attention to a specific matter in a chamber where the majority party leadership characteristically sets the floor agenda. Also unique is that, by their nature, questions of the privileges of the House allow potentially controversial assertions to be read on the floor, such as criticisms of another Member's conduct. The combination of these characteristics (the question's potential use by any Member, its reading requirement, and the subject matter's potentially controversial nature) make such resolutions exceptional in the House.

- **There is a contrast between the types of questions raised and the types of questions agreed to.** The ratios of the types of questions offered and the types of

[68] *House Manual*, §700.

questions agreed to by the House varied. As displayed in **Figure 4**, the greatest number of questions raised related to conduct (39%) and to the House's constitutional prerogatives (23%). Of the resolutions agreed to, however, most (78%) related to the House's constitutional prerogatives, while a relative few (9%) related to conduct. This might reflect a general disinclination to agree to conduct-related resolutions.

- **Consideration of questions reflect the roles and relations of the majority and the minority.** An examination of questions of the privileges of the House might offer insights into the roles and relationship of the majority party and the minority party in the House. First, recall that the minority party offered a majority (72%) of the total number of valid questions, and the proportion of questions offered by the minority remained consistent during most of the period, as illustrated in **Figure 1**.

  Second, the manner in which questions were disposed of varied significantly depending on whether the Member offering the question belonged to the majority or the minority party. Of the questions offered by majority Members, a majority (69%) were agreed to. In fact, all questions offered by the majority party that were voted on were agreed to, perhaps suggesting that if a majority party resolution was not likely to receive an affirmative vote, it did not receive a vote but was disposed of alternatively (e.g., by referring the resolution to committee).

  Of the questions offered by the minority party, a large majority (82%) were tabled, meaning that the House chose to dispose of the resolution adversely but without taking a vote on the resolution. This may be done to avoid political and/or practical situations that are inopportune for the majority party. For example, a motion to table prevents a vote that might be used by the minority as a messaging vote and, in addition, halts consideration of the resolution so that the House may engage in the business previously planned by the majority party.

Appendix A. Scripts of Parliamentary Language Used on the Floor

Parliamentary Language Used When a Member Gives Notice of a Resolution

In most cases, a Member (other than the majority leader of minority leader) must first give notice of his or her intention to offer the resolution.[69] The parliamentary language used in such situations is generally some variation of the following:

> Member: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of Rule IX, I rise to give notice of my intent to raise a question of the privileges of the House. The form of my resolution is as follows: (*At this point, the Member reads the resolution in its entirety, although he or she may also ask unanimous consent to dispense with the reading.*)
>
> Speaker: Under Rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the chair within two legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.
>
> Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentlelady (or gentleman) from (Member's home state) will appear in the *Record* at this point. The chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.
>
> *(Within two legislative days the Member will be notified of the date and time when he or she should rise to offer the resolution.)*

Parliamentary Language Used When a Member Offers the Resolution

When the resolution is offered, the parliamentary language used in such situations is generally some variation of the following:

> Member: Mr. Speaker, I rise to a question of the privileges of the House and offer the resolution previously noticed.
>
> Speaker: The Clerk will report the resolution. (*The Clerk reads the resolution.*) Does the gentlelady (or gentleman) from (Member's home state) wish to present argument on the parliamentary question whether the resolution presents a question of the privileges of the House?
>
> Member: Yes.
>
> Speaker: The gentlelady (or gentleman) from (Member's home state) is recognized for that purpose.

[69] Exceptions include a resolution that has been reported from committee, a resolution that has been offered on the floor by the majority leader or the minority leader, or a resolution that has been offered as privileged under the Origination Clause, which is the House's constitutional right to originate all revenue measures (Article I, Section 7, clause 1, of the Constitution). For more information, see the section above titled "Restrictions Governing When Questions of the Privileges of the House Can Come to the Floor."

Member: I rise today to ... (*In the event that a Member's remarks deviate from the subject of a question of the privileges of the House, the Speaker pro tempore will remind the Member to confine his or her remarks to the question*.)

Speaker: Are there any other Members that want to be heard on this point?

Speaker: The resolution does not qualify (*with explanation*).

—*or*—

Speaker: The resolution qualifies. The Clerk will report the resolution. (*The Clerk reads the resolution.*) The resolution presents a question of the privileges of the House. Pursuant to clause 2 of Rule IX, the gentlelady (or gentleman) from (Member's home state) and the gentlelady (or gentleman) from (Member's home state) each will control 30 minutes. The chair recognizes the gentlelady (or gentleman) from (Member's home state).

