

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

MEETING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

Wednesday, January 22, 2025

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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
NATURAL RESOURCES
CHAIRMAN BRUCE WESTERMAN

To: House Committee on Natural Resources Republican Members
From: House Committee on Natural Resources Republican Staff
Date: January 17, 2025
Subject: Full Committee Meeting—Consideration of Committee Rules, Authorization and Oversight Plan, and Staff Resolution

The Natural Resources Committee will meet to organize on **Wednesday, January 22, 2025, at 2 p.m.** in room 1324 Longworth House Office Building. The Committee will consider the Committee Rules, the Authorization and Oversight Plan, and a Committee Resolution appointing Committee staff.

Member offices are requested to notify Madeline Kelley (Madeline.Kelley@mail.house.gov) by 4:30 p.m. on January 21, 2025, if their Member intends to participate in the meeting.

I. KEY MESSAGES & TOP LINE ACTIONS

- Members should plan to attend the entirety of the Organizational meeting. Electronically recorded votes are anticipated throughout.
- Staff anticipates that the Committee Rules for the 119th Congress will move under regular order. Roll call votes on amendments and adoption of the rules measures are expected.
- Staff anticipates that the Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 119th Congress will move under regular order. Minority amendments and roll-call votes on the adoption of the Authorization and Oversight Plan are expected.
- Staff anticipates that the Committee Staff Resolution will move under unanimous consent, consistent with past Committee practice.
- The Chair and Ranking Member will also introduce new Committee Members and announce the Subcommittee Chairs.

II. MEASURES TO BE CONSIDERED

A. Rules for the Committee on Natural Resources—119th Congress

The Committee Rules for the 119th Congress is the first measure to be considered. The Committee Rules being proposed for the 119th Congress are substantially similar to those adopted by the Committee in the 118th Congress, with some technical changes to reflect amendments to House Rules. The Committee has amended the rule relating to subpoena authority to include a provision providing for notice to the Minority for any subpoena issued pursuant to Committee Rule 4(d)(1).

B. Authorization and Oversight Plan for the Committee on Natural Resources—119th Congress

Next, the Committee will consider the Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 119th Congress. Under clause 2 of House Rule X, the Committee has general oversight responsibilities to determine whether laws and programs addressing subjects

within its jurisdiction are being implemented and carried out in accordance with congressional intent.

Pursuant to clause 2(d)(1) of House Rule X, the Committee is required to adopt an Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 119th Congress. The Committee must adopt the Authorization and Oversight Plan no later than March 1 of the first session of each Congress. Upon adoption, the Committee is required to submit the Authorization and Oversight Plan to the Committee on Oversight and Accountability and the Committee on House Administration.

C. Committee Resolution Appointing Staff for the Committee on Natural Resources—119th Congress

The final matter to be considered is the Committee Staff Resolution. The purpose of this resolution is to appoint both majority and minority Committee staff. Adoption of this resolution is a formality but has ample precedent throughout the history of the Committee on Natural Resources. The Staff Resolution is typically adopted at the end of the Organizational Meeting by unanimous consent.

Staff contact: Tom Connally, Chief Counsel (Tom.Connally@mail.house.gov); William David, Deputy Chief Counsel, (William.David@mail.house.gov)

ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

Wednesday, January 22, 2025
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Natural Resources
Washington, D.C.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:21 p.m., Room 1324, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Bruce Westerman [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Westerman, Wittman, McClintock, Gosar, Radewagen, LaMalfa, Webster, Fulcher, Stauber, Tiffany, Boebert, Bentz, Collins, Hageman, Amodei, Walberg, Ezell, Maloy, McDowell, Crank, Begich, Hurd, Kennedy; Huffman, Neguse, Leger Fernández, Stansbury, Hoyle, Magaziner, Golden, Min, Dexter, Hernández, Randall, Ansari, Elfeth, Gray, and Rivas.

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will come to order. The Chair notes the presence of a quorum.

Without objection, the Chair is authorized to declare recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Pursuant to clause 2 of House Rule XI, and without objection, the Chair announces that he may postpone further proceedings today on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered.

I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. BRUCE WESTERMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ARKANSAS

The CHAIRMAN. Good afternoon, and welcome to the first official meeting of the Natural Resources Committee for the 119th Congress.

In the House chamber above the Speaker's rostrum is a quote by the 19th century American statesman, Daniel Webster, that says, "Let us develop the resources of our land, call forth its powers, build up its institutions, and promote all its great interests to see whether or not we also, in our day and generation, might do something worthy to be remembered," and I think that is exactly the task we, as the Natural Resources Committee, have before us during this Congress.

If we wisely steward our Nation's lands, waters, wildlife, minerals, and numerous other natural resources, they will be the source of our Nation's prosperity today and for future generations. The devastating effects of the Palisades Fire, the Eaton Fire, and countless other wildfires and natural disasters that came before them make painfully clear that for far too long our natural resources have been mismanaged, degraded, and allowed to become liabilities rather than the assets for our Nation that they should be.

It is this Committee's responsibility to change that course. We must increase access to our public lands and natural resources, managing them well, facilitating economic development for local communities, and expanding recreational opportunities for all Americans. And we did some of that in the last Congress, and we did it in a bipartisan manner, and I think we can do a lot of these goals in a bipartisan manner this year.

Restrictive land use policies, I think, neglect and are a substitute for true conservation. And we need to harness, not hinder our Nation's abundant lands and waters. We must unlock our Nation's energy and mineral resources to produce what we need and what the world needs, here at home. As the country with the highest labor and environmental standards, and the global leader in energy production, there is no reason why the United States should seek out energy resources from adversarial nations.

We need to tackle the systemic issues caused by drought and promote resilience in the West. When left unaddressed, droughts drive food prices sky high, undermine family farmers' livelihoods, and contribute to catastrophic wildfires.

Finally, we have a responsibility to work closely with tribal and insular communities to promote economic opportunities, improve public safety, and ensure they have the resources to thrive.

I have been on this Committee my entire time in Congress, and it is an honor to serve as Chairman in the 119th Congress. I would like to congratulate Mr. Huffman on assuming the role of Ranking Member of this Committee. I look forward to working with each and every one of you this Congress.

You will find some of the most talented folks in Congress on this Committee, each of whom brings a unique perspective and skill set to the table. Their districts range from urban to rural, east to west. But we all have one thing in common, and that is prioritizing the incredible resources with which America has been blessed. I do not doubt that we will have more than our fair share of spirited debates, especially with Mr. Huffman sitting this close to me.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. But I am hopeful we can work together to advance legislation that, in the words of Daniel Webster, is "something that is worthy to be remembered."

But before we can get into the legislative issues we are all excited to tackle, we first must organize and take care of Committee business. I am looking forward to adopting our Committee Rules today and getting to work on many important issues our constituents elected us to consider.

I will now recognize Ranking Member Huffman for any opening statement he may have.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. JARED HUFFMAN, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to you. It is good to be back with you. Congratulations to all the new Members on both sides of the aisle. On behalf of the Democratic Members of this Committee I would like to thank the Majority for working with us to schedule this organizing meeting and for agree-

ing to continue on with the usual Committee practices and norms that have been part of this Committee in the past.

As many of you know, this is my first time serving as the top Democrat on this Committee, and I want you to know that holding that position has been an aspiration and a dream of mine for a long time, way before I came to Congress. It has been inspired by some remarkable champions for our country's natural resources who have served in this position before me, people from all over the country but also including some Californians: the great George Miller; and there was another Californian by the name of Phil Burton, a bit of a legend in the San Francisco Bay area who was the Ranking Member and Chair of this Committee back in the 1970s and 1980s, and actually parlayed that position into coming within one vote of being Speaker of the House. He lost to a guy named Tip O'Neill. And I want you to know that I have no such ambitions or delusions, but I do very much look forward to building on the good work of those who came before us on this Committee.

Over the past 4 years of the Biden-Harris administration we have made historic progress in combating climate change and lifting up Indigenous voices, protecting iconic species, promoting environmental justice, and safeguarding our treasured places for future generations. We have passed the Inflation Reduction Act, which included \$370 billion in funding to fight climate change, the country's most meaningful investment in climate action ever. We protected some of the planet's most pristine resources from fossil fuel extraction. We successfully pushed back against Republicans' many attempts to dismantle environmental protections and sell off our natural resources.

And now we are facing a new chapter, one that I worry will threaten and imperil the natural resources that we have been entrusted to protect on this Committee, and the people and the wildlife that depend on them. In just the first few hours of the second Trump presidency, under full Republican control of Washington, we have seen an avalanche of sweeping Executive Orders to undermine climate action, environmental justice, protections for clean air and water, and long-standing civil rights protections. And that just scratches the surface of what is sure to be in store for us in this Congress.

But I want to thank our Republican friends for previewing a lot of this by publishing Project 2025. You don't have to look back much further than the last Congress, where we began to see much of this agenda rolling forward, laying the groundwork for President Trump's drill, baby, drill agenda and attempting to roll back in the last Congress many of the same protections that people in this Committee decades ago fought to enact, back when we had so many great Republican champions of conservation and public land protection and other environmental values.

To put a finer point on it, I think it is safe to say that we are going to see some of these tried and true antics by the Majority in the weeks and months ahead. We are going to see them denying the reality of climate change, stripping out every mention of it wherever possible. They are going to claw back the game-changing investments that we have made in clean energy and climate resiliency in return for handouts to their billionaire friends. We are

going to see them jam through policies that are no more than a wolf in sheep's clothing so they can sacrifice our public lands and waters to the altar of big oil, and they are going to scapegoat bed-rock environmental laws at every turn—NEPA, the Endangered Species Act, and so forth—in order to gut protections and community input to further advance the special interest agenda. That is a pretty grim picture for what is ahead. I hope I am wrong, but my experience here has taught me that that is likely what we are going to be facing.

I do hold out hope for opportunities for bipartisanship if the Majority is willing to work with us. In my 12 years on this Committee I have found space to carve out that work with my colleagues across the aisle, and I believe we can do it again because at the end of the day we have to govern.

That said, Democrats will be focused on standing up for all families and working people, including Indigenous communities and the U.S. insular areas. We will be working every day to push back against the GOP's extreme pro-polluter agenda because our goal is to tackle the urgent challenges of our time by moving forward real solutions to fight the climate crisis, advance environmental justice, and protect our natural resources for future generations. Doing that is a sacred trust, an intergenerational trust that we take very seriously.

So I look forward to the coming Congress. Again, congratulations everyone. I look forward to serving and working with you.

And Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. I would now like to take a moment to introduce the new Members on the Republican side of the dais. Some of them are new to the Committee, but certainly not new to Congress. We will start with representative Mark Amodei, representing Nevada's 2nd Congressional District.

I think this is your second tour on the Natural Resources Committee, and I look forward to all you will bring to the Committee.

From Michigan's 5th Congressional District, Tim Walberg, who is also the Chairman of the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

I welcome you to the Committee, Tim.

And then also Mike Ezell from Mississippi's 4th Congressional District, a Member that has a lot of expertise and knowledge on the Gulf Coast. We lost two of our former Gulf Coast Members.

And I welcome you to the Committee, Mike.

From Utah's 2nd Congressional District, Celeste McCoy, Maloy. Why do I always say McCoy?

We welcome you, and glad to have you on the Committee, and know how important these issues are to the State of Utah.

Then from North Carolina's 6th Congressional District, Addison McDowell. These are our new freshmen in this Congress.

And I look forward to working with you, Addison.

From Colorado's 5th Congressional District we have Jeff Crank.

And next to him, from Alaska's 1st Congressional District and only Congressional district, Nick Begich.

Then Jeff Hurd is not here, but he represents Colorado's 3rd Congressional District.

And finally, certainly last but not least, another Utahn from Utah's 3rd Congressional District, Mike Kennedy.

So welcome to all of our new Members. And I will now recognize Mr. Huffman.

[Pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, I left a part out. Our Members represent 20 different States and territories, each with its own unique resources and priorities. And again, I believe we have an unchosen obligation to be good stewards of these resources.

And now I recognize Mr. Huffman to recognize their new Members.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have some fantastic new Members that I am honored to introduce to you, starting with Jared Golden from Maine. We have Dave Min from Southern California, the 47th Congressional District, Maxine Dexter from Oregon's 3rd District, Pablo José Hernández Rivera from Puerto Rico, Emily Randall from Washington's 6th District, Yassameen Ansari from Arizona's 3rd District, Sarah Elfleth from Maryland's 3rd District, Adam Gray from California's 13th District, and Luz Rivas from California's 29th District.

We also have rejoining us after a bit of time off the Committee veterans Darren Soto and Julia Brownley.

So great to be part of this team on the Democratic side of the aisle. And thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Huffman. Now I want to recognize the leadership on the Republican side, and it is my pleasure to recognize the designation of Congressman Rob Wittman as the Vice Chairman of the Committee.

Rob, we appreciate your willingness to serve in this position. I know you have leadership positions on other committees, but it is obvious you have been here a while by the seniority you have on the Committee.

On Energy and Mineral Resources, we have returning Chairman Pete Stauber and then Vice Chairman Nick Begich. Their States obviously have vast untapped energy and mineral potential, and I know they will be champions of responsible development.

On Federal Lands, we have Chairman Tom Tiffany returning, except he is not here right now, and Vice Chairman Mike Kennedy, with broad jurisdiction over everything from forestry to national parks. These guys will be leaders in expanding access to the lands we cherish.

On Indian and Insular Affairs, we have Chairman Jeff Hurd, who is, again, not with us right now, and Vice Chair Amata Radewagen. Both of them have valuable insight into the unique challenges that tribal and insular communities face, and I know they will champion a path forward.

On Oversight and Investigations, we have returning Chairman Paul Gosar and Vice Chair Lauren Boebert.

We appreciate the work that you all do and the leadership on that Committee.

Then on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries, Harriet Hageman is moving into the role as Chairman of that Committee, and Mike Ezell will be the Vice Chairman. This Subcommittee is immensely important in addressing issues ranging from Western drought to wildlife

management. And I believe the leadership that these folks will play in this role will be pivotal in finding solutions that work for all Americans.

Clearly, there is no shortage of work to be done here on the Natural Resources Committee, and I am honored to lead a fantastic group of men and women who care about these issues and are passionate about bringing wins home to their district.

And I will say on both sides of the aisle you were able to get wins for your district with bipartisan bills that we passed out of the Committee that ended up getting signed into law. And we got a lot of bills out of this Committee and on the Floor, even if they didn't get passed by the Senate and signed into law.

I want to recognize again Ranking Member Huffman to introduce his Vice Ranking Member and Subcommittee Ranking Members.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations to the Republican Chairs of Subcommittees. I assume that Chair Westerman has told you about the long-standing tradition of, if you have good fishing spots in your district, you are supposed to ask the Ranking Democrat to visit for a fact-finding tour. So we hope to experience that.

But we have a fantastic lineup of leadership on the Democratic side that I will introduce to you now.

Our new Vice Ranking Member of the Full Committee is Sarah Elfreth of Maryland.

No stranger to anyone here, especially all the Coloradans on this Committee, but our Ranking Member of the Federal Lands Subcommittee will be Joe Neguse.

And also coming back for another tour of duty at the Indian and Insular Affairs Subcommittee is Teresa Leger Fernández.

We are pleased to have a new Ranking Member at the Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee, Dr. Maxine Dexter.

