

Some changes have taken place in the caucus rules with respect to time and place of meeting and the agenda. Former rule 3⁽¹⁵⁾ provided simply that “Meetings of the Democratic Caucus may be called by the Chairman upon his own motion, and shall be called by him whenever requested in writing by 25 members of the caucus.”

The present rule⁽¹⁶⁾ specifies in some detail the conditions under which meetings will be held and the matters that will form the agenda.

Present rule 4 provides, as did the former rule 4, that “A quorum of the Caucus shall consist of a majority of the Democratic Members of the House.” Additional language in the present rule 4, however, sets forth specific limits on the business that may be transacted in the absence of a quorum. The rule states:⁽¹⁷⁾

4. . . . If the absence of a quorum is established, the chairman may continue the meeting for purposes of dis-

example, §9, *infra*, for discussion of election of Members to committees; and §10, *infra*, for discussion of instances in which party members will be considered bound by vote of the caucus.

15. 8 Cannon’s Precedents § 3609.

16. Rule 3, Democratic Caucus Rules (July 20, 1971), quoted in §3, *supra*.

17. Rule 4, Democratic Caucus Rules (July 20, 1971).

cussion only, but no motion of any kind, except a motion to adjourn, shall be in order at such continued meeting.

Finally, with respect to persons permitted to attend meetings of the caucus, the former rule 10⁽¹⁸⁾ prohibited all but certain persons from attending meetings. The present rule 10⁽¹⁹⁾ gives to the caucus chairman some authority to admit persons to meetings.

§5. Time and Place of Meetings

A caucus rule, quoted above,⁽¹⁾ contains detailed provisions as to when caucus meetings may or must be held.

The Hall of the House may be used for caucus meetings. A rule

18. 8 Cannon’s Precedents § 3609.

19. Democratic Caucus Rules (July 20, 1971), quoted in §3, *supra*.

Note: An addendum to the caucus rules as adopted in 1973 set forth certain procedures to be followed when it was proposed that a bill be considered in the House pursuant to a closed rule. The procedures to be followed in such circumstances were designed primarily to afford the caucus an opportunity to decide whether the bill should be open to particular amendments. Some discussion of the operation of this provision can be found in Ch. 21, *infra*, of this edition. Further discussion will be found in this chapter in supplements to this edition as they appear.

1. Rule 3, Democratic Caucus Rules (July 20, 1971), quoted in §3, *supra*.

of the House⁽²⁾ provides that, with certain exceptions, "The Hall of the House shall be used only for the legislative business of the House and for the caucus meetings of its Members. . . ."

Notice of caucus or conference meetings may be by letter from the caucus or conference chairman.⁽³⁾ Notice of the meeting at which the caucus or conference organizes for a new Congress is given by the chairman of the caucus or conference of the preceding Congress.⁽⁴⁾

Although the caucus or conference chairman is the officer generally responsible for calling and announcing caucus or conference meetings, other party leaders have on occasion taken the initiative in this regard. Thus, announcements respecting such meetings have been made in the House by the party floor leaders⁽⁵⁾

2. Rule XXXI. See §5.3, *infra*, for an announcement of a meeting to be held in the Hall of the House.
3. See *Cannon's Procedure*, H. Doc. No. 122, 86th Cong. 1st Sess. (1959), p. 187.
4. *Id.*
5. See §§5.3 (Majority Leader), 5.4 and 5.5 (Minority Leader), *infra*. For an occasion on which the Minority Leader, without calling a conference meeting, asked on the floor of the House for an informal indication of Republican sentiment on particular legislation, see §19.2, *infra*.

and even by the Speaker of the House.⁽⁶⁾

The demands of business in the House may prevent the scheduling of meetings at the times desired by the party leaders. On one occasion, the Minority Leader asked that the House take a recess so that a meeting of the Republican Conference could take place; the Speaker declined to entertain the request.⁽⁷⁾

Announcement by Caucus Chairman

§ 5.1 On occasion, the caucus chairman has made an announcement in the House respecting a caucus meeting to be held.

On Jan. 12, 1937,⁽⁸⁾ the Democratic Caucus Chairman, Robert L. Doughton, of North Carolina, announced:

MR. DOUGHTON: Mr. Speaker, I have asked for this time to inform the ma-

For discussion of the more recent procedures used in calling organizational meetings of the caucus prior to the convening of a new Congress, see supplements to this edition as they appear.

6. See §5.2, *infra*.
7. See §5.5, *infra*.
8. 81 CONG. REC. 190, 75th Cong. 1st Sess.

majority Members of the House that there will be a Democratic Caucus at 10:30 o'clock tomorrow morning to hear a report of the majority Committee on Committees.