Appendix B. Questions of the Privileges of the House (105th Congress-113th Congress [1995-2014])

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
113th	03/13/2014	H.Res. 517	Condemns the offensive and disrespectful manner in which Chairman Darrell E. Issa conducted the hearing of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on March 5, 2014. Requires that he come to the well of the House of Representatives to issue a public apology to Members of the House.	Rep. Kildee	n/a	Table 217-173
113th	3/6/2014	H.Res. 504	Condemns the offensive and disrespectful manner in which Chairman Darrell E. Issa conducted the hearing of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform on March 5, 2014, during which he turned off the microphones of the Ranking Member while he was speaking and adjourned the hearing without a vote or a unanimous consent agreement.	Rep. Fudge	n/a	Table 211-186
112th	12/12/2012	H.Res. 829	Returns to the Senate S. 3254 (National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013), including the Senate amendment to H.R. 4310 (National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013), because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, they contravene the Constitution.	Rep. Camp	Agreed by voice vote	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
112th	6/29/2012	H.Res. 718	Disapproves of the behavior of the chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform for: (1) interfering with ongoing criminal investigations; (2) insisting on a personal attack against the Attorney General; and (3) calling him a liar on national television without corroborating evidence, thereby bringing discredit to the integrity of the House.	Rep. Jackson Lee	n/a	Table 259-161
112th	12/20/2011	H.Res. 504	Disapproves of the behavior of the Representative from Florida, Mr. West, for bringing discredit to the House by offending the memory of those who died during the Holocaust.	Rep. Edwards	n/a	Table 231-188
111th	9/23/2010	H.Res. 1653	Returns to the Senate specified bills, including the Senate amendment to H.R. 5875 (Emergency Border Security Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2010), because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, they contravene the Constitution.	Rep. Levin	Agreed to by voice vote	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	4/22/2010	H.Res. 1287	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to report to the House of Representatives, with respect to the activities addressed in its report of February 26, 2010 (regarding possible connections between PMA Group campaign contributions and specific earmarks), on: (1) how many witnesses were interviewed; (2) how many, if any, subpoenas were issued in the course of their investigation; and (3) what documents were reviewed and their availability for public review.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Refer 402-0
111th	4/15/2010	H.Res. 1255	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to report to the House of Representatives, with respect to the activities addressed in its report of February 26, 2010 (regarding possible connections between PMA Group campaign contributions and specific earmarks), on: (1) how many witnesses were interviewed; (2) how many, if any, subpoenas were issued in the course of their investigation; and (3) what documents were reviewed and their availability for public review.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Refer 385-0

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	4/14/2010	H.Res. 1249	Directs the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to investigate fully which House Democratic leaders and members of their respective staffs had knowledge before March 3, 2010, of the allegations concerning former Representative Eric Massa, and what actions each leader and staffer having any such knowledge took after learning of the allegations. Requires the Committee to establish an Investigative Subcommittee regarding such matter, or report to the House of Representatives the reasons for its failure to do so. Requires the Chief Administrative Officer immediately to take all steps necessary to secure and prevent the alteration or deletion of any e-mails, text messages, voicemails, and other electronic records resident on House equipment that have been sent or received by Members and staff who are the subjects of such investigation until advised by the Committee that it has no need of any portion of such records. Requires the Committee to issue a final report by July 31, 2010.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Refer 235-187

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	3/25/2010	H.Res. 1220	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to report to the House of Representatives, with respect to the activities addressed in its report of February 26, 2010, concerning allegations related to earmarks and campaign contributions, on: (1) how many witnesses were interviewed; (2) how many, if any, subpoenas were issued in the course of the Committee's investigation; and (3) what documents were reviewed and their availability for public review.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Refer 406-1
111th	3/18/2010	H.Res. 1194	Declares that the House of Representatives disapproves of the malfeasant manner in which the Democratic Leadership has discharged the duties of their offices.	Rep. Cantor	n/a	Table 232-181

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	3/18/2010	H.Res. 1193	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to report to the House of Representatives, with respect to the activities addressed in its report of February 26, 2010 (regarding possible connections between PMA Group campaign contributions and specific earmarks), on: (1) how many witnesses were interviewed; (2) how many, if any, subpoenas were issued in the course of their investigation; and (3) what documents were reviewed and their availability for public review.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Refer 397-0

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	3/11/2010	H.Res. 1164	Directs the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to investigate fully which House Democratic leaders and members of their respective staffs had knowledge before March 3, 2010, of the allegations concerning former Representative Eric Massa, and what actions each leader and staffer having any such knowledge took after learning of the allegations. Requires the Committee to establish an Investigative Subcommittee regarding such matter, or report to the House of Representatives the reasons for its failure to do so. Requires the Chief Administrative Officer to immediately take all steps necessary to secure and prevent the alteration or deletion of any e-mails, text messages, voicemails, and other electronic records resident on House equipment that have been sent or received by Members and staff who are the subjects of such investigation until advised by the Committee that it has no need of any portion of such records. Requires the Committee to issue a final report by June 30, 2010.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Refer 404-2