And Val Hoyle is stepping over to fill some small shoes as the Ranking Member at the Water, Wildlife and Fisheries Subcommittee.

And finally, Yassameen Ansari is going to be stepping in as the Ranking Member at the Energy and Mineral Resources Subcommittee.

So a great team of Ranking Members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Huffman, and congratulations and welcome to all the Ranking Members and leaders on the Democrat side of the dais.

The next item of business is the consideration of the proposed Committee Rules. Copies of the Rules were circulated to Members' offices last week.

Without objection, the proposed Rules will be considered as read and open to amendment at any point.

[The proposed Rules follow:]

RULE 1. RULES OF THE HOUSE; VICE CHAIRS

(a) Applicability of House Rules.

(1) The Rules of the House of Representatives, so far as they are applicable, are the rules of the Committee on Natural Resources (hereinafter in these rules referred to as the “Committee”) and its Subcommittees.

(2) Each Subcommittee is part of the Committee and is subject to the authority, direction and rules of the Committee. References in these rules to “Committee” and “Chair” shall apply to each subcommittee and its Chair wherever applicable.

(3) House Rule XI is incorporated and made a part of the rules of the Committee to the extent applicable.

(b) Vice Chair.—Unless inconsistent with other rules, the Chair shall designate a Vice Chair of the Committee and appoint Vice Chairs of the Subcommittees. If the Chair of the Committee or Subcommittee is not present at any meeting of the Committee or Subcommittee, as the case may be, the Vice Chair shall preside. If the Vice Chair is not present, the Ranking Member of the Majority party on the Committee or Subcommittee who is present, or the Chair’s designee, shall preside at that meeting.

RULE 2. MEETINGS IN GENERAL

(a) Scheduled Meetings.—The Committee shall meet at 10 a.m. the first Wednesday of each month when the House is in session if so noticed by the Chair under Committee Rule 3(a). The Committee shall also meet at the call of the Chair subject to advance notice to all Members of the Committee. Special meetings shall be called and convened by the Chair as provided in clause 2(c)(1) of House Rule XI. Any Committee meeting or hearing that conflicts with a party caucus, conference, or similar party meeting shall be rescheduled at the discretion of the Chair, in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member. The Committee may not sit during a joint session of the House and Senate or during a recess when a joint meeting of the House and Senate is in progress.

(b) Open Meetings.—Each meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, and each hearing of the Committee or a Subcommittee shall be open to the public, except as provided by clause 2(g) and clause 2(k) of House Rule XI.

(c) Broadcasting.—Whenever a meeting for the transaction of business, including the markup of legislation, or a hearing is open to the public, that meeting or hearing shall be open to coverage by audio and visual recordings in accordance with clauses 2(a)(1) and 4 of House Rule XI. The provisions of clause 4(f) of House Rule XI are specifically made part of these rules by reference. To the maximum extent practicable, the Committee shall provide audio and visual coverage of each hearing or meeting for the transaction of business in a manner that allows the public to easily listen to and view the proceedings, and maintain the recordings of such coverage in a manner that is easily accessible to the public. Operation and use of any Committee internet broadcast system shall be fair, and nonpartisan, and in accordance with clause 4(b) of House Rule XI and all other applicable rules of the Committee and the House.

(d) Authorization and Oversight Plan.—No later than March 1 of the first session of each Congress, the Committee shall prepare and submit its authorization and oversight plan for that Congress in accordance with clause 2(d) of House Rule X.

RULE 3. MEETING AND HEARING PROCEDURES IN GENERAL

(a) Notice and Information for Members and the Public.

(1) The Chair shall publicly announce the date, place and subject matter of a Committee hearing or meeting in accordance with clause 2(g)(3) of House Rule XI.

(2) A hearing or meeting may begin sooner if the Chair, with the concurrence of the Ranking Minority Member, determines that there is good cause to begin the meeting or hearing sooner, or if the Committee so determines by majority vote. In these cases, the Chair shall publicly announce the meeting or hearing at the earliest possible time. The Committee shall promptly notify the Daily Digest Clerk of the Congressional Record and shall promptly make publicly available in electronic form the appropriate information as soon as possible after the public announcement is made.

(3) To the extent practicable, a background memorandum prepared by the Majority staff summarizing the major provisions of any bill being considered by the Committee, including the need for the bill and its effect on current law, will be available for the Members of the Committee and the public no later than 48 hours before the meeting.

(b) Public Availability of Markup Text.—At least 24 hours prior to the markup of any legislation (or at the time of an announcement under paragraph (a)(2) above made within 24 hours before such meeting), the Chair shall cause the text of such legislation to be made publicly available in electronic form.

(c) Meetings and Hearings to Begin Promptly.—Each meeting or hearing of the Committee shall begin promptly at the time stipulated in the public announcement of the meeting or hearing.

(d) Addressing the Committee.—A Committee Member may address the Committee or a Subcommittee on any bill, motion, or other matter under consideration or may question a witness at a hearing only when recognized by the Chair for that purpose. The time a Member may address the Committee or Subcommittee for any purpose or to question a witness shall be limited to five minutes, except as provided in Committee Rule 4(f), and except that the Chair may extend this time period equally for the majority and minority party for the purpose of Members questioning a witness who requires an interpreter. In recognizing Members to question witnesses, the Chair shall take into consideration the ratio of the Majority to Minority Members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in a manner so as not to disadvantage the Members of the Majority or the Members of the Minority. Members shall limit remarks to the subject matter under consideration.

(e) Quorums.

(1) A majority of the Members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the reporting of any measure or recommendation, the authorizing of a subpoena under Committee Rule 4(d); the closing of any meeting or hearing to the public under clause 2(g)(1), clause 2(g)(2)(A) and clause 2(k)(5)(B) of House Rule XI; and the releasing of executive session materials under clause 2(k)(7) of House Rule XI. Testimony and evidence may be received at any hearing at which there are at least two Members of the Committee present. For the purpose of transacting all other business of the Committee, one-third of the Members shall constitute a quorum.

(2) When a call of the roll is required to ascertain the presence of a quorum, the offices of all Members shall be notified, and the Members shall have not less than 15 minutes to prove their attendance. The Chair shall have the discretion to waive this requirement when a quorum is actually present or whenever a quorum is secured and may direct the Director of Legislative Operations or their designee to note the names of all Members present within the 15-minute period.

(f) Participation of Members in Committee and Subcommittees.

(1) Any Member of the Committee may sit with any Subcommittee during any meeting or hearing, and by unanimous consent of the Members of the Subcommittee may participate in such meeting or hearing. However, a Member who is not a Member of the Subcommittee may not vote on any matter before the Subcommittee, be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum, or raise points of order.

(2) Any Member of the House who is not a Member of the Committee may sit with the full Committee or any Subcommittee during any meeting or hearing, and by unanimous consent of the Members of the Committee or Subcommittee may participate in such meeting or hearing. Unless otherwise provided by unanimous consent, such participation includes but is not limited to the right to seek recognition, to submit materials for the record as described in Committee Rule 3(o), and to introduce a constituent witness as described in Committee Rule 4(f)(1). However, a Member of the House who is not a Member of the Committee may not vote on any matter, be counted for purposes of establishing a quorum, raise points of order, or offer motions.

(g) Proxies.—No vote in the Committee or its Subcommittees may be cast by proxy.

(h) Recorded Votes.—Recorded votes shall be ordered on the demand of one-fifth of the Members present, or by any Member in the apparent absence of a quorum. The Chair may conduct any record vote by electronic device in accordance with clause 2(n) of House Rule XI.

(i) Postponed Recorded Votes.

(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the Chair may, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, postpone further proceedings when a recorded vote is ordered on the question of approving any measure or matter or adopting an amendment. The Chair shall resume proceedings on a postponed request at any time after reasonable notice, but no later than the next meeting day.

(2) Notwithstanding any intervening order for the previous question, when proceedings resume on a postponed question under paragraph (1), an underlying proposition shall remain subject to further debate or amendment to the same extent as when the question was postponed.

(3) This rule shall apply to Subcommittee proceedings.

(j) Privileged Motions.—A motion to recess from day to day, a motion to recess subject to the call of the Chair (within 24 hours), and a motion to dispense with the first reading (in full) of a bill or resolution if printed or electronic copies are available and have been properly circulated by the Director of Legislative Operations or their designee, are nondebatable motions of high privilege.

(k) Layover and Copy of Bill.—No measure or recommendation reported by a Subcommittee shall be considered by the Committee until two calendar days from the time of Subcommittee action. No bill shall be considered by the Committee unless a copy has been delivered to the office of each Member of the Committee requesting a copy. These requirements may be waived by a majority vote of the Committee at the time of consideration of the measure or recommendation.

(l) Access to Dais and Conference Room.—Access to the hearing rooms' daises (and to the conference rooms adjacent to the Committee hearing rooms) shall be limited to Members of Congress and employees of the Committee during a meeting or hearing of the Committee, except that Committee Members' personal staff may be present on the daises if their employing Member is the author of a bill or amendment under consideration by the Committee, but only during the time that the bill or amendment is under active consideration by the Committee.

(m) Cellular Telephones and other Electronic Devices.—During a meeting or hearing of the Committee, ringing or audible sounds or conversational use of cellular telephones or other electronic devices is prohibited on the Committee dais or in the Committee hearing rooms.

(n) Motion to go to Conference with the Senate.—The Chair may offer a motion under clause 1 of House Rule XXII whenever the Chair considers it appropriate.

(o) Materials for Record.—Other than witness questions for the hearing record, materials must be submitted within 10 business days following the last day of the hearing or meeting. Witness questions for the hearing record must be submitted to the Director of Legislative Operations or their designee within 3 business days following the last day of the hearing. The materials submitted must address the subject matter of the hearing or meeting. Only a Member of the Committee (including a Member participating as provided in Committee Rule 3(f)) or an invited witness may submit materials for inclusion in the hearing or meeting record.

RULE 4. HEARING PROCEDURES

(a) Written Statement; Oral Testimony.—Witnesses who are to appear before the Committee or a Subcommittee shall file with the Director of Legislative Operations or their designee, at least two business days before the day of their appearance, a written statement of their proposed testimony, including to the extent practicable English translations of any portions not in English. Witnesses shall limit their oral presentation to a five-minute summary of the written statement, unless the Chair, in consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, extends this time period. Subject to the approval of the Committee, the Chair may waive oral testimony of any witness who has submitted written testimony for the record. Any witness appearing before the Committee shall remain available for questioning by the Committee, unless excused by the Chair. In addition, a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity shall file such disclosure materials required by clause 2(g)(5) of House Rule XI. Any witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity shall also disclose any current or pending litigation that involves the Federal Government. Failure to comply with these disclosure requirements may result in the exclusion of the written testimony from the hearing record and/or the barring of an oral presentation of the testimony. Disclosure materials may be signed electronically.

(b) Minority Witnesses.—When any hearing is conducted by the Committee or any Subcommittee upon any measure or matter, the Minority party Members on the Committee or Subcommittee shall be entitled, upon request to the Chair by a majority of those Minority Members before the completion of the hearing, to call witnesses

selected by the Minority to testify with respect to that measure or matter during at least one day of hearings thereon.

(c) Information for Members.—After announcement of a hearing, the Committee shall make available as soon as practicable to all Members of the Committee a tentative witness list and to the extent practicable the Majority staff shall make publicly available a memorandum explaining the subject matter of the hearing (including relevant legislative reports and other necessary material). In addition, the Chair shall make available to the Members of the Committee any official reports from departments and agencies on the subject matter as they are received.

(d) Subpoenas.

(1) The Chair of the Committee may authorize and issue a subpoena under clause 2(m) of House Rule XI.

(2) The Committee may authorize and issue a subpoena under clause 2(m) of House Rule XI if authorized by a majority of the Members voting.

(3) Subpoenas shall be signed only by the Chair of the Committee. Subpoenas may be served by any person designated by the Chair.

(4) For any subpoena issued pursuant to Committee Rule 4(d)(1), the Chair shall, to the extent practicable, cause notice of the issuance of such subpoena to the Minority, and such notice shall be given at least contemporaneously with service of such subpoena.

(e) Oaths.—The Chair of the Committee, the Chairs of the Subcommittees, or any Member designated by the Chair may administer oaths to any witness before the Committee. All witnesses appearing in hearings may be administered the following oath by the Chair or his designee prior to receiving the testimony: “Do you solemnly swear or affirm, under penalty of law, that the testimony that you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?”

(f) Opening Statements; Questioning of Witnesses.

(1) Opening Statements may be made by the Chair and the Ranking Member or their designee. Such Statements shall be limited to five minutes in length. If a witness scheduled to testify at any hearing of the Committee is a constituent of a Member of the Committee (including a Member participating under Committee Rule 3(f)), that Member may be recognized for up to 30 seconds to briefly introduce the witness at the hearing.

(2) The questioning of witnesses in Committee and Subcommittee hearings may be initiated by the Chair, followed by the Ranking Minority Member and all other Members alternating between the Majority and Minority parties. In recognizing Members to question witnesses, the Chair shall take into consideration the ratio of the Majority to Minority Members present and shall establish the order of recognition for questioning in a manner so as not to disadvantage the Members of the Majority or the Members of the Minority. A motion is in order to allow designated Majority and Minority party Members to question a witness for a specified period to be equally divided between the Majority and Minority parties. This period shall not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(g) Claims of Privilege.—Claims of common-law privileges made by witnesses in hearings, or by interviewees or deponents in investigations or inquiries, are applicable only at the discretion of the Chair, subject to appeal to the Committee.

RULE 5. FILING OF COMMITTEE REPORTS

(a) Duty of Chair.—Duty of Chair.—Whenever the Committee authorizes the favorable reporting of a measure from the Committee, the Chair or the Chair's designee shall report the same to the House of Representatives and shall take all steps necessary to secure its passage without any additional authority needing to be set forth in the motion to report each individual measure. In appropriate cases, the authority set forth in this rule shall extend to moving in accordance with the Rules of the House of Representatives that the House be resolved into the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union for the consideration of the measure; and to moving in accordance with the Rules of the House of Representatives for the disposition of a Senate measure that is substantially the same as the House measure as reported. Subject to the approval of the Chair and the Ranking Minority Member, staff may make necessary technical and conforming changes to measures that the Committee has authorized to be reported favorably.

(b) Filing.—A report on a measure that has been approved by the Committee shall be filed within seven calendar days (exclusive of days on which the House of Representatives is not in session) after the day on which there has been filed with the relevant Full Committee staff a written request, signed by a majority of the Members of the Committee, for the reporting of that measure. Upon the filing with

the relevant Full Committee staff of this request, the staff shall transmit immediately to the Chair notice of the filing of that request.

(c) Supplemental, Additional, Dissenting, or Minority Views.—Any Member may, if notice is given by any Member at the time a measure or matter is approved by the Committee, file supplemental, additional, dissenting, or minority views. These views must be in writing and signed by each Member joining therein and be filed with the Committee Chief Counsel not less than two additional calendar days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays except when the House is in session on those days) of the time the bill or resolution is approved by the Committee. This paragraph shall not preclude the filing of any supplemental report on any measure or matter that may be required for the correction of any technical error in a previous report made by the Committee on that bill or resolution.

