

The committee system in congress assignment



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The modern committee structure stems from the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, the first and most ambitious restructuring of the standing committee system since the committee system was first developed. A congressional committee is a legislative sub-organization in the United States Congress that handles a specific duty. Congress divides its legislative, oversight, and internal administrative tasks among approximately 200 committees and subcommittees. Specifically, there are 20 committees, 68 subcommittees, and 4 joint committees.

Although the Senate committee system is similar to that of the House of Representatives, it has its own guidelines, within which each committee adopts its own rules. This creates considerable variation among the panels. This report provides a brief overview of the organization and operations of House and Senate committees. Although Congress has used committees since its first meetings in 1789, the 1946 legislative Reorganization Act set the foundation of today's committee system. The house and Senate each have their own committees and related rules of procedure, which are similar but not identical.

Within the guidelines of chamber rules, each committee adopts its own rules addressing, organizational, structural, and procedural issues; thus, even within a chamber, there is considerable variation among panels. Within their respective areas of responsibility, committee generally operate rather independently of each other and of their parent chambers. The difficult task of aggregating committees' activities, and of integrating policy in areas where jurisdiction is shared, falls largely to the chamber's party leadership.

Congress has three types of committee; select, standing, and joint committee. A select committee is established because the existing standing committee system does not address and issue comprehensively, or because a particular even sparks interest in an investigation. A select committee is maybe permanent or temporary. Special committees tend to be similar in constitution and function and that distinction from select committees is generally thought to be only semantic. Standing committees are permanent panels identified in chamber rules.

The rules also list the jurisdiction of each committee. Because they have legislative jurisdiction, standing committees consider bills and issues and recommend measures for consideration by the respective chambers. They also have oversight responsibility to monitor agencies, programs, and activities within their jurisdictions, and in some cases in areas that cut across committee jurisdictions. Most standing committees recommend authorized levels of funds for government operations and for new and existing programs within their jurisdiction.

Standing committees also have jurisdiction over appropriations (in the case of the Appropriations committees), taxation (in the case of the House Ways and Means and Senate Finance Committees), Carious other revenues such as user fees, and direct spending such as Social security, veterans' pensions, and some farm support programs Select committees usually are establish by a consider measures. Joint committees are made up of Members of both chambers. Today, they usually are permanent panels that conduct studies or perform housekeeping tasks rather that consider measures.

A conference committee is a temporary joint committee formed to resolve differences in senate and House passed versions of a particular measure. The roster of each committee is officially approved by a full vote of its house. However those decisions (including who will serve as chair of each committee) are actually made by the party leadership. Considerations in making the assignments include each member's areas of expertise, the interests of their constituents, and seniority. Political favors also often come into play in committee assignments.