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	10/7/2009	H.Res. 805	Removes Representative Rangel as chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means pending completion of the investigation into his affairs by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.	Rep. Carter	n/a	Refer 246-153
111th	9/15/2009	H.Res. 744	Declares that the House of Representatives disapproves of the behavior of the Representative from South Carolina, Mr. Wilson, during the joint session of Congress held on September 9, 2009.	Rep. Hoyer (majority leader)	240-179	n/a
111th	7/29/2009	H.Res. 690	Declares that the House of Representatives views with disapproval the failure of the Democratic Members of the Franking Commission to ensure that the Commission's Democratic staff carries out its important responsibilities in a professional, fair, and impartial manner.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 244-173
111th	7/22/2009	H.Res. 667	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to immediately establish an investigative subcommittee and begin an investigation into the relationship between: (1) the source and timing of past campaign contributions to Members of the House related to the raided prominent defense-lobbying firm; and (2) earmark requests made by Members on behalf of the firm's clients.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 224-189

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	6/3/2009	H.Res. 500*	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to report to the House on the actions the Committee has taken, if any, concerning any misconduct of House Members and employees in connection with activities of the PMA Group.	Rep. Hoyer (majority leader)	n/a	Refer 270-134
111th	5/12/2009	H.Res. 425	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a designated subcommittee, to investigate immediately, for a report to the House within two months on, the relationship between: (1) the source and timing of past campaign contributions to Members of the House related to a certain raided defense-lobbying firm; and (2) earmark requests made by Members on behalf of the firm's clients.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 215-182

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	4/1/2009	H.Res. 312	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a designated subcommittee, to investigate immediately, for a report to the House within two months on the relationship between: (1) the source and timing of past campaign contributions to Members of the House related to a certain raided defense-lobbying firm; and (2) earmark requests made by Members on behalf of the firm's clients.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 217-185
111th	3/30/2009	H.Res. 295	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a designated investigative subcommittee, to begin immediately an investigation and report to the House on the relationship between: (1) the source and timing of past campaign contributions to Members of the House related to the raided prominent defense-lobbying firm; and (2) earmark requests made by Members on behalf of the firm's clients.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 210-173

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	3/25/2009	H.Res. 286	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a designated investigative subcommittee, to begin immediately an investigation and report to the House on the relationship between: (1) the source and timing of past contributions to Members of the House related to the raided prominent defense-lobbying firm; and (2) earmark requests made by Members on behalf of the firm's clients.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 223-182
111th	3/19/2009	H.Res. 265	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a designated investigative subcommittee, to begin immediately an investigation and report to the House on the relationship between: (1) the source and timing of past campaign contributions to Members of the House related to Paul Magliocchetti, founder of the raided prominent defense-lobbying firm; and (2) earmark requests made by Members on behalf of the firm's clients.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 226-180

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	3/10/2009	H.Res. 228	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a designated investigative subcommittee, to begin immediately an investigation and report to the House on the relationship between: (1) FY2009 earmark requests on behalf of clients of the raided top defense-lobbying firm already made by Members; and (2) the source and timing of past campaign contributions related to such requests.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 228-184
111th	3/5/2009	H.Res. 212	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a designated investigative subcommittee, to begin immediately an investigation and report to the House on the relationship between: (1) earmark requests on behalf of clients of the raided top defense-lobbying firm already made by Members; and (2) the source and timing of past campaign contributions related to such requests.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 222-181

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
111th	3/5/2009	H.Res. 189	Requires the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a designated investigative subcommittee, to begin immediately an investigation and report to the House on the relationship between: (1) earmark requests on behalf of clients of the raided top defense-lobbying firm already made by Members; and (2) the source and timing of past campaign contributions related to such requests.	Rep. Flake	n/a	Table 222-181
111th	2/10/2009	H.Res. 143	Provides for removal of Representative Rangel as chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, pending completion of the investigation into his affairs by the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct.	Rep. Carter	n/a	Table 242-157
110th	9/18/2008	H.Res. 1460	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to establish an Investigative Subcommittee in the matter of Representative Charles B. Rangel or report to the House the reasons for its failure to do so. Removes Representative Rangel as chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means, upon adoption of this resolution and pending completion of such investigation.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 226-176