(d) Review by Members.—Each Member of the Committee shall be given an opportunity to review each proposed Committee report before it is filed with the Clerk of the House of Representatives. Nothing in this paragraph extends the time allowed for filing supplemental, additional, dissenting, or minority views under paragraph (c).

(e) Disclaimer.—All Committee or Subcommittee reports printed and not approved by a majority vote of the Committee or Subcommittee, as appropriate, shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of the report: “This report has not been officially adopted by the {Committee on Natural Resources} {Subcommittee} and therefore may not necessarily reflect the views of its Members.”

RULE 6. ESTABLISHMENT OF SUBCOMMITTEES; FULL COMMITTEE JURISDICTION; BILL REFERRALS

(a) Subcommittees.—There shall be five standing Subcommittees of the Committee, with the following jurisdiction and responsibilities:

Subcommittee on Federal Lands

(1) Measures and matters related to the National Park System and its units, including Federal reserved water rights.

(2) The National Wilderness Preservation System.

(3) Wild and Scenic Rivers System, National Trails System, national heritage areas and other national units established for protection, conservation, preservation or recreational development, other than coastal barriers.

(4) Military parks and battlefields, national cemeteries administered by the Secretary of the Interior, parks in and within the vicinity of the District of Columbia and the erection of monuments to the memory of individuals.

(5) Federal and non-Federal outdoor recreation plans, programs and administration including the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 and the Outdoor Recreation Act of 1963.

(6) Preservation of prehistoric ruins and objects of interest on the public domain and other historic preservation programs and activities, including national monuments, historic sites and programs for international cooperation in the field of historic preservation.

(7) Matters concerning the following agencies and programs: Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program, Historic American Buildings Survey, Historic American Engineering Record, and U.S. Holocaust Memorial.

(8) Public lands generally, including measures or matters relating to entry, easements, withdrawals, grazing, and Federal reserved water rights.

(9) Forfeiture of land grants and alien ownership, including alien ownership of mineral lands.

(10) Cooperative efforts to encourage, enhance, and improve international programs for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources otherwise within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

(11) Forest reservations, including management thereof, created from the public domain.

(12) Public forest lands generally, including measures or matters related to entry, easements, withdrawals, grazing, and Federal reserved water rights.

(13) General and continuing oversight and investigative authority over activities, policies, and programs within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

Subcommittee on Water, Wildlife and Fisheries

(1) Generation and marketing of electric power from Federal water projects by Federally chartered or Federal regional power marketing authorities.

(2) All measures and matters concerning water resources planning conducted pursuant to the Water Resources Planning Act, water resource research and development programs, and saline water research and development.

(3) Compacts relating to the use and apportionment of interstate waters, water rights, and major interbasin water or power movement programs.

(4) All measures and matters pertaining to irrigation and reclamation projects and other water resources development and recycling programs, including policies and procedures.

(5) Indian water rights and settlements.

(6) Activities and programs of the Water Resources and Ecosystem Mission Areas or their successors within the U.S. Geological Survey.

(7) The Endangered Species Act.

(8) Fisheries management and fisheries research generally, including the management of all commercial and recreational fisheries (including the reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act), interjurisdictional fisheries, international fisheries agreements, aquaculture, seafood safety, and fisheries promotion.

(9) All matters pertaining to the protection of coastal and marine environments, estuarine protection, and coastal barriers.

(10) Oceanography.

(11) Ocean engineering, including materials, technology, and systems.

(12) Marine sanctuaries.

(13) U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea.

(14) All matters regarding Antarctica within the Committee's jurisdiction.

(15) Sea Grant programs and marine extension services.

(16) Cooperative efforts to encourage, enhance and improve international programs for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources otherwise within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

(17) Coastal zone management.

(18) Wildlife resources, including research, restoration, and conservation.

(19) Measures and matters related to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, including ecological services, fish and aquatic conservation, international affairs, migratory birds, national wildlife refuge system, wildlife and sport fish restoration, and the Lacey Act.

(20) General and continuing oversight and investigative authority over activities, policies, and programs within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources

(1) Planning for and development of energy from solar and wind resources on land belonging to the United States, including the outer Continental Shelf.

(2) All matters and measures affecting geothermal resources.

(3) Marine hydrokinetic energy development on the outer Continental Shelf.

(4) All matters related to the leasing, development, and conservation of fossil fuel resources belonging to the United States, including on the outer Continental Shelf and land where the surface is owned by entities other than the United States, including decommissioning of relevant facilities and reclamation of affected areas.

(5) Mitigation of energy and mining related impacts on Federal lands and resources.

(6) Terrestrial and geological sequestration of carbon dioxide, except for matters involving implementation of land or forestry management strategies.

(7) All measures and matters concerning the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement.

(8) All measures and matters concerning the U.S. Geological Survey, except for the activities and programs of the Water Resources and Ecosystem Mission Areas or their successors.

(9) Collection and management of energy and mineral revenues.

(10) Mining interests generally, including all matters involving mining regulation and enforcement, including the reclamation of mined lands, the environmental effects of mining, mineral land laws and claims, long-range mineral programs, and seabed mining.

(11) Conservation of United States uranium supply.

(12) Geospatial data collection and management, except for nautical charts (or data collected by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration).

(13) Helium supply and management of the Federal helium program.

(14) Rights-of-way over public lands for pipeline transportation of oil, natural gas, carbon dioxide, helium, and hydrogen.

- (15) Measures and matters concerning the transportation of natural gas from or within Alaska and disposition of oil transported by the trans-Alaska oil pipeline.
- (16) Cooperative efforts to encourage, enhance and improve international programs for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources otherwise within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.
- (17) Rights-of-way over public lands for energy-related transmission.
- (18) All matters relating to mineral withdrawals on public lands and public forest lands.
- (19) General and continuing oversight and investigative authority over activities, policies, and programs within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs

- (1) All matters related to the Federal trust responsibility to Native Americans and the sovereignty of Native Americans.
- (2) Measures relating to the welfare of Native Americans, including management of Indian lands in general and special measures relating to claims that are paid out of Indian funds.
- (3) All matters regarding Native Alaskans.
- (4) All matters regarding the relations of the United States with Native Americans and Native American tribes, including special oversight functions under House Rule X.
- (5) All matters regarding Native Hawaiians.
- (6) All matters regarding insular areas of the United States.
- (7) All measures or matters regarding the Freely Associated States.
- (8) General and continuing oversight and investigative authority over activities, policies, and programs within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

- (1) Primary and general oversight and investigative authority on all activities, policies, and programs within the jurisdiction of the Committee under House Rule X.

(b) Full Committee.—The following measures and matters shall be retained at the Full Committee:

- (1) Environmental and habitat measures of general applicability, including the National Environmental Policy Act.
- (2) Cooperative efforts to encourage, enhance, and improve international programs for the protection of the environment and the conservation of natural resources otherwise within the jurisdiction of the Full Committee.
- (3) All other measures and matters retained by the Full Committee, including those retained under Committee Rule 6(e).
- (4) General and continuing oversight and investigative authority over activities, policies, and programs within the jurisdiction of the Full Committee.

(c) Ex-officio Members.—The Chair and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee may serve as ex-officio Members of each standing Subcommittee to which the Chair or the Ranking Minority Member have not been assigned. Ex-officio Members shall have the right to fully participate in Subcommittee activities but may not vote and may not be counted in establishing a quorum.

(d) Powers and Duties of Subcommittees.—Each Subcommittee is authorized to meet, hold hearings, receive evidence and report to the Committee on all matters within its jurisdiction. Each Subcommittee shall review and study on a continuing basis the application, administration, execution and effectiveness of those statutes, or parts of statutes, the subject matter of which is within that Subcommittee's jurisdiction; and the organization, operation, and regulations of any Federal agency or entity having responsibilities in or for the administration of such statutes, to determine whether these statutes are being implemented and carried out in accordance with the intent of Congress. Each Subcommittee shall review and study any conditions or circumstances indicating the need for enacting new or supplemental legislation within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee. Each Subcommittee shall have general and continuing oversight and investigative authority over activities, policies, and programs within the jurisdiction of the Subcommittee.

(e) Referral to Subcommittees; Recall.

- (1) Except as provided in paragraph (2) and for those measures or matters retained at the Full Committee, every legislative measure or other matter referred to the Committee shall be referred to the maximum extent possible

to the Subcommittee of jurisdiction within two weeks of the date of its referral to the Committee. If any measure or matter is within or affects the jurisdiction of one or more Subcommittees, the Chair may refer that measure or matter simultaneously to two or more Subcommittees for concurrent consideration or for consideration in sequence subject to appropriate time limits, or divide the matter into two or more parts and refer each part to a Subcommittee.

(2) The Chair, with the approval of a majority of the Majority Members of the Committee, may refer a legislative measure or other matter to a select or special Subcommittee. A legislative measure or other matter referred by the Chair to a Subcommittee may be recalled from the Subcommittee for direct consideration by the Full Committee, or for referral to another Subcommittee, provided Members of the Committee receive one-week's written notice of the recall and a majority of the Members of the Committee do not object. In addition, a legislative measure or other matter referred by the Chair to a Subcommittee may be recalled from the Subcommittee at any time by majority vote of the Committee for direct consideration by the Full Committee or for referral to another Subcommittee.

(f) Consultation.—Each Subcommittee Chair shall consult with the Chair of the Full Committee prior to setting dates for Subcommittee meetings and hearings with a view toward avoiding whenever possible conflicting Committee and Subcommittee meetings and hearings.

(g) Vacancy.—A vacancy in the membership of a Subcommittee shall not affect the power of the remaining Members to execute the functions of the Subcommittee.

RULE 7. TASK FORCES, SPECIAL OR SELECT SUBCOMMITTEES

(a) Appointment.—The Chair of the Committee is authorized, after consultation with the Ranking Minority Member, to appoint Task Forces, or special or select Subcommittees, to carry out the duties and functions of the Committee.

(b) Ex-officio Members.—The Chair and Ranking Minority Member of the Committee may serve as ex-officio Members of each Task Force, or special or select Subcommittee if they are not otherwise Members. Ex-officio Members shall have the right to fully participate in activities but may not vote and may not be counted in establishing a quorum.

(c) Party Ratios.—The ratio of Majority Members to Minority Members, excluding ex-officio Members, on each Task Force, special or select Subcommittee shall be as close as practicable to the ratio on the Full Committee.

(d) Temporary Resignation.—Members can temporarily resign their position on a Subcommittee to serve on a Task Force, special or select Subcommittee without prejudice to the Member's seniority on the Subcommittee.

(e) Chair and Ranking Minority Member.—The Chair of any Task Force, or special or select Subcommittee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Committee. The Ranking Minority Member shall select a Ranking Minority Member for each Task Force, or standing, special or select Subcommittee.

RULE 8. RECOMMENDATION OF CONFEREES

Whenever it becomes necessary to appoint conferees on a particular measure, the Chair shall recommend to the Speaker as conferees those Majority Members primarily responsible for the measure. Similarly, the Ranking Member shall recommend to the Minority Leader as conferees those Minority Members primarily responsible for the measure. The ratio of Majority Members to Minority Members recommended for conferences shall be no greater than the ratio on the Committee.

RULE 9. COMMITTEE RECORDS

(a) Segregation of Records.—All Committee records shall be kept separate and distinct from the office records of individual Committee Members serving as Chairs or Ranking Minority Members. These records shall be the property of the House and all Members shall have access to them in accordance with clause 2(e)(2) of House Rule XI.

(b) Availability.—The Committee shall make available to the public for review at reasonable times in the Committee office transcripts of public meetings and hearings, except those that are unrevised or unedited and intended solely for the use of the Committee.

(c) Archived Records.—Records of the Committee that are deposited with the National Archives shall be made available for public use pursuant to House Rule VII. The Chair shall notify the Ranking Minority Member of any decision, pursuant

to clause 3(b)(3) or clause 4 of House Rule VII, to withhold, or to provide a time, schedule or condition for availability of, any record otherwise available. At the written request of any Member of the Committee, the matter shall be presented to the Committee for a determination and shall be subject to the same notice and quorum requirements for the conduct of business under Committee Rule 3.

(d) Records of Closed Meetings.—Notwithstanding the other provisions of this rule, no records of Committee meetings or hearings that were closed to the public pursuant to the Rules of the House of Representatives shall be released to the public unless the Committee votes to release those records in accordance with the procedure used to close the Committee meeting.

(e) Classified Materials.—All classified materials shall be maintained in an appropriately secured location and shall be released only to authorized persons for review, who shall not remove the material from the Committee offices without the written permission of the Chair.

(f) Committee Information Available for the Public.—As required by the Rules of the House of Representatives, the Chair shall cause to be made available publicly in electronic form the following:

- (1) a record of the votes on any question on which a recorded vote is taken.
- (2) copies of all amendments adopted, voted down, or withdrawn.
- (3) the rules of the Committee, once adopted, and any amendments thereto, in accordance with clause 2(a)(2) of House Rule XI.
- (4) the statements required under clause 2(g)(5) of House Rule XI, with appropriate redactions to protect the privacy of the witness.

RULE 10. COMMITTEE BUDGET AND EXPENSES

(a) Budget.—At the beginning of each Congress, after consultation with the Chair of each Subcommittee and the Ranking Minority Member, the Chair shall present to the Committee for its approval a budget covering the funding required for staff, travel, and miscellaneous expenses.

(b) Expense Resolution.—Upon approval by the Committee of each budget, the Chair, acting pursuant to clause 6 of House Rule X, shall prepare and introduce in the House a supporting expense resolution, and take all action necessary to bring about its approval by the Committee on House Administration and by the House of Representatives.

(c) Amendments.—The Chair shall report to the Committee any amendments to each expense resolution and any related changes in the budget.

(d) Additional Expenses.—Authorization for the payment of additional or unforeseen Committee expenses may be procured by one or more additional expense resolutions processed in the same manner as set out under this rule.

(e) Monthly Reports.—Copies of each monthly report prepared by the Chair for the Committee on House Administration that shows expenditures made during the reporting period and cumulative for the year, anticipated expenditures for the projected Committee program, and detailed information on travel, shall be available to each Member.

RULE 11. COMMITTEE STAFF

(a) Rules and Policies.—Committee staff are subject to the provisions of clause 9 of House Rule X, as well as any written personnel policies the Committee may from time to time adopt.

(b) Majority and Nonpartisan Staff.—The Chair shall appoint, determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the legislative and administrative employees of the Committee not assigned to the Minority. The legislative and administrative staff of the Committee not assigned to the Minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Chair, who shall establish and assign the duties and responsibilities of Committee staff and delegate any authority the Chair determines appropriate.

(c) Minority Staff.—The Ranking Minority Member of the Committee shall appoint, determine the remuneration of, and may remove, the legislative and administrative staff assigned to the Minority within the budget approved for those purposes. The legislative and administrative staff assigned to the Minority shall be under the general supervision and direction of the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee who may delegate any authority the Ranking Member determines appropriate.

(d) Availability.—The skills and services of all Committee staff shall be available to all Members of the Committee.

RULE 12. COMMITTEE TRAVEL

In addition to any written travel policies the Committee may from time to time adopt, all travel of Members and staff of the Committee or its Subcommittees to hearings, meetings, conferences, and investigations, including all foreign travel, must be authorized by the Full Committee Chair prior to any public notice of the travel and prior to the actual travel. In the case of Minority staff, all travel shall first be approved by the Ranking Minority Member. Funds authorized for the Committee under clauses 6 and 7 of House Rule X are for expenses incurred in the Committee's activities within the United States.