Announcement by Speaker

§ 5.2 The Speaker announced to the House the calling of a Democratic Caucus to fill a vacancy on the Committee on Ways and Means.

On July 23, 1968,⁽⁹⁾ a Member's letter of resignation from the Committee on Ways and Means having been laid before the House,⁽¹⁰⁾ Speaker John W. McCormack, of Massachusetts, announced from the floor:

Mr. Speaker, I want to announce publicly that there will be a Democratic Caucus on Friday morning at 10 o'clock for the purpose of filling a vacancy that exists on the Ways and Means Committee by reason of the resignation of the gentleman from Florida [Mr. Herlong], whose resignation has been accepted today. I want to make this announcement for the benefit of my Democratic colleagues, so we can have as democratic a caucus as possible.

Announcement by Floor Leader

§ 5.3 In the 90th Congress, the Majority Leader announced

9. 114 CONG. REC. 22800, 90th Cong. 2d Sess.

10. See 114 CONG. REC. 22795, 90th Cong. 2d Sess., July 23, 1968.

in the House that the Democratic Caucus would meet to elect Members to the Committee on Ways and Means.

[Note: For discussion of procedures recently adopted with respect to announcement of organizational meetings of the caucus prior to the convening of a new Congress, see supplements to this edition as they appear.]

On July 30, 1968,⁽¹¹⁾ the following proceedings took place:

MR. [CARL] ALBERT [of Oklahoma]: Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for one minute and to revise and extend my remarks.

THE SPEAKER: Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Oklahoma?

There was no objection.

MR. ALBERT: Mr. Speaker, I take this time to advise the Democratic Members that a caucus of the Democratic Members of the House is called to meet in the Hall of the House of Representatives on Thursday, August 1, 1968, at 10 a.m., for the purpose of electing Members to the Ways and Means Committee.

§ 5.4 The Minority Leader made an announcement in the House concerning a meeting of the Republican Conference.

On Jan. 13, 1937,⁽¹²⁾ the Minority Leader, Bertrand H. Snell, of New York, announced as follows:

11. 114 CONG. REC. 24269, 90th Cong. 2d Sess.

12. 81 CONG. REC. 201, 75th Cong. 1st Sess.

MR. SNELL: Mr. Speaker, there will be a meeting of the . . . Committee on Committees . . . and there will be a Republican Conference in this Hall at 10 o'clock tomorrow morning.

§ 5.5 The Speaker having declined to entertain a request of the Minority Leader that the House take a two-hour recess for a Republican Conference, the Minority Leader subsequently announced a meeting of the Republican Members to take place following adjournment.

On Apr. 11, 1951,⁽¹³⁾ the following proceedings took place:

MR. [JOSEPH W.] MARTIN [Jr.] of Massachusetts: I inquire if the Speaker would agree that the House would take a recess of two hours. I make this request because of the tragic situation that prevails in the world. I should like, if I could, to have a Republican conference. .

THE SPEAKER [Sam Rayburn, of Texas]: The Chair will say that that is a very unusual request. . . .

. . . [T]here is an amendment coming up to the bill that the Chair thinks will take some hours, in all probability.

MR. MARTIN: The Chair understands that in accordance with his policies and the policies I have previously agreed with, too, we desire all our membership to be on the floor when

13. 97 CONG. REC. 3673, 82d Cong. 1st Sess., considering the 1951 amendments to the Universal Military Training and Service Act.

these various bills are being read for amendment. Because of the tremendous importance of the situation in the world today, I should like to submit [the] request. . . .

THE SPEAKER: The gentleman from Massachusetts poses a very hard question for the Chair. For the moment the Chair thinks he will not entertain the request.

Subsequently,⁽¹⁴⁾ Mr. Martin made the following remarks:

. . . I should like to make one more statement: The Members will recall that I was hopeful we might have a recess for two hours in order that we could have a Republican Conference in which we could discuss these latest developments. That request was not granted. May I say, however, that I think the Speaker acted wholly within his province when he did not entertain that request, I know it was neither personal or partisan because I can understand how it might lead to abuses. I am not finding any fault, but I am giving notice that following the adjournment of the House today there will be a meeting of the Republican Members of the House in this Chamber.⁽¹⁵⁾

**§ 6. Specific Functions—
Selection of Leaders**

The caucus and conference organize at the beginning of a Con-

14. 97 CONG. REC. 3676, 82d Cong. 1st Sess., Apr. 11, 1951.

15. For an occasion on which the Minority Leader, without calling a conference meeting, asked on the floor of the House for an informal indication of Republican sentiment on particular legislation, see § 19.2, *infra*.