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
110th	7/31/2008	H.Res. 1396	Declares that: (1) the Member from New York, Mr. Rangel, by the conduct giving rise to this resolution, has dishonored himself and brought discredit to the House and merits its censure; and (2) such Member is censured.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 253-138
110th	7/15/2008	H.Res. 1345*	Impeaches President George W. Bush for high crimes and misdemeanors. Sets forth an article of impeachment stating that President Bush, in violation of his oath of office, deceived Congress with fabricated threats of Iraq weapons of mass destruction to fraudulently obtain support for the authorization of use of force against Iraq and to commit troops to combat in Iraq.	Rep. Kucinich	n/a	Refer 238-180
110th	6/11/2008	H.Res. 1263*	Urges the Chief Administrative Officer and the Sergeant at Arms of the House of Representatives to take timely action to ensure that all Members, committees, and offices of the House are: (1) alerted to the dangers of electronic attacks on the computers and information systems used in carrying out their official duties; and (2) fully briefed on how to protect themselves and their official records and communications from electronic security breaches.	Rep. Wolf	n/a	Refer- voice vote

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
110th	6/11/2008	H.Res. 1258*	Sets forth articles of impeachment stating that President Bush, in violation of his oath of office: (27 articles are included).	Rep. Kucinich	n/a	Refer- 251-166
110th	5/22/2008	H.Res. 1221	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to begin an immediate investigation into the abuse of power surrounding the inaccuracies in the process and enrollment of H.R. 2419 (Food and Energy Security Act of 2007), vetoed by the President on May 21, 2008. Admonishes the Speaker of the House, Majority Leader, and other Members of the Democratic Leadership for their roles in the events surrounding this enrollment error.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 220-188
110th	3/12/2008	H.Res. 1040	Directs the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to investigate without further delay violations of House rules by Representative Dave Obey and report its findings and recommendations to the House, including a recommendation regarding the appropriate action for such violations.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 219-193

110th	3/12/2008	H.Res. 1039	Declares that the House: (1) denounces any violations of House rules by Speaker Nancy Pelosi and other Members of the Democratic leadership in the strongest terms possible; (2) rejects the practices of holding votes open beyond a reasonable period of time for the sole purpose of circumventing the will of the House; and (3) directs the Speaker to take such steps as necessary to prevent any further abuse. Vacates the votes on ordering the previous question and adoption of House Resolution 1031 (adopting H.Res. 895). Directs the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to investigate and report to the House on: (1) violations of House rules by the Speaker and such Members; and (2) its findings and recommendations to the House, including a recommendation regarding the appropriate actions for the Speaker's activities. Directs the Select Committee to Investigate the Voting Irregularities of August 2, 2007, to investigate and include in the report its findings and resulting recommendations concerning the actions of the Speaker, the time the vote was held open and the changes in votes cast by members, resulting in passage of the previous question vote to H.Res. 1031 on March 11, 2008.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 215-193

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
110th	11/6/2007	H.Res. 799	Impeaches Richard B. Cheney, Vice President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors. Sets forth articles of impeachment stating that Vice President Cheney: (1) has purposely manipulated the intelligence process to deceive the citizens and Congress of the United States about a threat of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, and about an alleged relationship between Iraq and al Qaeda, to justify the use of the U.S. Armed Forces against Iraq in a manner damaging to U.S. national security interests; and (2) has openly threatened aggression against Iran absent any real threat to the United States, and has done so with the U.S. proven capability to carry out such threats, thus undermining U.S. national security.	Rep. Kucinich	n/a	Refer 218-194
110th	10/23/2007	H.Res. 767	Declares that: (1) the Member from California, Mr. Stark, by his despicable conduct, has dishonored himself and brought discredit to the House and merits its censure; and (2) such Member is censured.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 196-173

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
110th	8/4/2007	H.Res. 623	Directs the Select Committee to Investigate the Voting Irregularities of August 2, 2007, to investigate and include in its initial report findings and resulting recommendations concerning the actions of a specified Member while presiding over the House of Representatives on August 3, 2007, at the time the Republican Leader offered H.Res. 612 (raising a question of the privileges of the House) and the actions which led to the differences between the statements in the *Congressional Record* and those actually spoken on that day. Requires the *Congressional Record* for the legislative day of August 3, 2007, to be corrected to reflect verbatim the words actually spoken during consideration of H.Res. 612.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 216-182
110th	8/3/2007	H.Res. 612	Declares that, by certain actions on August 3, 2007, a specified Member has brought dishonor and discredit to the U.S. House of Representatives by misusing the powers of the chair.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 211-178