RULE 13. CHANGES TO COMMITTEE RULES

The rules of the Committee may be modified, amended, or repealed by a majority vote of the Committee provided that written notice of the proposed change has been provided to each Member of the Committee prior to the meeting date on which the changes are to be discussed and voted on consistent with Committee Rule 3(a). A change to the rules of the Committee shall be published in the Congressional Record no later than 30 days after its approval and made publicly available in electronic form.

RULE 14. OTHER PROCEDURES

The Chair may establish procedures and take actions as may be necessary to carry out the rules of the Committee or to facilitate the effective administration of the Committee, in accordance with the rules of the Committee and the Rules of the House of Representatives.

RULE 15. DEPOSITION AUTHORITY

The Regulations for the Use of Deposition Authority as issued by the Committee on Rules pursuant to H. Res. 5 titled—Adopting the Rules of the House of Representatives for the One Hundred Nineteenth Congress, and for other purposes—are incorporated by reference and shall be considered the rules of the Committee.

RULE 16. FORUMS AND ROUNDTABLES

(a) **Generally.**—At the beginning of each forum or roundtable hosted by the Committee, the Member convening the forum or roundtable shall make the following statement: “This event is not an official hearing or meeting of the House Committee on Natural Resources. Documents produced to support this forum may not necessarily reflect the views of the Committee or its Members.”

(b) **Disclaimer.**—All documents generated for the purpose of a Committee forum or roundtable shall contain the following disclaimer on the cover of the document: “This document has not been officially adopted by the {Committee on Natural Resources} {Subcommittee} and therefore may not necessarily reflect the views of its Members.”

RULE 17. MEMBER DAY HEARING REQUIREMENT

To the extent required by House Rules, the Committee or each Subcommittee thereof (other than the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations) shall hold a hearing at which it receives testimony from Members, Delegates, and the Resident Commissioner on proposed legislation within its jurisdiction.

The CHAIRMAN. Does any Member wish to be recognized for purposes of debate on the proposed Rules?

Ms. STANSBURY, you are recognized.

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chairman, I would like to propose an amendment to the Rules.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we are debating the Rules. We haven't—

Mr. HUFFMAN. General—

Ms. STANSBURY. OK.

The CHAIRMAN. We will get to the amendments in just a moment.

Ms. STANSBURY. Great.

Mr. HUFFMAN. So I would like to—

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Huffman.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So it should be no surprise that I will be opposing these Rules, since they dramatically favor the Majority over those of us on my side of the dais. That said, I want to start with some positive comments.

First, it was nice to see language formalizing our long-standing use of electronic voting. That is these gizmos that I believe it was Chairman Bishop first brought into practice. That is a good use of our time. I think all of us who have been on this Committee should declare victory and celebrate that the other committees will finally be joining us in the modern world soon. These guys have found their way into the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee now and some others, as well. So Chairman Bishop's legacy is impressive.

I also want to acknowledge you have proposed keeping the Subcommittee issue areas the same as the last Congress. It is probably not how Democrats would organize things if we were in the Majority, but it provides some continuity, which we can appreciate.

And on that point I want to acknowledge that, in fact, across the board these Rules stop short of making any substantive changes from last time. There are things in here that we still don't like, as I will be discussing shortly. But I do appreciate the Republicans not making things worse with any dramatic changes or picking any unnecessary fights. We will have the necessary ones, but it is good to not have unnecessary ones.

The lack of substantive changes cuts both ways, though. It would have been nice to see some engagement and negotiation with the Minority because I think there are changes that we could have worked out together to make these Rules better. The last time Democrats had the Majority we provided the proposed Rules to you weeks before the organizing meeting so that you could review and develop suggestions and discuss them with us. Unfortunately, you in your Congress and your conference were able to negotiate with Democrats on 10 Rule changes that you requested. We would have appreciated more notice, but I am glad we got to do that. Some of those requests we met in full, and we gave partial concessions on others. It was collegial and collaborative, and I am grateful for that.

This time around I came to you with several detailed suggestions and requests in writing well in advance, and yet none of those have fully been addressed. The closest that these Rules come is a new line in there saying that the Chair will provide us all with notice of any subpoena that he issues, but only if doing so is practicable. That is not a real notice requirement and is not good enough.

As I said at the start, I urge my Democratic colleagues to oppose these Rules since they disempower the Minority. Those disadvantages are across the board. But in a few moments, when we get to amendments, I will focus my opposition on two specific topics. With that I urge Members on my side of the aisle to vote against the Rules as proposed.

And I thank you, Mr. Chairman and I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Is there further discussion on the Rules?

It is now in order to consider amendments to the proposed Committee Rules. Are there any amendments?

Mr. HUFFMAN. Ms. Stansbury.

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady from New Mexico.

Ms. STANSBURY. All right. Well, welcome to the 119th Congress. It is wonderful to be here with all of you this morning. And congratulations both to Mr. Chairman and our Ranking Member and to our newest Members on both sides of the aisle. We welcome you to the Natural Resources Committee.

Today, I would like to offer an amendment to the Rules, and specifically to Rule No. 4, which is the hearing procedures for this Committee. You have in front of—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady will suspend. We went out of order on the amendments. But as I recognize you, I need to say I am going to recognize you for the purpose of offering an amendment designated Stansbury No. 3 Revised.

And without objection, the amendment is considered read.

[The amendment of Ms. Stansbury follows:]

Amendment 3 to the Rules for the House Committee on Natural Resources (119th Congress), offered by Rep. Stansbury

Rule 4 is amended by adding a new subsection (h) after the end of subsection (g):

The Committee and its Subcommittees shall consult with any federally recognized Tribal Nation and confer with any Tribal and or Insular entity on any particular matter that would affect that nation or entity prior to taking action on that matter.

The CHAIRMAN. Now you can go.

[Laughter.]

Ms. STANSBURY. Would you prefer to go in the order of the amendments as listed?

The CHAIRMAN. This is fine.

Ms. STANSBURY. OK, all right. All right. So back to the matter at hand.

Today I am proposing an amendment to Rule No. 4, which is the hearing procedures of the Committee. You have the amendment in front of you, which is marked amendment No. 3.

Now, the purpose of this amendment is very simple, very straightforward. It is intended to make the process by which we pass legislation or consider policy changes that might affect our tribal nations or our insular areas done in consultation and conference with the communities who are actually impacted by them. This is actually the basic procedure. It is required by Executive Order within the executive branch. But we have not within this Committee held ourselves accountable with a similar Rule.

So I am going to read the Rule here. Rule 4 is amended by adding a new subsection H after the end of subsection G: "The Committee and its Subcommittees shall consult with any tribal nation and confer with any tribal and/or insular entity on any particular

matter that would affect the nation or entity prior to taking action on that matter.”

Now, the purpose of this Rule change, as I said, is to require consultation with our tribal nations. This is already Federal law pursuant to Executive Order within the executive branch. And because this Committee has significant jurisdictional impacts on our insular areas including, of course, Puerto Rico and our islands in the Pacific and the nations that we work with in partnership, we want to make sure that there is a formal process that governs the Committee as we consider and take actions impacting these communities.

Now, I find that this is a particularly timely and relevant amendment at this particular moment, because only 2 days ago, when the current Administration took office, our newly-minted President introduced and signed an Executive Order to change the name of Mount Denali. Now, many of you are probably familiar with Mount Denali, and I know we have an Alaskan here on the Committee, welcome.

Because this mountain is not only the highest peak in the continental United States and in Alaska, it is also a sacred mountain to the Alaska Native people who have called it home since time immemorial. And in fact, the former Chairman of this Committee, Representative Don Young, had carried legislation to change the name of Mount Denali back to Denali from Mount McKinley for many years. And in fact, the State of Alaska, even under GOP leadership, had petitioned the U.S. Government to change Denali's name since 1975.

So for the incoming President to take unilateral action to change the name of this sacred mountain without consultation of the tribal nations that are impacted by them is something that we just simply cannot abide by. And certainly we want to hold this Committee to account and make sure that, as we enter this new policy era, that we are consulting with our Tribes, our tribal nations, our tribal entities, and with our insular areas and friends across the world as we take decisions that will impact them.

And with that I stand for questions.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

I recognize myself.

Ms. LEGER FERNÁNDEZ. Mr. Chair? Sorry.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you asking for—

Ms. LEGER FERNÁNDEZ. Yes, whenever—

The CHAIRMAN. I will recognize you first.

Ms. LEGER FERNÁNDEZ. Yes, because you want to end, right?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Ms. LEGER FERNÁNDEZ. The prerogative of the Chair.

I just want to raise my voice in support of this. The great thing is, in the Indian and Insular Affairs Committee, we always do have Native American representation on the bills. That is the whole purpose of the Committee. And I think what this is looking for is what happens in the other committees to make sure that we do have that consultation, that we carry it forward.

There has always been an Executive Order that recognizes that there is a trust responsibility to do this. So the Federal agencies

have for decades recognized the importance of having that tribal consultation when it matters. I think the Denali example would be a good one because that would probably fall under Federal lands and not under Indian and Insular Affairs. So you would want to make sure you had that consultation in that kind of circumstance.

And with that, Mr. Chair, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back. Is there further discussion?

I will recognize myself. I oppose this amendment because it is really unnecessary. It is duplicative. And I think the results of our work in the last Congress will highlight that.

And personally, as Chairman, I have been committed to regular order of process in the Committee that allows for robust opportunities for input from Members of Congress, as well as tribal, State, and local officials and outside stakeholders alike.

I want to go through some of the numbers here. Last Congress, we continued our efforts to highlight native voices and work collaboratively with Tribes and tribal organizations. We hosted over 50 tribal witnesses who testified across all our Subcommittee jurisdictions. Each witness presented aspects of the multifaceted and complex opinions that Tribes and individual Native Americans have within Indian Country. Receiving information from tribal leaders about the challenges they face and the successes they have had highlights how important it is for Congress to work with Tribes to find solutions to address the most pressing needs in tribal communities.

And again, I will say the work of this Committee speaks for itself. For example, the Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs held 16 tribally-focused hearings in the 118th Congress. These hearings covered issues including public safety in Indian Country, holding the Indian Health Service accountable, putting land into trust to benefit individual Tribes, and improving burdensome bureaucratic policies that Tribes and tribal members must navigate. Of the 23 tribal bills our Indian and Insular Affairs Subcommittee had hearings on, 6 individual bills that benefited Tribes were signed into law last Congress. These were bills supported by this Committee in a bipartisan manner.

The Committee has also done remarkable work with our insular territories. We held 10 insular hearings and invited 27 witnesses from the insular areas to present their views on legislation and oversight topics. The Committee went so far as to hold a historic field hearing in Guam to learn firsthand about growing Chinese aggression in the Indo-Pacific, the key role Guam plays in our national defense, and the importance of the Compacts of Free Association, which I am proud of the fact that we worked in a bipartisan manner to reauthorize COFA in the last Congress.

We will continue working with our tribal and insular partners this Congress, and no change to the Committee Rules is required to allow this to happen.

I oppose the amendment, and I urge my colleagues to oppose, as well.

Ms. STANSBURY. Mr. Chairman——

The CHAIRMAN. Is there any further discussion?

Mr. HUFFMAN. You want some time?

Ms. STANSBURY. Would you yield, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Huffman, you are recognized.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to yield some time to the gentlelady from New Mexico.

But first I just want to say that it is disappointing that our friends across the aisle that have a nice, prepared list of all of the things that they can point to saying that they take tribal interests and the respect for Indian Country seriously would reject a simple proposal that we include native voices when we are taking actions like perhaps acting on the new President's insane idea to re-colonialize and rename Denali. That is something that we should all quickly acknowledge is of special interest to Native Alaskans. They should be at the table. They should be advising us, informing us. And it seems like an easy ask to acknowledge that in our Rules.

So I am disappointed to hear that, especially in the wake of just some dystopic rhetoric, including the inaugural speech which romanticized manifest destiny without any discussion of all of the massacres of Native Americans that were part of that dark history. It seems like we should do better.

And with that I yield the balance of my time to the gentlelady from New Mexico.

Ms. STANSBURY. Well, I thank the Ranking Member especially for reminding us of the words that we heard actually in the halls of this Congress just a few days ago.

I think in my time working in the Federal Government I never expected that in the year 2025 we would hear a sitting U.S. President regale an era of colonialism, expansion, an era in which we intentionally, as a Nation, invaded other countries and colonized their lands. And to speak so blatantly and openly about the taking of native lands across the West, and then to take an executive action as one of their first actions, and to do it publicly in front of the American people without any regard for the native voices who would be impacted from it, I think, is truly shocking and chilling in the year 2025.

So while I appreciate that there has been an effort by the Chairman, and I do respect greatly the Chairman and colleagues across the aisle who do make an effort to bring tribal leaders and voices into this Committee. Notwithstanding that and the list of excellent work that was done by this Committee last Congress, there were multiple bills that went to the House floor for a vote that the tribal leaders of those communities who were impacted by them did not support.

So there is a need to have formal consultation in the Rules of this Committee to hold ourselves accountable, and especially as we are entering an era in which we have a sitting President who is openly glorifying the taking of lands, of islands, and other countries, and of Indigenous communities. I think we need to hold ourselves to account and do better in this Committee.

And I yield back.

Mr. HUFFMAN. The gentleman yields back. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

Ms. BOEBERT. Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. Ms. Hageman—

Ms. BOEBERT. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. I think, is first.

Ms. HAGEMAN. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Indian and Insular Affairs for the 118th Congress, and I take great pride in the work that we did on behalf of our Tribes throughout the country, addressing everything from the issues associated with security and the Indian Health Service's economic development.

Not only did we have numerous hearings addressing those issues throughout the entire 2-year period, but we also had a roundtable discussion, I believe, in September or October of last fall that lasted several hours, brought in tribal members again from around the country, and focused specifically on the security, the economic development, and challenges we have with providing Indian health services.

There is nothing that prevents us from bringing in tribal members for any hearing that we may have, whether it is of the Committee as the whole, or it is the individual Subcommittees such as Water, Wildlife and Fisheries. And in fact, I would assume that the Committee Chairs will be inviting a variety of tribal members to come and testify on those matters that are important to them, depending upon the issue at hand.

I take offense at anyone who might imply that there is any sort of racism associated with it on this side of the aisle, where the decisions that we are making. Again, I think that the work that we did last year on this Subcommittee was stellar. I have developed incredible relationships with tribal members around the country addressing the challenges that they have, and I anticipate that, just like with me, with everyone else on this Committee, they will continue to reach out to us and participate in this process just as any other citizen of the United States would on those matters that are important to them.

With that I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back. Is there further discussion?

Ms. Boebert, you are recognized.

Ms. BOEBERT. Mr. Chairman, I would just like to second the former Chairwoman's comments. And we have always invited our tribal leaders and members here to the Committee, and have been open to these discussions.

I served on the Subcommittee in my first Congress, and I have worked closely with Chairman Baker with the Southern Utes in Colorado and Chairman Heart with the Ute Mountain Utes. And we have put forward some very good legislation that benefits our tribal lands. We have worked closely to mitigate the wolf situation in Colorado specifically.

