

Statement of Chairman Tom Cole
Committee on House Administration Hearing: Committee Funding for the 118th Congress
February 28, 2023

Chairman Steil, Ranking Member Morelle, and Members of the committee, thank you for inviting me to testify on the budget request for the Committee on Rules for the One Hundred and Eighteenth Congress. I appreciate the thoughtful and deliberate work you do to ensure that committees have the resources they need to fulfill our constitutional mandate.

Along with my partner on the committee, Ranking Member Jim McGovern, I respectfully request level funding for the One Hundred and Eighteenth Congress to carry out our institutional responsibilities on behalf of the American people. As my colleagues who have previously served on the Rules Committee, Ranking Member Morelle and Ms. Torres, are well aware, on our committee we have no margin for error or delay. We have no ability to turn down work in response to insufficient resources, we have no ability to calibrate our workload based on available funds.

When the House is considering legislation, the Rules Committee must be open for business. Preparing legislation for the floor comes with high fixed costs, costs that don't disappear when the resources get tight. Many other committees may have weeks and months to prepare their work product, however the Rules Committee's agenda is measured in days, hours, and minutes. As a result of the committee's essential and unique role, we invest heavily in a custom automated workflow system, one that allows us to process thousands of amendments in a matter of days.

In the One Hundred and Seventeenth Congress, the Committee processed over 8,500 amendment submissions, an increase of 14% over the previous Congress. We expect to exceed that number, perhaps by a significant amount, in this Congress. We are encouraged by the level of Member and staff engagement in the legislative process so far this Congress and look forward to partnering with committees to move exceptional work product to the House floor in a deliberative process whereby all voices can be heard.

While the Committee on Rules is a standing committee, its function is different than any other. Without the Committee on Rules operating at peak efficiency, the entire institution suffers. Our committee's responsibility is the timely delivery of business to the floor, maintaining the Republican Conference's commitment to transparency and openness in the legislative process, and the fair and efficient handling of Member requests. Due to the previous investments that your committee has allowed us to make, both in staff and technology, we believe we can rise to the challenges, and opportunities, we will certainly confront in the next two years without an increase in funding. As such, our budget request for the One Hundred and Eighteenth Congress is flat funding of \$8,335,614, equally divided between each session.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and I'm pleased to answer any questions you may have.