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
110th	8/3/2007	H.Res. 611	Directs the Officers of the House of Representatives to preserve immediately all records, documents, recordings, electronic transmissions, or other material, regardless of form, related to the voting irregularities of August 2, 2007. Establishes a select committee to: (1) investigate the circumstances surrounding the record vote requested on the motion to recommit to H.R. 3161, including the Chair's ruling over the Parliamentarian's objections; (2) report to the House regarding the actions of any Members, officers, or employees of the House engaged in the disenfranchisement of Members in voting on the question of the requested record vote; and (3) recommend changes to House rules and procedures necessary to protect the voting rights of constitutionally elected Members chosen by the people of the United States of America.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	Agreed by voice vote	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
110th	8/3/2007	H.Res. 609	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to review immediately the regularity of events surrounding the vote on the motion to recommit on H.R. 3161 (Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2008), which occurred on August 2, 2007, and report back to the House of Representatives.	Rep. Hoyer (majority leader)	n/a	Withdrawn
110th	6/5/2007	H.Res. 452	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to: (1) investigate without further delay alleged illegal conduct and violations of House rules by Representative William J. Jefferson; and (2) report its findings and recommendations to the House, including a recommendation regarding whether Representative Jefferson should be expelled from the House.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	Agreed 373-26	n/a
110th	5/22/2007	H.Res. 428	Declares that the Member from Pennsylvania, Mr. Murtha, has been guilty of a violation of the Code of Official Conduct and merits the reprimand of the House for the same.	Rep. Rogers	n/a	Table 219-189

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
110th	1/24/2007	H.Res. 93	Disapproves certain actions taken by the Majority on the Committee on Rules (refusal to produce for the Ranking Member a copy of a letter from another Minority Member requesting withdrawal of an amendment he had submitted for the Committee's consideration regarding H.Res. 78). Directs the Chairwoman of the Committee to undertake practices to prevent future occurrences.	Rep. Boehner (minority leader)	n/a	Table 223-189
109th	9/29/2006	H.Res. 1065	Directs the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to: (1) immediately appoint a Subcommittee, pursuant to Rule 19 of the Rules of the Committee, to fully and expeditiously determine the facts connected with Representative Mark Foley's conduct and the response thereto; and (2) make a preliminary report within 10 days.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Refer 410-0
109th	4/5/2006	H.Res. 762	Directs the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to initiate an investigation immediately of the misconduct by Members of Congress and their staff implicated in the scandals associated with Mr. Jack Abramoff's criminal activity.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 218-198

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
109th	3/30/2006	H.Res. 746	Directs the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to initiate an investigation immediately of the misconduct by Members of Congress and their staff implicated in the scandals associated with Mr. Jack Abramoff's criminal activity.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 216-193
109th	2/16/2006	H.Res. 687	Directs the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to begin an immediate investigation into the abuse of power surrounding the inaccuracies in the process and enrollment of the Budget Reconciliation legislation (S. 1932) cleared for the President on February 1, 2006.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 219-187
109th	12/8/2005	H.Res. 591	Declares that the House of Representatives: (1) denounces the culture of corruption exhibited by the Republican Leadership and the ongoing resort to illegitimate actions taken to pass legislation like the Prescription Drug bill under false pretenses; (2) rejects the practice of improperly holding votes open beyond a reasonable period of time for the sole purpose of circumventing the will of the House; and (3) directs the Speaker to take such steps as necessary to prevent any further abuse.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 219-188

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
109th	6/16/2005	H.Res. 324	Declares that the House of Representatives: (1) strongly condemns the manner in which Representative Sensenbrenner has responded to the minority party's request for an additional day of oversight hearings on the reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act, and the manner in which such hearing was conducted; and (2) instructs Representative Sensenbrenner, in consultation with Representative Conyers, to schedule a further day of hearings with witnesses requested by members of the minority party concerning the reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act.	Rep. Nadler	n/a	Table 222-191
109th	6/9/2005	H.Res. 310	Directs the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to proceed, in accordance with rule XI (Procedures of Committees and Unfinished Business) of the Rules of the House of Representatives, to appoint, upon an affirmative vote of the majority of the Members of the Committee, a non-partisan professional staff.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 219-199

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
109th	5/3/2005	H.Res. 253	Declares that the House of Representatives: (1) finds that the Committee on the Judiciary purposefully and deliberately mischaracterized five amendments in H.Rept. 109-51; and (2) directs the Chairman of such Committee to report to the House a supplement to such Report that corrects the record by describing the five amendments with nonargumentative, objective captions.	Rep. Conyers	n/a	Table 220-196
109th	4/14/2005	H.Res. 213	Requires the Speaker of the House of Representatives to: (1) appoint a bipartisan task force with equal representation of the majority and minority parties to make recommendations to restore public confidence in the ethics process; and (2) report its findings and recommendations to the House by June 1, 2005.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 218-195
109th	3/15/2005	H.Res. 153	Requires the Speaker of the House of Representatives to appoint a bi-partisan task force with equal representation of the majority and minority parties to: (1) make recommendations to restore public confidence in the ethics process; and (2) report its findings and recommendations to the House by May 2, 2005.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 223-194