And even with the NCA that I put forward, that was something that our tribal leaders had been working on for a little over a decade. And I did not receive any Democrat support there on that piece of legislation, but this was something that our tribal leaders spoke up and wanted Congress to move forward with, a bipartisan, really common sense position on conservation.

And so I would say that this is duplicative, and this Subcommittee would never reject the opinions of our tribal leaders or members. We enjoy working closely with them. We recognize their

sovereignty, and we also recognize the need for energy independence here in America and how we can better deal with them in a fashion that also realizes the debt that we are facing, this cliff that we are about to jump off of, and then, of course, honor their requests and hear from them.

So I appreciate the amendment that is offered to highlight the needs of our friends in our tribal lands, but I would also urge a “no” vote against this because we have always extended that invitation.

Mr. Chairman, I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

If there is no further discussion, the question is on the amendment offered by Ms. Stansbury designated Stansbury No. 3, Revised.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

All those opposed, no.

In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it and the amendment is not agreed to.

Ms. STANSBURY. I would like a recorded vote, please.

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been requested. Further proceedings on this amendment will be postponed.

I will now recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Huffman, for the purpose of offering an amendment designated Huffman No. 1.

Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.

[The amendment of Mr. Huffman follows:]

Amendment 1 to the Rules for the House Committee on Natural Resources (119th Congress), offered by Mr. Huffman of California

Committee Rule 3 is amended by adding the following to the end—

(p) Remote Witnesses.—

- (1) If the Ranking Minority Member of the Committee requests, by providing the Chair of the Committee with Written Justification, the remote participation of a Designated Witness in a Committee or Subcommittee hearing, then the Chair shall approve the request for purposes of section 3(i) of H. Res. 5 (119th) and shall take any steps necessitated by any regulations issued pursuant to section 3(i) of H. Res. 5 (119th) to secure the remote participation of the Designated Witness.
- (2) For purposes of this Rule 3(p), the term “Designated Witness” means a nongovernmental witness who:
 - (A) Is from an insular area of the United States, a Native American tribe, a Native Alaskan community located in Alaska, or a Native Hawaiian community located in Hawaii; and
 - (B) Would be invited to testify on a matter regarding insular area matters, tribal matters, Native Alaskan matters, or Native Hawaiian matters, respectively.
- (3) For purposes of this Rule 3(p), the term “Written Justification” means a written document containing a detailed explanation of why the Designated Witness is eligible for approval under section 3(i) of H. Res. 5 (119th) and the regulations issued pursuant to section 3(i) of H. Res. 5 (119th).

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So I was disappointed but not surprised to see that the Republican Rules package once again blocks Democrats from ever picking witnesses who would be testifying remotely. Under these Rules, only the Chair gets to invite a witness who would appear remotely. And even then it is only after obtaining approval from the Majority Leader, Steve Scalise.

So in addition to being completely partisan, it is mystifying to me why you would do this. Is this just lingering distaste for anything that was a precaution during the COVID period? I am not coming at this from a public health perspective. It is about democracy. Now that we have these technologies, do we think that Congress should hear only from witnesses who are close enough to Washington, D.C. to hop over here on short notice, or from those who maybe can't get multiple days off work?

What about those who can't get multiple days off work? What about those who can't afford a babysitter? What about those who can't afford an expensive lobbyist to speak on their behalf, much less a plane ticket and a Washington, D.C. hotel? What about witnesses who live in other parts of the world who would otherwise struggle to travel here?

So our jurisdiction includes places like Guam, American Samoa, remote Tribes, Alaska Native villages, Native Hawaiian communities. We should be hearing from those people in those locations, many of whom represent marginalized communities.

I will also note that even before the pandemic this Committee had sometimes allowed witnesses to testify remotely. So this should not be a partisan issue. Now, when he was Ranking Member of the EMR Subcommittee, our colleague, Mr. Gosar, requested and Democrats approved that a tribal witness be allowed to testify remotely. And that was before the House's pandemic-era policies, by the way.

So my amendment would require the Chair to request the Majority Leader's approval for a remote witness requested by the Minority in very specific circumstances. The witness would be from an insular area, for example, a Tribe, a Native Alaskan community in Alaska, or a Native Hawaiian community if the witness would be testifying on an insular or Indigenous topic, and that we provide written justification for those requests. That is not too much to ask.

That last part, by the way, the written justification, is the paperwork that the Chair has to submit to the Majority Leader. So we are even offering to fill out the permit application for you if you can just work with us to make this happen in special circumstances.

This is not complicated. It is not costly or even precedent-breaking. It simply allows us to expand our witnesses beyond wealthy stakeholders and Beltway lobbyists, and to include the voices of underserved communities whose lives are impacted by a lot of the work we do on this Committee.

I ask my colleagues to choose to hear from all of the American people, and I urge adoption of this amendment.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

Mr. Neguse.

Mr. NEGUSE. I thank the Chairman. I would just underscore my support for the Ranking Member's amendment for all of the reasons that he articulated.

When I first joined this Committee in 2019, as the Ranking Member articulated, there were practices in effect to enable the remote testimony for witnesses under certain circumstances. This was pre-pandemic, it has nothing to do with the pandemic. It is all about ultimately ensuring that every American can participate in their government.

And in particular, for Members like myself who represent large rural districts, this particular provision is a salient one. I know we have many new Members from Utah and Alaska and others, and we welcome you all. And of course, my newest colleagues from Colorado. And they will well understand that requiring a rancher in Jackson County in my district to expend great resources to come travel to Washington, D.C. to testify on a particularly simple or elementary bill regarding a land exchange, just by way of example, is unnecessary.

And all we are asking for here is a little flexibility. Let's provide some level of flexibility within the Rules that would require the consent of the Majority, obviously, as well as the Minority to be able to ultimately have witnesses testify here remotely. I don't think it is a large ask, and I would think that it would be a prudent thing for this Committee to consider.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Is there further debate on the amendment?

Ms. Leger Fernández, you are recognized.

Ms. LEGER FERNÁNDEZ. Mr. Chair, thank you very much, and I think that, you know, as I mentioned, what I love about serving on this Committee, and serving when I first came in as Chair of the Subcommittee on Indigenous Peoples and now the Indian and Insular Affairs, is the range of voices that we absolutely must hear from.

And I had the great benefit, by the way, Representative Begich, of having Don Young serve as the Ranking Member when I first came on, and he taught me so much. But many times the people that I learned from were in Alaska, and were in places that made it very difficult for them to get here. And I learned in my own trips to Alaska that there are no roads, right? That too often, and in the middle of winter, there aren't roads. It is not like you can get on a road and climb. It is hard to get here.

And so what this is, is this is simply a request to make a request. It isn't mandatory. It is this: Would you please ask if it were OK if people in Alaska, if people far away, Chair Westerman, I am so grateful to you for having taken us to the blue continent to see the insular areas because it takes so long to get there. Never did I realize how hard it was to get here from Guam and from those places.

So there are places that are very, very far away. And I think recognizing that, having the kind of guardrails that are in the amendment, and just asking, "would you please ask if it were all right, if they were able to participate," it is not all the time, because I do recognize it is always, I do like having that live body here, and

the interchange that we have. So it is only in those special circumstances.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back. Is there further discussion?

Mr. Crane?

Mr. CRANK. Mr. Chairman, just a point of clarification. Does anything in the current Rules prohibit this remote testimony now?

The CHAIRMAN. No, and I will address that a little bit later.

Mr. CRANK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Any further discussion? Any further discussion on the issue?

I will recognize myself. And again, I oppose this amendment because, quite frankly, it is unnecessary. House Rules already provide for remote witnesses.

I can tell you, after suffering through COVID and all witnesses being remote, I am a big fan of in-person witnesses. But however, there could be special circumstances where a request is made, and the Chair can approve a remote witness; the amendment would just require the Chair to accept the remote witness if the request were made by the Ranking Member.

So we still have the opportunity to have remote witnesses if it is a circumstance where that is justified, but I think the Committee is better served when we have witnesses in person. And if at all practicable, I would love to have the witnesses here in person. So therefore, I oppose the amendment and urge my colleagues to oppose it as well.

Is there further discussion?

Ms. Hoyle, you are recognized.

Ms. HOYLE. Thank you. I yield my time to Mr. Huffman.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Thank you to the gentlelady from Oregon.

So I am not hearing any great opposition across the aisle to special circumstances that may make it totally appropriate to allow remote testimony, but I am hearing opposition to a Rule that would simply give us a guarantee and assurance that, if we come to you in one of those special circumstances and ask that you take this to Steve Scalise and ask for permission, that you will do it. I think that is not asking much.

But look, if what I am hearing from you, Mr. Chairman, and from your colleagues across the aisle is that the Rules will allow you to do that as a courtesy, and that you will extend that courtesy to Democrats, I would at least like you to put that on the record, to at least give us that assurance verbally now that if we come to you with compelling circumstances, that you will take that request to Steve Scalise and see if we can't work it out so we can hear from people in Samoa and other parts of the world that are going to have a hard time getting here on here on short notice.

The CHAIRMAN. If you are asking that in the form of a colloquy, I will just say that—

Mr. HUFFMAN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN [continuing]. You know, elections have consequences. And as the Majority, that would be giving away power of the Majority to say that we are required to do something the Minority asks us to do.

Now, working in good faith, we will take those requests under consideration. But I still oppose your amendment.

Is there—

Mr. HUFFMAN. We will put that good faith to the test, I am sure. And I appreciate the exchange.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there further discussion on the amendment? The gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. MCDOWELL. Mr. Chairman, just a point of clarification. Is there anything that would prohibit this Committee from doing a field hearing for somebody if they are a necessary witness that could not get here?

The CHAIRMAN. We do a lot of field hearings, but I don't think we would schedule a field hearing specifically because somebody couldn't come to Congress. But we do a lot of field hearings, and we are actually planning a tribal field hearing soon in the year.

But yes, the Committee is known for doing a lot of field hearings.

Mr. MCDOWELL. Yes, well, I would echo my opposition to this amendment as well, sir.

Ms. STANSBURY. Does the gentleman yield, Mr. Chairman?

Gentleman, thank you for the time.

I think it is useful just to respond, and also for folks who are watching. Folks may not realize that when you are invited to come and testify in front of the Committee, you have to pay for it at your own expense. And so the purpose of the amendment is to ensure that this Committee is accessible to all Americans, no matter where you live, what your income status is. And especially for folks like myself, Congresswoman Leger Fernández, and those of us who come from rural and more remote areas, it is extremely challenging, financially challenging, geographically challenging for many of our leaders from our communities to come and testify in person.

And while the Committee Rules do not prevent us from doing this, and I appreciate that, part of the purpose of having Rules is to be clear on our intentions as a Committee. If we could just do whatever we wanted because the Rules didn't tell us we couldn't, then we don't even need Rules; that is the whole point of having Rules. So that is why we are offering the amendment.

And I am really glad you asked the question, because the whole point is to make sure that people who are affected by our decisions can participate. So thank you for yielding.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

Ms. RANDALL, you are recognized.

Ms. RANDALL. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I will recognize I am very new to Congress, and I am adjusting to the things that are different from my State legislature.

I had the great honor of chairing the Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee in the Washington State Senate. And even before COVID, our Committee piloted fully remote testimony because Washington State is certainly smaller than the country, but it is a big State that takes a long time for folks to travel from one corner to the other. And particularly for our

Republican neighbors who lived in the more rural parts of Washington, what it meant was that we had more balanced and more accessible testimony for folks who couldn't take time off work, who had child care needs, who wanted to be present at the request of the Chair or, as is allowed in Washington, because they are interested in bringing their voice to the legislature. And I think it shaped committees that were more impactful for the people.

And I completely respect your decision, Mr. Chairman. And yes, elections do have consequences. But, you know, I think it is incumbent upon all of us to think about how we are making the halls of power more accessible to the people we represent. And that is why I will be voting yes to this amendment today.

I yield.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady yields back. Mr. Gosar, you are recognized.

Dr. GOSAR. Yes. Could anybody on the other side tell us one case that did not go through that was not asked for, please?

Yes.

Ms. STANSBURY. Thank you. Does the gentleman yield?

Dr. GOSAR. Yes, sure.

Ms. STANSBURY. Oh, thank you, gentleman. Well, I had the joy, and sometimes challenge, of course, of being the Ranking Member with you, Mr. Gosar.

Dr. GOSAR. It must have been a joy.

Ms. STANSBURY. It was a joy, we had some good times.

So, yes, I mean, there were a number of cases where we invited Minority witnesses but, due to financial or geographic hardships, they were not able to come and testify in front of the Subcommittee. And I think this happens all the time, but it may fly under the radar and not rise to the level even that maybe the whole Committee is aware of it.

So it does impact our communities on a day-to-day basis, and certainly we want to make sure that our communities have the access.

So I yield back.

Dr. GOSAR. Well, my question would be, you know, to see that. But I think that the Chairman has been and done everything in good faith. And I would love to kind of monitor this to see who and what can't come to here. I do understand the farthest reach, because I have had almost all of rural Arizona at one time or another. So from that standpoint, I would like to see kind of a reporting of why and who couldn't come.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

If there is no further discussion, the question is on the amendment offered by Mr. Huffman designated Huffman No. 1.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

All those opposed, no.

In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it.

Mr. HUFFMAN. Yes, a recorded vote, please.

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been requested. Further proceedings on the amendment will be postponed.

I recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Huffman, for the purpose of offering an amendment designated Huffman No. 2.

Without objection, the amendment is considered as read.
[The amendment of Mr. Huffman follows:]

Amendment 2 to the Rules for the House Committee on Natural Resources (119th Congress), offered by Mr. Huffman of California

Committee Rule 4(d)(1) is amended by striking “under clause 2(m) of House Rule XI.” and inserting the following:

“subject to the following conditions:

“(i) No subpoena shall issue under authority of this Committee Rule 4(d)(1) until seven calendar days have elapsed after the Chair of the Committee has consulted with the Ranking Member regarding such subpoena. Such consultation shall be in writing and shall include a justification for the proposed subpoena, a copy of the subpoena, and any production schedules.

“(ii) No subpoena shall issue under authority of this Committee Rule 4(d)(1) if a majority of the Members of the Committee, within the seven-day consultation period, request of the Chair in writing a special meeting of the Committee to consider the proposed subpoena under Committee Rule 4(d)(2).”

Committee Rule 4(d)(4) is amendment by striking “, to the extent practicable,”.

Mr. HUFFMAN. All right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is my second and last amendment today.

Under the proposed Rules the Chair can issue subpoenas without a vote, in secret, without notifying the rest of us, even after the fact notifying the rest of us. A subpoena can change a person's life profoundly, altering their careers, costing them tens of thousands of dollars or more in legal fees. Oversight is a critical function of this Committee, but subpoenas need to be taken very seriously. There needs to be at least some measure of accountability.

I would like to remind my colleagues of some very recent historical context when it comes to our decisions around subpoena power. When Democrats had the Majority, Chair Grijalva struck a deal with Ranking Member at the time, Mr. Bishop, about these unilateral subpoenas. Instead of allowing the Democratic Chair to issue a subpoena with no restrictions, we agreed with Republicans that the Minority would get 7 days' notice before a subpoena was issued, along with a written justification for the subpoena. We also agreed that Members could veto the subpoena during that 7-day period if over half the Members signed a letter requesting a meeting to vote on it instead. These guardrails provided Members with transparency and a mechanism for accountability, something Democrats were happy to enact.

When Mr. Westerman became Ranking Member he continued Mr. Bishop's opposition to a fully unilateral Chair's subpoena. At his request, Democrats once again agreed to the Bishop-Westerman guardrails. But even that wasn't enough to appease them.

At the organizing meeting in the 117th Congress, then-Ranking Member Westerman was so concerned that he offered an amendment to give himself full veto power over Democratic subpoenas.

No such subpoena could be issued without his sign-off. And in his remarks, he said, I quote, "As you know, subpoenas are a very powerful investigatory and oversight tool, and that is why the Committee Rules have historically required votes by the members of this Committee before issuance of any subpoenas. Such a powerful tool warrants at least concurrence with the Ranking Member to prevent abuse of power and undue harm for the individual being subpoenaed." That was Mr. Westerman just a few years ago.

He went on to say, and I am still quoting here, "The Rules as proposed today leave every one of our constituents vulnerable to the unchecked power of the Chairman, and potentially to all future Chairmen of this Committee."

So you can imagine my surprise, Mr. Chair, when one of your first acts as Chair was to scrap the Minority safeguards that were negotiated with Mr. Bishop and yourself, and to give unfettered subpoena authority to yourself. No 7-day notice, no chance for a Committee member to show that a majority wishes to debate and vote on the matter, no requirement for a justification for the subpoena, not even a requirement that the Chair inform Members after the subpoena has gone out.

I was less surprised to see the same in the proposed Rules this time around, but I was still hopeful that we could at least negotiate some common sense guardrails. I asked for restoring the original guardrails, but, Mr. Chair, you refused that. I asked for at least requiring notice to the Minority, an actual requirement, not the language we have now, "to the extent practicable," which is meaningless. In this era of modern communication technology, notice to the Minority is easy. It is always going to be practicable. And yet we have Rules that won't acknowledge that.

My amendment would not take us all the way back to the original guardrails that Mr. Westerman and others have fought for. It doesn't demand that I have veto power over the Chair's subpoenas. Instead, it just restores a proven bipartisan compromise: the same guardrails that were there for 3 years at the request of our Republican colleagues. The only way to prevent a subpoena from being issued under this amendment is if a majority of members on this Committee request an opportunity to discuss it and vote on it. That shouldn't be controversial. If the Committee doesn't support a subpoena, it shouldn't be issued.

So I urge adoption of this amendment, these common-sense, historically bipartisan guardrails.

And I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

Mr. Neguse.

Mr. NEGUSE. Again, I want to reiterate my support for the Ranking Member's amendment for all the arguments that he articulated.

I remember well the debate that we had in the 117th Congress at the organizing meeting that the Ranking Member referenced. And I will say, and it pains me to say this, because I have great respect for the Chairman and, I think, the bipartisan manner in which he prides himself on, which is well deserved. But with respect to this particular provision of the Rules, as was vociferously

argued years ago, this is not consistent with the way we do business in the House.

And I recognize elections have consequences. A similar argument was made at the commencement of the 118th Congress. But understand that the precedent you are setting will govern long into the future. Majorities come, majorities go. For as long as anyone can remember the fundamental Rule was to enable basic safeguards, basic guardrails for the issuance of a subpoena: notice requirements and consultation with the Minority. That, in my view, is a reasonable approach. This Committee decided to do something that most other Committees in the House have not done, which is eliminate both of those guardrails. And, you know, I just will hope that my colleagues on the other side of the aisle will recognize that the precedent they set now will govern into the future.

And I will say, and, you know, insofar as the Chairman is willing to perhaps engage in a colloquy on this point, it is unclear to me why this Committee is being treated differently than other committees within the House. And I don't know if maybe the Chairman has some thoughts on that, or could provide some insight as to why the Rule is different in this Committee than other committees.

The CHAIRMAN. I will say the Rule as proposed is consistent with the House Rules, and I don't think this is an anomaly that our Committee has the Rule that we have.

Mr. NEGUSE. I thank the Chairman for that clarity.

Let me, many members of this Committee serve on the Energy and Commerce Committee. My friend Russ from Idaho and Mr. Stauber from Minnesota, they serve on E&C. E&C's Rule, I am reading it here, this is Rule 16, requires notice and requires consultation. "The Chair shall notify the Ranking Minority Member prior to issuing any subpoena under such authority. To the extent practicable, the Chair shall consult with the Ranking Minority Member at least 72 hours in advance of a subpoena being issued." These are the Rules that the Energy and Commerce Committee just promulgated a week ago.

I understand Chairman Walberg is new to this Committee, and we welcome him and look forward to working with him with respect to his principal committee of jurisdiction, the Education and Workforce Committee.

His Committee, Mr. Walberg, you promulgated Rules last week that you pronounced, I found these on your website, Rule 10, subpoena authority. "The Chair shall notify the Ranking Member prior to issuing any subpoena under such authority. To the extent practicable, the Chair shall consult with the Ranking Member at least 24 hours in advance of a subpoena being issued." I think that is a great Rule.

If it is good enough for Chairman Walberg's committee, if it is good enough for the Energy and Commerce Committee, if it is good enough for most of the committees in the House, I just don't understand why we don't adopt that basic notice and consultation language. It does not stop the Chair from unilaterally issuing a subpoena. It simply creates a layer of consultation so that the Minority can voice its opinion via the Ranking Member, and it is certainly something that I mean, again, I will applaud Chairman Walberg for his leadership in promulgating this as part of the

Rules on Education and Workforce and the other Chairs that have decided to take this route.

And I would just encourage our Chairman that perhaps this Committee do the same.

The CHAIRMAN. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. NEGUSE. Of course.

The CHAIRMAN. So just looking at the Rules, D(4) says, "For any subpoena issued pursuant to Committee Rule 4(d)(1), the Chair shall, to the extent practicable, cause notice of the issuance of such subpoena to the Minority, and such notice shall be given at least contemporaneously with service of such subpoenas," which sounds remarkably like the language in the——

Mr. NEGUSE. So the two distinctions, just to be very clear, the Rules that I just described which are consistent with at least all the other Rules that I have found of other committees, require notice before the subpoena is issued, No. 1. Very clear, bright-line Rule, very different than the provision that is articulated here.

Secondly, every other Committee that I have found requires some level of consultation to the extent practicable. What you have done, or what the staff has done here, is conflated the two. So you have inserted a practical standard with respect to giving notice, not with respect to consultations. It is basically, if it is practical, make sure you give notice at some point within a week after this subpoena being issued.

In any event, I digress. I know we have had this debate previously. But I would just hope, for some of our newer Members that contextually understanding, you are going to be here a long time, and I trust and, you know, I suspect this debate will rage on into the future. And I would hope that this is not the precedent that governs. So——

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. Is there further discussion on the amendment?

I recognize myself. I do oppose this amendment. Although it is being offered under the auspices of guardrails, really what this amendment would ultimately be used for is a delay tactic to impede oversight by the Committee.

In certain circumstances mechanisms already exist to ensure notice to the Ranking Member before acting under the color of subpoena authority. For example, if a subpoena is to compel witness testimony at a hearing before the Committee, House and Committee Rules already require a 7-day notice of such a hearing. To the extent a subpoena is used to effectuate a deposition, the regulations for the use of deposition authority require consultation with the Ranking Minority Member and 3 days' notice specifying the date, time, and place of examination. I also read the Rule about a reasonable requirement that the Majority notify the Minority. And also, if adopted, the amendment would serve the sole purpose of frustrating the Committee's oversight obligations, which I don't think we can jeopardize that.

So again, I oppose the amendment and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Is there further discussion on the amendment?

Seeing no further discussion, the question is on the amendment offered by Mr. Huffman, designated Huffman No. 2.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

All those opposed, no.

In the opinion of the Chair, the noes have it.

Mr. HUFFMAN. I request——

The CHAIRMAN. A recorded vote has been requested. Further proceedings on the amendment will be postponed.

OK, we are going to take a 5-minute recess, and we will start voting at 3:30.

[A brief recess was taken.]

The CHAIRMAN. The Committee will come to order.

The unfinished business is a request for recorded votes on amendments to the Committee Rules. Members will record their votes using the electronic voting system.

The question is on the amendment designated Stansbury No. 3 Revised, on which the noes prevailed by voice vote. The clerk will open the vote.

[The vote was taken.]

The CHAIRMAN. Have all Members voted?

Does any Member wish to change their vote?

The clerk will close the vote and report.

Ms. VARNASIDIS. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the yeas are 15 and the nays are 20.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment is not agreed to.

[The Recorded Vote follows:]

Committee on Natural Resources
U.S. House of Representatives
119th Congress

Date: January 22, 2025

Recorded Vote #: 1

Meeting on / Amendment on: Stansbury 3 revised to HNR Committee Rules

MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres	MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres
Mr. Westerman, AR, Chairman		X		Mr. Huffman, CA	X		
Mr. Wittman, VA		X		Mr. Grijalva, AZ			
Mr. McClintock, CA				Mr. Neguse, CO	X		
Mr. Gosar, AZ		X		Ms. Leger Fernandez, NM	X		
Mrs. Radewagen, AS		X		Ms. Stansbury, NM	X		
Mr. LaMalfa, CA		X		Ms. Hoyle, OR	X		
Mr. Webster, FL		X		Mr. Magaziner, RI	X		
Mr. Fulcher, ID		X		Mr. Golden, ME	X		
Mr. Stauber, MN		X		Mr. Min, CA	X		
Mr. Tiffany, WI		X		Ms. Dexter, OR	X		
Ms. Boebert, CO		X		Mr. Hernández, PR	X		
Mr. Bentz, OR				Ms. Randall, WA	X		
Ms. Kiggans, VA				Ms. Ansari, AZ	X		
Mr. Hunt, TX				Ms. Elfreth, MD	X		
Mr. Collins, GA		X		Mr. Gray, CA	X		
Ms. Hageman, WY		X		Ms. Rivas, CA	X		
Mr. Amodei, NV		X					
Mr. Walberg, MI							
Mr. Ezell, MS		X					
Ms. Maloy, UT		X					
Mr. McDowell, NC		X					
Mr. Crank, CO		X					
Mr. Begich, AK		X					
Mr. Hurd, CO		X					
Mr. Kennedy, UT		X		TOTAL:	15	20	

The question is on the amendment designated Huffman No. 1, on which the noes prevailed by voice vote. The clerk will open the vote.

[The vote was taken.]

The CHAIRMAN. Have all Members voted?

Does any Member wish to change their vote?

The clerk will close the vote and report.

Ms. VARNASIDIS. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the yeas are 15 and the nays are 20.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment is not agreed to.

[The Recorded Vote follows:]

Committee on Natural Resources

U.S. House of Representatives
119th Congress

Date: January 22, 2025

Recorded Vote #: 2

Meeting on / Amendment on: Huffman 1 to HNR Committee Rules

MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres	MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres
Mr. Westerman, AR, Chairman		X		Mr. Huffman, CA	X		
Mr. Wittman, VA		X		Mr. Grijalva, AZ			
Mr. McClintock, CA				Mr. Neguse, CO	X		
Mr. Gosar, AZ		X		Ms. Leger Fernandez, NM	X		
Mrs. Radewagen, AS		X		Ms. Stansbury, NM	X		
Mr. LaMalfa, CA		X		Ms. Hoyle, OR	X		
Mr. Webster, FL		X		Mr. Magaziner, RI	X		
Mr. Fulcher, ID		X		Mr. Golden, ME	X		
Mr. Stauber, MN		X		Mr. Min, CA	X		
Mr. Tiffany, WI		X		Ms. Dexter, OR	X		
Ms. Boebert, CO		X		Mr. Hernández, PR	X		
Mr. Bentz, OR				Ms. Randall, WA	X		
Ms. Kiggans, VA				Ms. Ansari, AZ	X		
Mr. Hunt, TX				Ms. Elfreth, MD	X		
Mr. Collins, GA		X		Mr. Gray, CA	X		
Ms. Hageman, WY		X		Ms. Rivas, CA	X		
Mr. Amodei, NV		X					
Mr. Walberg, MI							
Mr. Ezell, MS		X					
Ms. Maloy, UT		X					
Mr. McDowell, NC		X					
Mr. Crank, CO		X					
Mr. Begich, AK		X					
Mr. Hurd, CO		X					
Mr. Kennedy, UT		X		TOTAL:	15	20	

The question is on the amendment designated Huffman No. 2, on which the noes prevailed by voice vote. The clerk will open the vote.

[The vote was taken.]

The CHAIRMAN. Have all Members voted?

Does any Member wish to change their vote?

The clerk will close the vote and report.

Ms. VARNASIDIS. Mr. Chairman, on this vote the yeas are 15 and the nays are 21.

The CHAIRMAN. The amendment is not agreed to.

[The Recorded Vote follows:]

Committee on Natural Resources

U.S. House of Representatives
119th Congress

Date: January 22, 2025

Recorded Vote #: 3

Meeting on / Amendment on: Huffman 2 to HNR Committee Rules

MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres	MEMBERS	Yea	Nay	Pres
Mr. Westerman, AR, Chairman		X		Mr. Huffman, CA	X		
Mr. Wittman, VA		X		Mr. Grijalva, AZ			
Mr. McClintock, CA		X		Mr. Neguse, CO	X		
Mr. Gosar, AZ		X		Ms. Leger Fernandez, NM	X		
Mrs. Radewagen, AS		X		Ms. Stansbury, NM	X		
Mr. LaMalfa, CA		X		Ms. Hoyle, OR	X		
Mr. Webster, FL		X		Mr. Magaziner, RI	X		
Mr. Fulcher, ID		X		Mr. Golden, ME	X		
Mr. Stauber, MN		X		Mr. Min, CA	X		
Mr. Tiffany, WI		X		Ms. Dexter, OR	X		
Ms. Boebert, CO		X		Mr. Hernández, PR	X		
Mr. Bentz, OR				Ms. Randall, WA	X		
Ms. Kiggans, VA				Ms. Ansari, AZ	X		
Mr. Hunt, TX				Ms. Elfreth, MD	X		
Mr. Collins, GA		X		Mr. Gray, CA	X		
Ms. Hageman, WY		X		Ms. Rivas, CA	X		
Mr. Amodei, NV		X					
Mr. Walberg, MI							
Mr. Ezell, MS		X					
Ms. Maloy, UT		X					
Mr. McDowell, NC		X					
Mr. Crank, CO		X					
Mr. Begich, AK		X					
Mr. Hurd, CO		X					
Mr. Kennedy, UT		X		TOTAL:	15	21	

The question is on the adoption of the Committee Rules.

All those in favor, signify by saying aye.

All those opposed, no.

In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it and the Rules are adopted.

Without objection, the motion to reconsider is laid on the table.

The next order of business is consideration of the Committee Resolution to appoint Republican and Democrat Committee staff. Under House Rules, the Resolution was circulated with a meeting notice.

Without objection, the Committee staff is appointed.

I ask unanimous consent that the staff be allowed to make any technical and conforming changes to the documents the Committee just adopted, subject to the approval of the Minority.

Without objection, so ordered.