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
108th	10/8/2004	H.Res. 845	Directs the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to: (1) establish an Investigative Subcommittee to determine if there is substantial reason to believe that by his past and continuing conduct Representative Tom DeLay has violated the Code of Official Conduct or other relevant laws, rules, or regulations; and (2) retain a Special Counsel to assist in its investigation.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 210-182
108th	12/8/2003	H.Res. 474	Declares that the House of Representatives: (1) denounces certain actions taken during the vote on H.R. 1 (Medicare Prescription Drug and Modernization Act of 2003); (2) rejects the practice of holding votes open beyond a reasonable time for the sole purpose of circumventing the will of the House; and (3) directs the Speaker to take such steps as necessary to prevent any further abuse.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 207-182

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
108th	7/23/2003	H.Res. 330	Declares that the House of Representatives: (1) disapproves of the manner in which Representative Thomas summoned the U.S. Capitol Police to evict minority party members of the Committee on Ways and Means from the committee library, as well as the manner in which he conducted the markup of legislation in such Committee on July 18, 2003; (2) finds that the bill considered at that markup was not validly ordered reported to the House; and (3) calls for the police report to be placed in the *Congressional Record*.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	Table 223-193
108th	7/18/2003	H.Res. 324	Declares that the House of Representatives disapproves of the manner in which Representative Thomas conducted the markup of legislation in the Committee on Ways and Means on July 18, 2003, and finds that the bill considered at that markup was not validly ordered reported to the House.	Rep. Pelosi (minority leader)	n/a	170-143
107th	7/24/2002	H.Res. 495	Expels Representative James A. Traficant, Jr. from the House of Representatives.	Rep. Hefley	420-1	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
107th	9/20/2001	H.Res. 240	Returns to the Senate H.R. 2500 (FY2002 Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, and the Judiciary, and related agencies appropriations) because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, it contravenes the Constitution and infringes upon the privileges of the House.	Rep. Thomas	agreed by voice vote	n/a
106th	10/27/2000	H.Res. 657	Directs the Speaker of the House of Representatives to certify to the U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia a report of the Committee on Resources regarding the refusal of specified persons to produce papers and to answer questions under subpoena before the Subcommittee on Energy and Natural Resources and the refusal of the Project on Government Oversight to produce papers subpoenaed by the Committee	Rep. Young	n/a	withdrawn
106th	10/24/2000	H.Res. 645	Returns to the Senate S. 1109 (bear protection) because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, it contravenes the Constitution and infringes upon the privileges of the House.	Rep. Crane	agreed by voice vote	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
106th	7/27/2000	H.Res. 568	States that the conference report accompanying H.R. 4516 (FY 2001 legislative appropriations) contravenes article I, section 7 of the Constitution, is an infringement of the privileges of the House of Representatives, and should be recommitted to the committee of conference.	Rep. Archer	n/a	Table 213-212
106th	11/18/1999	H.Res. 394	Returns to the Senate S. 1232 (Federal erroneous retirement coverage corrections) because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, it contravenes the Constitution and infringes upon the privileges of the House.	Rep. Weller	agreed by voice vote	n/a
106th	11/18/1999	H.Res. 393	Returns to the Senate S. 4 (Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines' Bill of Rights) because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, it contravenes the Constitution and infringes upon the privileges of the House.	Rep. Weller	agreed by voice vote	n/a
106th	7/15/1999	H.Res. 249	Returns to the Senate S. 254 (juvenile offenders) because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, it contravenes the Constitution and infringes upon the privileges of the House.	Rep. Portman	agreed by voice vote	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
106th	1/6/1999	H.Res. 10	Appoints specified Members of the House of Representatives as managers to conduct the impeachment trial against William Jefferson Clinton, the President of the United States. Authorizes such managers to exhibit the articles of impeachment to the Senate and to take other necessary actions related to the articles of impeachment.	Rep. Hyde	Agreed 223-198	n/a
105th	12/19/1998	H.Res. 614	Appoints certain Members of the House of Representatives managers to conduct the impeachment trial against President Clinton, and authorizes them to take all necessary actions in connection with the preparation and conduct of the trial.	Rep. Hyde	Agreed 228-190	n/a
105th	12/18-12/19, 1998	H.Res. 611	Sets forth four articles impeaching William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors.	Rep. Hyde	Agreed by voice vote	n/a
105th	10/15/1998	H.Res. 601	Returns to the Senate S. 361 (rhinoceros and tiger conservation) because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, it contravenes the Constitution and infringes the privileges of the House.	Rep. Crane	Agreed by voice vote	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
105th	10/8/1998	H.Res. 581	Authorizes the House Committee on the Judiciary, acting as a whole or by any subcommittee thereof appointed by the chairman for the purposes hereof and in accordance with the rules of the Committee, to investigate fully and completely whether sufficient grounds exist for the House to exercise its constitutional power to impeach President Clinton. Requires the Committee to report to the House such resolutions, articles of impeachment, or other recommendations as it deems proper.	Rep. Hyde	Agreed 258-176	n/a
105th	9/23/1998	H.Res. 545	Impeaches Kenneth W. Starr, an independent counsel of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors.	Rep. Hastings	n/a	Table 340-71
105th	5/14/1998	H.Res. 431	Disapproves of the manner in which Representative Burton has conducted the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight's investigation of political fund-raising improprieties and possible violations of law.	Rep. Gephardt (minority leader)	n/a	Table 223-196
105th	3/5/1998	H.Res. 379	Returns to the Senate S. 104 (radioactive waste disposal) because, in the opinion of the House of Representatives, it contravenes the Constitution and infringes upon the privileges of the House.	Rep. Ensign	Agreed by voice vote	n/a
105th	2/12	H.Res. 355	Dismisses the election contest against Loretta Sanchez.	Rep. Thomas	Agreed 378-33	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
105th	1/28/1998	H.Res. 341	Dismisses the election contest in the 46th District of California.	Rep. Gephardt (minority leader)	n/a	Table 214-189
105th	11/9/1997	H.Res. 318	Dismisses the election contest in the 46th District of California.	Rep. Gephardt (minority leader)	n/a	Table 218-194
105th	11/9/1997	H.Res. 315	Dismisses the election contest in the 46th District of California.	Rep. Gephardt (minority leader)	n/a	Table 215-193
105th	11/5/1997	H.Res. 307	Dismisses the election contest in the 46th District of California unless the Committee on House Oversight reports a recommendation for its final disposition before the expiration of November 7, 1997.	Rep. Furse	n/a	Table 217-194
105th	10/30/1997	H.Res. 294	Declares that unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of October 31, 1997.	Rep. Becerra	n/a	Table 217-193
105th	10/30/1997	H.Res. 293	Declares that unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of October 31, 1997.	Rep. Condit	n/a	Table 212-190