If there is no further business, the Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:36 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

[ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR THE RECORD]

COMMITTEE RESOLUTION NO. 1

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, That
pursuant to Rule 11 of the Rules of the Committee, and clause 9(a) of House of Representatives
Rule X,

(a) the following persons be employed to perform the duties of their respective positions
on the permanent staff of the Committee:

Vivian Moeglein
Chris Marklund
Sophia Varnasidis
Tom Connally
William David
Madeline Kelley
Ilene Clauson
Rebekah Hoshiko
Rob MacGregor
Aniela Butler
Ken Degenfelder
Annick Miller
Michelle Lane

(b) the following additional persons be employed to perform the duties of their respective
positions on the permanent staff of the Committee:

Ana Unruh Cohen
Mary Hurrell
Morgan McCue
Christian Hollowell
Rachel Jones
Maria Oparil
Sebastian Pons
Bobby Ahern

BRUCE WESTERMAN
Chairman

Approved this _____ day of January 2025.

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Authorization and Oversight Plan

119th Congress



Chairman Bruce Westerman

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to clause 2(d)(1) of Rule X of the House of Representatives, the Committee on Natural Resources (Committee) adopted the following Authorization and Oversight Plan for the 119th Congress. The Committee will conduct ongoing oversight of the Executive Branch to strengthen America's environment and economy, promote access to public lands and natural resources, and enhance conservation through innovation and efficiency. The Committee will review all laws and programs within its jurisdiction to assess their application, administration, execution, and effectiveness while providing transparency and accountability. The Committee seeks to eliminate waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement through such examination.

Congress is responsible for keeping the government accountable to the American people, ensuring decisions by agencies are open and transparent and the effective stewardship of taxpayers' money. The adopted Authorization and Oversight Plan identifies select agencies and programs with lapsed authorizations and outlines the initial and primary oversight focuses of the Committee. Additional oversight activities are expected to arise throughout the first and second sessions of the 119th Congress.

The Committee will consult, as appropriate, with other committees of the House that may share jurisdiction on any of the oversight activities the Committee may consider.

REGULATORY REVIEW

Committee oversight activities will assist in the collection of relevant information to support the Committee's legislative agenda, monitor the implementation of public policy, and ensure the government's performance in subject matters within the Committee's jurisdiction. Accordingly, the Committee will examine the effectiveness of natural resources laws. Oversight focus will also be provided on how laws, such as the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, the Wilderness Act, the Federal Land Policy and Management Act, the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA), the National Historic Preservation Act, and others may exceed their regulatory purposes resulting in costly litigation and other adverse consequences to American taxpayers.

ETHICS AND TRANSPARENCY

The Committee will conduct thorough oversight of ethics compliance at the federal departments and agencies under its jurisdiction. It will review the operations of departmental ethics offices, ethics training, guidance, and compliance, among other considerations.

PREVENTING FRAUD, WASTE, AND ABUSE, AND PROMOTING EFFICIENCY

The Committee will identify fraud, waste, or abuse at the Department of the Interior and other departments and agencies within its jurisdiction while seeking to promote good government and streamline regulatory efficiencies within these departments and agencies. The Committee will also work with federal agencies and the Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) to reduce unnecessary spending, make the federal government more efficient, and ensure better stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

SCIENTIFIC INTEGRITY AND GRANT ACCOUNTABILITY

The Committee will continue oversight over scientific integrity policies to ensure that scientific activities by agencies under the Committee's jurisdiction are conducted in a manner that is accurate and objective and open to appropriate oversight from Congress. In addition, the Committee will conduct oversight of federal grants awarded by the agencies and bureaus within its jurisdiction to ensure an efficient, fair, and transparent grantmaking process.

ENERGY AND MINERAL RESOURCES

Budget and Spending Review—The Committee will review the Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 budget requests for federal land management programs and agencies under its jurisdiction, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE), the Office of Surface Mining and Reclamation Enforcement (OSMRE) and the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). The Committee will also work to raise revenues and reduce the federal deficit through budget reconciliation measures that capitalize on our vast domestic energy potential. Lastly, the Committee will work closely with the Trump administration to review agency spending and ensure proper stewardship of taxpayer dollars. In particular, the Committee will seek to eliminate wasteful programs and ensure responsible allocation of funds under the Inflation Reduction Act and Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).

Expanding Domestic Energy Production—The Committee will work alongside the Trump administration to unleash domestic energy production, meet growing demand, and reduce costs for American families. This effort will create high-paying jobs here at home, increase our global competitiveness, bring greater economic benefits to states and local communities, and improve U.S. national security and energy security for our allies—all while displacing foreign sources and reducing global emissions.

Fiscal Responsibility Act Implementation and NEPA Reform—The Committee will work closely with the Trump administration to revise NEPA regulations and ensure proper implementation of the historic NEPA reforms included in the Fiscal Responsibility Act (FRA). Furthermore, the Committee will continue its pursuit of common-sense NEPA reforms that will end permitting delays and frivolous litigation on key infrastructure projects, as well as unnecessary administrative burdens on federal agencies.

Onshore Oil and Natural Gas Programs—In the 119th Congress, the Committee will work with the Trump administration to follow the law by holding quarterly lease sales across the western United States and Alaska and reverse administrative

actions that have created permitting delays and disincentivized energy production on federal lands. This includes holding meaningful lease sales under the Mineral Leasing Act (MLA), ensuring lands are not improperly disqualified for oil and gas leasing, streamlining the Interior Board of Land Appeals' (IBLA) drawn-out appeals process, reissuing leases in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR), and restoring access to millions of acres in the National Petroleum Reserve Alaska (NPR-A). The Committee will also conduct oversight regarding implementation of the over \$4 billion allocated under the IIJA for cleanup of orphaned and abandoned wells and ensure that those funds are not squandered as a result of burdensome monitoring requirements.

Outer Continental Shelf (OCS) Oil and Natural Gas—The Committee has jurisdiction over the administration of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act (OCSLA) and will work to ensure safe and responsible production of America's offshore oil and natural gas resources. Specifically, the Committee will collaborate with the Trump administration to revitalize DOI's 2024–2029 offshore oil and gas leasing plan, prioritizing consistent lease sales to deliver critical benefits. These sales will generate Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA) revenue to fund coastal resilience projects and hurricane recovery efforts, bolster the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and provide much-needed resources to coastal states. Additionally, they will help lower energy costs for American families, create thousands of well-paying jobs, and strengthen local economies. This is necessary to reverse the consequences of the Biden Administration's misguided policies—such as, for the first time since 1958, failing to hold a single lease sale in 2024 and delaying reviews of the 2025 sale, effectively imposing a two-year leasing moratorium through procedural inaction. The Committee will also work with DOI to improve resource assessment methodology in the Outer Continental Shelf and bring increased energy revenues to states for economic development and restoration projects.

Renewable and Alternative Energy—In the 119th Congress, the Committee will conduct oversight over current solar, geothermal, and wind programs operated by the Bureau of Ocean and Energy Management, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service. The Committee will examine ways to reduce duplicative NEPA reviews and litigation that delay renewable projects. The Committee will also explore mechanisms for renewable energy revenue sharing and work with the Trump administration to ensure that BLM regulations and Resource Management Plans uphold a technology-neutral “all of the above” approach regarding renewable energy development and revenue collection.

Office of Natural Resources Revenue (ONRR)—The Committee will conduct oversight of ONRR to ensure accountability and the accurate and appropriate collection of energy and mineral revenues. The ONRR collects an average of over \$10 billion in annual revenue, making this office responsible for collecting one of the federal government's largest sources of non-tax revenue. Specifically, the Committee will work with President Trump and the Secretary of the Interior to address ONRR's history of arbitrary request denials and prioritization of quantitative goals rather than accurate royalty payment and recovery.

Mineral Security—The Committee will conduct aggressive oversight of domestic hardrock mineral resources, including critical minerals, especially regarding the nation's current and planned production on federal lands. The Committee will also continue to review ways to responsibly increase production through legislation. To further these goals, the Committee will examine the steeply rising global demand for hardrock minerals, insufficient rates of domestic production to meet this demand, and the resultant risks to our mineral supply chain brought by overreliance on foreign sources. Furthermore, the Committee will place an emphasis on unlocking our significant domestic mineral potential through actions such as overturning the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals' harmful “Rosemont decision,” expanding interagency and intergovernmental efforts to streamline mine permitting, and supporting the Trump administration in overturning disastrous withdrawals, delays, and stymieing of hardrock mineral development on federal lands. Lastly, the Committee will closely monitor the implementation of the hardrock abandoned mine lands program established by the IIJA.

Coal Mining Regulations and Leasing—The Committee will work alongside President Trump and the Secretary of the Interior to reverse the Biden Administration's war on coal that has significantly impacted domestic energy reliability, job security, and federal revenues. Specifically, this involves revising the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement's (OSMRE) recent Wyoming and Montana RMPs, which remove millions of acres from consideration for future coal leasing. The Committee will also explore overturning OSMRE rules and practices that reduce state regulatory independence and hinder transparent access to federal fund-

ing. Lastly, the Committee will track the implementation of the \$11.3 billion in additional funding for the Abandoned Mine Lands Program allocated under the IJA, including the revision of departmental guidance regarding the use of such funds.

United States Geological Survey (USGS)—The Committee will coordinate with the Trump administration to support USGS programs that ensure accurate siting of hardrock minerals and other resources, such as the Earth MRI program, as well as mapping programs for hazard risk assessment, land use planning, and geothermal resource evaluation. The Committee will work to move three authorization bills relating to hazard reduction early in the 119th Congress. The Committee will work to reauthorize the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP), the National Landslide Hazards Reduction Program (NLHRP), and the National Volcano Early Warning System (NVEWS). These essential programs must remain operational to help mitigate the impacts of natural disasters. The Committee will also continue its efforts to improve the methodology USGS uses when publishing the Critical Minerals List (CML) and simplify mineral classification across the federal government. Additionally, the Committee will work closely with President Trump and the Secretary of the Interior to eliminate unauthorized funding for climate-related USGS programs and other wasteful spending across the agency.

FEDERAL LANDS

Budget and Spending Review—The Committee will review the Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027 budget requests for federal land management programs and agencies under its jurisdiction, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the National Park Service (NPS), and the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and identify fraud, waste, and abuse. In particular, the Committee will continue to examine spending under the Inflation Reduction Act and Infrastructure IJA.

Forest Health and Wildfires—Across the nation, more than one billion acres are identified as at risk for wildfire and millions of acres continue to burn in catastrophic wildfires every year, particularly in the West. The Committee will conduct oversight on forest health, wildfire prevention and suppression, and the need for more active management of our national forests. The Committee will continue to monitor USFS' progress toward meeting its goal of treating an additional 20 million acres of federal land over the next 10 years through the "Confronting the Wildfire Crisis" strategy. Additionally, the Committee will investigate how failure to manage federal forests results in unnecessary pollution and emissions, economic damages, loss of life and property, destruction of wildlife habitat, and degraded air and water quality.

Deferred Maintenance at our National Parks and Public Lands—Despite historic investments in deferred maintenance through the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), maintenance backlogs at the federal land management agencies continue to increase exponentially. Nowhere is this issue more acute than at NPS, which saw its backlog increase from roughly \$11.9 billion in 2018 to over \$23 billion in 2023. This over \$11 billion increase in the backlog over the past five years is indicative of greater underlying problems in how we manage our parks and deserves renewed attention and oversight.

Federal Land Acquisition—The Committee will conduct oversight of the federal land acquisition process, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and the growing size of the federal estate. Proposals for expanding the federal estate will be examined with due regard for the merits of the proposal, spending constraints, input of local stakeholders, our national need for access to vital resources, and the protection of private property rights. The Committee will work with local and state stakeholders to identify lands in the federal estate that the federal government no longer wants or needs, particularly in states and counties predominately comprised of federal lands.

Access and Recreation—The Committee will conduct oversight on ways to expand access to our national parks, national forests, and public lands for recreational and sportsmen's activities. The Committee will evaluate proposals to ensure greater access to, and enjoyment of, the abundant outdoor recreation opportunities offered by our public lands. During the 119th Congress, the Committee will build upon previous legislative efforts from the 118th Congress, particularly the EXPLORE Act, a comprehensive, bipartisan, bicameral legislation that works to improve access and transform recreation opportunities on public lands and waters.

Conservation versus Preservation—The Committee will conduct oversight to ensure our public lands provide secure domestic sources of energy, food, fiber, minerals, jobs, and recreation under appropriate conservation standards. The Committee will conduct oversight of preservation and unilateral land designations, such

as national monument designations under the Antiquities Act of 1906 and mineral withdrawals, that usurp the authority and will of Congress, State, and local stakeholders. The Committee will conduct oversight of the BLM and USFS to ensure the agencies follow their multiple use and sustained yield mandates.

Grazing—When managed properly, grazing on federal lands can enhance rangeland health and reduce the build-up of hazardous fuels. As one of the most effective wildfire reduction tools, grazing can also help conserve habitat for species like the Greater Sage Grouse. The Committee will examine ways in which grazing can benefit the economy and the health of federal rangelands, and ways to better protect the practice against frivolous litigation and unnecessary regulation.

Sustainable Funding Sources for Conservation Programs—The Committee will conduct oversight on the longevity of revenue streams for conservation funds, including LWCF, the Historic Preservation Fund, and the National Parks and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund, especially due to previous Biden administration efforts to ban new oil and gas leases on federal lands and waters. that undercut the GAOA and threaten the long-term solvency of important conservation programs.

Natural Climate Solutions—From planting trees to incentivizing innovative grazing practices, public and private lands must play a large role in future discussions on responsible, commonsense solutions to climate change. The Committee will continue to review new innovative practices that benefit the environment without sacrificing rural jobs and our nation's overall economic health. This includes engaging with stakeholders to identify new frontiers in research and development that should be explored and further opportunities to support American innovation.

Park Partnerships—To truly enter the 21st Century, the NPS should adopt more market-based solutions and engage in public-private partnerships to maximize agency resources and enhance visitor services. The Committee will continue to seek out examples of successful partnerships to learn from their successes and encourage the NPS to actively promote new partnership opportunities.

Checks and Balances—The Committee will examine administratively imposed activities and designations to ensure that these actions fully respect the interests and culture of the affected local people and do not infringe on authorities that more properly belong to elected officials in Congress and local government.

WATER AND POWER

Increasing Water Supplies—The Committee will examine how to augment existing water storage and delivery projects in order to continue to serve millions of ratepayers and food consumers nationwide. Many of these water supply and delivery and hydropower generation operations are impacted by drought, regulations, litigation, and other factors. The Committee will examine ways to improve water supplies through an all-of-the-above approach, including the protection and promotion of new water storage, to help achieve a policy of water abundance.

Colorado River Basin—The Committee is aware of the ongoing, serious drought impacting communities throughout the seven-state Colorado River region, and the need for the region to reach an agreement for operations beyond 2026. The Committee plans to work with the Executive Branch, tribes, the seven Colorado River Basin states, their congressional delegations and stakeholders to focus on the need to help mitigate and resolve this situation.

Protecting and Promoting Hydropower as a Clean, Renewable Energy Source—The Committee will examine ways to protect and promote large-scale and small-scale hydropower generation at existing and potential facilities within its jurisdiction. Hydropower is an emissions-free renewable energy that provides baseload and peaking power for millions of electricity consumers nationwide. Hydropower also serves as a backup electricity resource for intermittent renewable power. Federal hydropower resources have provided these benefits for generations. Drought, federal regulations, and litigation have curtailed some of these hydropower-producing dams. In the 118th Congress, the Committee heard numerous concerns about the dam infrastructure in the Pacific Northwest, particularly regarding the future of the Lower Snake River Dams. In the 119th Congress, the Committee will continue to examine ways to establish long-term certainty for the nation's federal hydropower fleet.

Indian Water Rights Settlements—The Committee has longstanding jurisdiction over Indian Water Rights Settlements, which can be beneficial to Indian and non-Indian settling parties and can provide some water supply certainty for these parties. Since American taxpayer dollars are authorized in many of these settlements, the Committee will continue to examine how each settlement meets the Department of the Interior's longstanding criteria and procedures relating to these matters. Additionally, the Committee will conduct oversight of the \$2.5 billion provided in

the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act to implement the Indian Water Rights Settlement Completion Fund. The Committee will continue encouraging negotiations for Indian Water Rights Settlements rather than unnecessary litigation.

FISHERIES AND WILDLIFE

Budget and Spending Review—The Committee will conduct oversight of the current spending and proposed annual budget requests of the National Marine Fisheries Service, certain programs of the Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) under the Committee's jurisdiction, and the Department of the Interior's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and identify any fraud, waste, and abuse. The Committee will examine how the agencies utilized regular appropriations and additional funding provided through the IIJA and the Inflation Reduction Act.

Endangered Species Act (ESA)—The Committee will continue examining the efficacy and modern use of the ESA, both in terms of species-specific issues and the underlying statute itself. In the 118th Congress, the Committee passed legislation to delist grizzly bear populations in the Greater Yellowstone and Northern Continental Divide Ecosystems and gray wolves in the lower-48 states, and passed Congressional Review Act resolutions related to species-specific issues. In addition, the Committee passed legislation to reform and reauthorize the ESA statute, which has not been reauthorized since 1988. The Committee will build upon these ideas in the 119th Congress. The Committee will also continue to monitor the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, which governs international activities related to the ESA.

Empowering State Wildlife Agencies—The Committee will continue to examine ways to provide greater financial resources and regulatory opportunities for state wildlife agencies. In the 118th Congress, the Committee passed legislation that gave State wildlife agencies more financial resources to create and restore habitat for at-risk species. In addition, that legislation gave State agencies more regulatory opportunities to manage species listed as threatened under the ESA to incentivize recovery of those species. The Committee will continue to promote these ideas in the 119th Congress.

Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act—The Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA) is the primary statute regulating commercial and recreational fishing in federal waters. The MSA was last reauthorized in the 109th Congress and has helped the U.S. serve as the gold standard in fisheries management. Any efforts to reauthorize this legislation must first provide robust consideration of related policy issues and opportunities for stakeholders and the regional fishery management councils to provide input. The Committee will continue to examine ways to best support commercial and recreational fishing across the U.S., including using the best science and data to make management decisions.

Marine Protected Areas and Marine National Monuments—Ocean conservation is not mutually exclusive to ensuring that our federal offshore waters simultaneously remain a vital, sustainable, working, and recreational resource for communities and fishermen. The Committee will continue to exercise oversight over expansions of Marine Protected Areas and Marine National Monuments, and how these designations and expansions can negatively impact their surrounding communities.

Public Access and Management within the National Wildlife Refuge System—The Committee will examine how to improve access to, and management of, the U.S. National Wildlife Refuge System. In the 118th Congress, the House passed legislation that would prevent any proposed lead ammunition and fishing equipment ban that is not supported by science or State agencies. Any proposed lead ban could restrict access for sportsmen and women and be cost prohibitive for some in the hunting and fishing communities. The Committee will also continue to advocate for refuge management practices such as cooperative agriculture and predator control.

Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)—In the 118th Congress, the Committee heard concerns about numerous regulatory actions that NOAA took under the authorities provided in the Marine Mammal Protection Act. Among those that the Committee heard the most about were the unprecedented, proposed amendments to the North Atlantic Right Whale Vessel Strike Reduction Rule; the issuance of take and harassment authorizations for various offshore activities; and MMPA's role in the issuance of biological opinions (BiOps). These actions, if flawed, impose a huge risk to industry and private citizens alike. The Committee will continue to examine the process by which these regulations are developed and whether they are based in sound science and reasoning.

INDIAN AFFAIRS

Budget and Spending Review—The Committee will examine the annual budget requests and staffing levels for the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the Indian Health Service (IHS), the Bureau of Indian Education, and other agencies, offices and functions relating to Indian and Alaska Native affairs, and identify any fraud, waste, and abuse. The Committee will conduct oversight of agency programs with expired authorizations, to determine whether such programs warrant reauthorization, updating, or termination.

Federal Barriers to Economic Development on Indian Lands—Indian tribes have demonstrated that they are best suited to manage their land and resources. When tribes have greater control over their own lands, resources, and decisions, they can make the best decisions for their members and their future. Certain laws and policies govern public lands and lands held in trust or restricted fee for tribes or individual Indians. Activities occurring on tribal land are often subject to the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, resulting in delays, excessive regulatory burdens, and loss of local control for tribes in decision-making. The Committee will conduct hearings on tribal economic development, including on federal laws and policies governing the use of lands held in land trust or restricted status for tribes and individual Indians, on the barriers to tribal energy development on trust lands, and the diversification of tribal economies that increase opportunity for tribal members and communities within or near tribal lands. The committee also intends to conduct oversight of the self-determination programs such as self-determination contracts, self-governance compacts, and the 477 program.

Tribal Forestry—In 2018, Congress passed certain provisions of the Resilient Federal Forest Act which provided tribes the authority to participate in federal Good Neighbor Authority projects. Tribes are good stewards of the environment and know how to manage their forests best. Unfortunately, severe fires throughout the U.S. have impacted many tribal nations. The Committee will conduct oversight to analyze and determine what additional tools will benefit tribal forest management activities and reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires on tribal and non-tribal lands.

Natural Resources Management—The Department of the Interior holds approximately 56 million acres of land in trust or restricted status for tribes and individual Indians, with many of those lands having significant, undeveloped energy resources. In 2018, Congress passed the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act Amendments of 2017 to increase tribes' ability to develop their resources on their lands should they choose to do so. The Committee will review the implementation of the Act, its furtherance of the goal of increasing tribal self-governance and economic development opportunities and ensure tribes can develop their resources on their lands should they choose to do so.

Land Fractionation—Fractionation of Indian land creates significant land management and administration challenges for both tribes and individual Indian owners, resulting in barriers to economic development, as well as land management and use. In 2010, the Claims Resolution Act provided a one-time direct appropriation of \$1.9 billion to the Department of the Interior to consolidate highly fractionated Indian land pursuant to the Indian Land Consolidation Act. By 2017, the Land Buy Back Program for Tribal Nations (LBBP) had spent most of the \$1.9 billion but yielded little progress on reducing land fractionization. Without concerted efforts, land fractionation is expected to reach pre-LBBP levels by 2038. The Committee will continue to conduct oversight of the land consolidation program and solicit stakeholder input to find more fiscally sound options to reduce land fractionation in Indian country.

Alaska Natives—The Committee will review the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act and other laws pertaining to Alaska Natives, such as the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980.

Law Enforcement in Indian Country—The Committee will conduct oversight of the implementation and impact of current law, policy, and agency action concerning the safety of indigenous people, including laws meant to address issues regarding missing and murdered indigenous people. The Committee will also examine law enforcement in Indian Country and tribal jurisdiction provisions, as well as improving recruitment and retention of qualified law enforcement officers. In addition, the Committee will review federal policies and programs related to law enforcement in Indian Country and determine whether such programs should be reauthorized, updated, or terminated. The Committee has the responsibility to ensure that the Office of Justice Services is using taxpayer funds for the best solutions to hire, train, and retain law enforcement officers in Indian Country.

Transnational Crime in Indian Country—Dangerous criminal Cartels have established extensive distribution networks in Indian communities for narcotics such as fentanyl and methamphetamine, leading to an increase in violence, crime, and drug overdoses that are ravaging communities across Indian country. The Committee will continue to work with tribal organizations across the U.S. to support law enforcement in efforts to eradicate the cartels, reduce related crimes, and address devastating drug addiction in certain Indian communities. Additionally, the Committee will identify challenges and opportunities for the BIA, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to collaborate with tribal law enforcement to investigate and prosecute cartel activities on Indian lands.

Indian Health Care/Indian Health Service (IHS)—The Committee will review the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, with a focus on the delivery of medical services to Indian people, particularly those in remote reservations where access to health care is difficult and costly. Congress has increased Indian health funding nearly every year since fiscal year 2010. Despite these funding increases, reports from the U.S. Government Accountability Office continue to reveal that standards for the quality of care in federally operated Indian health care facilities are absent. Additionally, there continues to be a shortage of health care professionals throughout the 12 IHS areas. In 2017, the GAO placed IHS on its high-risk list as one of the government programs and operations that are vulnerable to waste, fraud, abuse, mismanagement, or need for transformation. In 2023, IHS began developing and implementing an agency work plan to improve the impact of the Indian health system, which has improved some aspects of healthcare for tribal members. However, recruitment and retention of health care professionals throughout the 12 IHS areas, particularly in rural areas, remains a challenge. To ensure efficient program operation and modernize Indian health policy, the Committee will conduct oversight of Indian health programs.

Indian Education—During the 118th Congress, the Committee initiated a joint investigation with the Committee on Education and the Workforce on Haskell Indian Nations University, a Bureau of Indian Education post-secondary educational institution. The Committee uncovered a serious lack of oversight by BIE that has allowed potential misconduct to occur including fraud, retaliation against employees and students, mishandling of sexual assault incidents, and non-adherence to federal background investigation requirements. During the 119th Congress, the Committee will continue to investigate potential misconduct at Haskell Indian Nations University, and conduct oversight over other BIE educational facilities, including Flandreau Indian School, and Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute.

INSULAR AFFAIRS

Budget and Spending Review—The Committee will conduct oversight of the annual budgets of the Office of Insular Affairs (OIA) within the Department of the Interior, and identify fraud, waste, and abuse. The OIA serves a critical mission as territories rely heavily on the funding they receive from federal grants and OIA to support their economic stability. Each U.S. territory should exercise its own self-determination, rather than Congress imposing a “federal government knows best” approach on the Insular areas.

Energy Resources in the Insular Areas—The Committee will encourage federal efforts that ensure affordable and reliable energy systems that meet the individual needs of each Insular area, rather than forcing a federally mandated transition to renewable energy sources without regard for each territory’s particular circumstances and needs. The Committee will look to promote an all-of-the-above energy approach for the U.S. territories to ensure that the islands have access to affordable, reliable, and resilient energy.

Freely Associated States—The Committee will conduct oversight of the implementation of the Compacts of Free Association (COFA) and assistance provided by the Department of the Interior’s OIA. COFA were entered into by the U.S. with three Pacific Island nations, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Republic of Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia, collectively referred to as the Freely Associated States (FAS). In 2024, Congress successfully passed the Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2024, reauthorizing and making amendments to the agreements that were negotiated between the United States and the FAS. These compacts continue a long-standing relationship between the U.S. and the FAS nations and enable mutually beneficial defense and economic connections between nations. These agreements are a primary deterrent against China’s increasing aggression. The Committee will conduct oversight of the COFA implementation and its role in countering China’s aggression in the Indo-Pacific.

Oversight of the Insular Areas—The Committee will review the fundamental issues facing each of the territories and FAS, such as support and development of self-government and self-determination, economic development and self-sufficiency through the private sector, accountability of federal funds, implementation and enforcement of federal laws, implementation of the COFA, and the management of limited land and water resources. The Committee will also continue to conduct oversight over the implementation of the Puerto Rico

Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act.

Proposed National Marine Sanctuary in the Pacific Remote Islands—The Biden administration aggressively pursued Marine Protected Areas to accomplish their 30x30 goal, including the Proposed National Marine Sanctuary in the Pacific Remote Islands, with potential commercial fishing restrictions for the indigenous residents of the Pacific Remote Islands (PRI), who largely depend on tuna fishing and processing for their livelihoods. The Committee will work with the Trump administration and the PRI to protect their tuna fishing economy from unwanted and unnecessary federal actions.

NATIONAL SECURITY

Foreign Influence—Throughout the Biden administration, foreign adversaries benefited from the misguided environmental and natural resources policies that restricted the domestic development of our natural resources. During the 118th Congress, the Committee investigated potential foreign influence over domestic environmental and natural resources policies, particularly at DOI, accomplished through a network of U.S.-based activist non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Committee will continue identifying NGOs with ties to foreign adversaries such as the CCP and Iran and prevent foreign influence over domestic natural resources policy.

Violence and Disruption on Public Lands—On July 24, 2024, a group of U.S.-based non-profits operating under the ‘Shut It Down for Palestine’ movement staged a violent anti-Israel riot at a public gathering at Union Station in DC, a National Park Service site. The Committee will continue to investigate and provide recommendations to improve the public gathering permitting process for the National Park Service to improve the permitting process, and ensure it is not abused by organizations that intend to cause violence and destruction. Additionally, the Committee will continue to expose these organizations’ ties to foreign adversaries like the CCP, Iran, and Hamas.

Border Security and the Environment—As the Trump administration implements policies to reduce migrant crossings on the Southern Border, the Committee will assist the Trump administration to identify challenges faced by U.S. Border Patrol agents in securing federal borderlands, reducing the environmental impact of illegal border crossings, and eliminating drug smuggling and illegal marijuana cultivation on public lands. During the 119th Congress, the Committee will investigate NGOs that have contributed to increased illegal immigration, and consequently, the environmental damage on the Southern Border. Additionally, the Committee will conduct oversight of the Floyd Bennet Field Migrant Camp in New York City, the termination of the lease with NPS, and ensure that required improvements are made by NYC to the Floyd Bennet Field site.

DOI Cybersecurity Vulnerabilities—As new technologies emerge and foreign adversaries seek to exploit cybersecurity vulnerabilities related to critical infrastructure for our nation, the Committee will ensure that DOI is prioritizing cybersecurity. The Committee will assist the Trump administration in identifying emerging cyber threats and working to reduce or resolve existing cybersecurity vulnerabilities at DOI to ensure the security of America’s critical energy infrastructure.

COMMITTEE on NATURAL RESOURCES – ACTION REPORT

The Committee on Natural Resources met in open session on Wednesday, January 22, 2025, to consider the Committee Rules and Staffing Resolution for the 119th Congress. Per Committee Rule 9(f) and House Rule XI, clause 2(c), amendments adopted will be posted within 24 hours, and roll call votes and all other amendments offered will be posted no later than 48 hours after the vote is taken. These documents can be found at docs.house.gov, found [here](#).

Chairman Bruce Westerman (R-AR) offered the proposed Committee Rules for the 119th Congress. The following amendments were offered to the proposed Rules:

- Rep. Melanie Stansbury (D-NM) offered an amendment designated Stansbury 3 revised. The amendment was not agreed to by a roll call vote of **15 to 20**.
- Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-CA) offered an amendment designated Huffman 1. The amendment was not agreed to by a roll call vote of **15 to 20**.
- Ranking Member Jared Huffman (D-CA) offered an amendment designated Huffman 2. The amendment was not agreed to by a roll call vote of **15 to 21**.

The Committee Rules for the 119th Congress were adopted by **voice vote**.

Chairman Bruce Westerman offered the Staff Resolution for the 119th Congress.

- The Staff Resolution was agreed to by unanimous consent.