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
105th	10/30/1997	H.Res. 292	Declares that unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of October 31, 1997.	Rep. Norton	n/a	Table 214-187
105th	10/30/1997	H.Res. 290	Dismisses the contested election in the 46th District of California unless the Committee on House Oversight reports a recommendation for its final disposition before the expiration of October 31, 1997.	Rep. Menendez	n/a	Table 212-198
105th	10/30/1997	H.Res. 291	Declares that unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of October 31, 1997.	Rep. Roybal-Allard	n/a	Table 216-200
105th	10/30/1997	H.Res. 296	Declares that unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of October 31, 1997.	Rep. Waters	n/a	Table 214-196

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
105th	10/30/1997	H.Res. 295	Declares that unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of October 31, 1997.	Rep. Hooley	n/a	Table 212-197
105th	10/30/1997	H.Res. 297	Declares that unless the Committee on House Oversight has sooner reported a recommendation for its final disposition, the contest in the 46th District of California is dismissed upon the expiration of October 31, 1997.	Rep. Dooley	n/a	Table 208-192
105th	10/29/1997	H.Res. 287	Dismisses the contested election in the 46th District of California unless the Committee on House Oversight reports a recommendation for its final disposition before the expiration of October 29, 1997.	Rep. Gephardt (minority Leader)	n/a	Table 218-200
105th	10/23/1997	H.Res. 276	Dismisses the contested election in the 46th District of California unless the Committee on House Oversight reports a recommendation for its final disposition before the expiration of October 29, 1997.	Rep. Gephardt (minority leader)	Failed 204-222	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
105th	9/18/1997	H.Res. 233	Instructs the Sergeant-at-Arms to remove former Representative Robert Dornan from the Hall of the House and rooms leading thereto and to prevent him from returning until the election contest concerning the 46th district of California is resolved.	Rep. Menendez	Agreed 289-65	n/a
104th	9/28/1996	H.Res. 554	Returns to the Senate H.R. 400 (Gates of the Artic National Park and Preserve land exchange) because in the opinion of the House of Representatives it contravenes the U.S. Constitution and infringes on the privileges of the House.	Rep. Crane	Agreed by voice vote	n/a
104th	9/27/1996	H.Res. 545	Returns to the Senate S. 1311 (establishing the National Physical Fitness and Sports Foundation) because in the opinion of the House of Representatives it contravenes the U.S. Constitution and infringes on the privileges of the House.	Rep. Archer	Agreed by voice vote	n/a
104th	9/24/1996	H.Res. 532	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to release to the public the outside counsel's report on Speaker Newt Gingrich by September 25, 1996.	Rep. Lewis	n/a	Table 225-173

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
104th	9/24/1996	H.Res. 531	Directs the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to: (1) hire a special counsel to assist in the investigation of the charges filed against the Democratic leader, Representative Richard A. Gephardt; and (2) submit all relevant materials presented to, or developed by, the Committee to date on the complaint to a special counsel for review and recommendation to determine whether the committee should proceed to a preliminary inquiry.	Rep. Linder	n/a	Table 390-11
104th	9/19/1996	H.Res. 526	Requires the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to release to the public the outside counsel's report on Speaker Newt Gingrich.	Rep. Lewis	n/a	Table 225-179
104th	9/19/1996	H.Res. 524	Directs the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to: (1) hire a special counsel to assist in the investigation of an alleged violation by Representative Richard A. Gephardt of the House Rules; and (2) submit all relevant materials on such complaint to the counsel for review and recommendation to determine whether the Committee should proceed to a preliminary inquiry.	Rep. Linder	n/a	Table 395-9

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
104th	6/27/1996	H.Res. 468	Instructs the House Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to transmit the remaining charges against Speaker Newt Gingrich to the outside counsel for his investigation and recommendations.	Rep. Johnston	n/a	Table 229-170
104th	4/16/1996	H.Res. 402	Returns to the Senate S. 1463 (amending the Trade Act of 1974 to revise the definitions of domestic industry and like articles in certain investigations involving perishable agricultural products) because in the opinion of the House of Representatives it contravenes the U.S. Constitution and infringes on the privileges of the House.	Rep. Archer	Agreed by voice vote	n/a
104th	3/21/1996	H.Res. 387	Returns to the Senate S. 1518 (eliminating the Board of Tea Experts) because in the opinion of the House of Representatives it contravenes the U.S. Constitution and infringes on the privileges of the House.	Rep. Archer	Agreed by voice vote	n/a

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
104th	10/25/1995	H.Res. 244	Requires the Speaker of the House of Representatives to take such action as necessary to provide an appropriate remedy (in response to the use of a forged document at a hearing of the Subcommittee on National Economic Growth, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs of the Committee on Government Reform and Oversight) to ensure that the integrity of the legislative process is protected and to report his actions and recommendations to the House.	Rep. Slaughter	n/a	Table 236-189
104th	11/30/1995	H.Res. 288	Requires the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to report to the House of Representatives by December 12, 1995, concerning: (1) the status of the Committee's investigation of the complaints against Speaker Newt Gingrich; (2) the Committee's disposition with regard to the appointment of a nonpartisan outside counsel and the scope of the counsel's investigation; and (3) a timetable for Committee action on the complaints.	Rep. Johnston	n/a	Table 218-170

Congress	Date	Resolution	Subject	Sponsor	Vote on the Resolution	Other
104th	11/17/1995	H.Res. 277	Requires the chairman and ranking member of the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct to report to the House of Representatives by November 28, 1995, concerning: (1) the status of the Committee's investigation of the complaints against Speaker Newt Gingrich; (2) the Committee's disposition with regard to the appointment of a nonpartisan outside counsel and the scope of the counsel's investigation; and (3) a timetable for Committee action on the complaints.	Rep. Peterson	n/a	Table 219-177

Source: Congressional Research Service (using the *Legislative Information System* and the *Congressional Record*). Descriptions of the resolutions were taken from the "CRS Summary", available on the *Legislative Information System*.

Notes: In the 105th Congress, the House imposed a moratorium on raising certain questions of the privileges of the House related to official conduct and ethics complaints. For more information, see *House Manual*, §703.

Author Information

Megan S. Lynch
Analyst on Congress and the Legislative Process

Acknowledgments

The author wishes to thank James Saturno for providing valuable assistance during the designing and writing of this report.

Disclaimer

This document was prepared by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). CRS serves as nonpartisan shared staff to congressional committees and Members of Congress. It operates solely at the behest of and under the direction of Congress. Information in a CRS Report should not be relied upon for purposes other than public understanding of information that has been provided by CRS to Members of Congress in

connection with CRS's institutional role. CRS Reports, as a work of the United States Government, are not subject to copyright protection in the United States. Any CRS Report may be reproduced and distributed in its entirety without permission from CRS. However, as a CRS Report may include copyrighted images or material from a third party, you may need to obtain the permission of the copyright holder if you wish to copy or otherwise use copyrighted material.