

1 House during the absence of the Speaker from the chair; and a Deputy Speaker who, in case of a
2 vacancy in the office of the Speaker and Speaker pro tempore, or in case these officers are absent
3 at the hour to which the House stands adjourned, shall call the House to order and shall preside
4 until the Speaker pro tempore or a Speaker, as the case may require, is elected by ballot. In case
5 of a vacancy in the office of Speaker, Speaker pro tempore and Deputy Speaker or in case these
6 officers are absent at the hour to which the House stands adjourned, the senior member present
7 from Newport, or in the absence of any such member, a member chosen in such manner as the
8 House shall provide shall call the House to order and shall preside until a Speaker pro tempore or
9 a Speaker, as the case may require, is elected by ballot.

10 Secondly - Of the Order of Business

11 (7)(a) At the commencement of each day's session the roll shall be called, or taken by use
12 of the electronic voting system and if a quorum be present, the Speaker shall proceed to the order
13 of business. After the approval of the journal the order of business shall be as follows:

- 14 (i) Reports of standing and select committees.
- 15 (ii) Introduction and reference of new business.
- 16 (iii) Communications, including communications from the Senate.
- 17 (iv) Unfinished business in which the House was engaged at the time of last adjournment.
- 18 (v) Consent calendar.
- 19 (vi) Calendar.
- 20 (vii) Introduction of guests and announcements.
- 21 (viii) Matters of personal privilege.
- 22 (ix) Recess or adjournment.

23 (b) A representative desiring to introduce a bill or resolution shall file the same with the
24 Clerk of the House. At the request of any representative, an announcement upon presentation to
25 the Speaker may be placed directly in the House Journal noting his or her absence from session.

26 (c) Except as provided in Rule 17, all bills and resolutions shall be filed no later than
27 February 15, 2007 (for the 2007 session) and February 14, 2008 (for the 2008 session). The
28 provisions of this section shall not apply to city or town bills, to bills for the reinstatement of
29 corporate charters, or to bills relating to the solemnization of marriages.

30 (d) Any bill or resolution introduced on or before April 12, 2007 (for the 2007 session)
31 and on or before April 10, 2008 (for the 2008 session).

32 (i) if filed prior to the convening of the session, shall be in order for the first reading and,
33 where appropriate, assignment to committee, on that day, and

34 (ii) if filed after the convening of the session, shall be in order for the first reading and,

1 where appropriate, assignment to committee, on the next legislative day and shall be considered a
2 part of that day's business, provided that the Speaker may direct that a given measure may be
3 treated in accord with subparagraph (i) above.

4 All bills or resolutions introduced after April 12, 2007 (for the 2007 session) and after
5 April 10, 2008 (for the 2008 session) shall be in order for the first reading and, where appropriate,
6 assignment to committee, on the day of introduction.

7 (e) The Clerk of the House shall cause the title and numbers of all bills and resolutions
8 introduced to be published in the House Journal for the day on which said bill or resolution is
9 deemed, as herein provided, to have been introduced.

10 (8) The Speaker or his or her designee shall prepare the calendar for each legislative
11 day. The calendar shall be printed and distributed or made available electronically to the members
12 daily.

13 (9) There shall be a consent calendar on which shall be entered such bills and resolutions
14 as the Speaker, the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader or their designees shall agree upon,
15 and shall be proposed to the House by the Majority Leader or the designee of the Majority Leader
16 in the form of a motion to move the consent calendar. The consent calendar shall contain bills for
17 the restoration of corporate charters (which shall be assigned to the consent calendar immediately
18 upon introduction), and other bills and resolutions which are of a routine or non-
19 controversial nature, and in no event shall the consent calendar be considered as a substitute for
20 the regular calendar. Matters of substance shall be placed on the regular calendar and be fully
21 debated and considered by the membership according to these rules. No bill or resolution shall
22 be included on the consent calendar on the date the consent calendar is moved unless copies of
23 the consent calendar in the same form as shall be moved have been made available to the
24 membership no later than two (2) legislative days prior to the day on which the consent calendar
25 shall be proposed to be moved. All bills and resolutions included on the consent calendar shall be
26 made available in printed form and/or electronically to the Majority Leader, the Minority
27 Leader, the State House library and the Clerk of the House at the same time that copies of the
28 consent calendar are made available under this rule. At the request of a member any bill or
29 resolution shall be removed from those included in the motion. All bills and
30 resolutions designated for action on the consent calendar shall be passed on motion without
31 discussion unless, at any time prior to the motion for passage, a member requests removal of a
32 bill or resolution from the consent calendar in which case such bill or resolution shall be so
33 removed and placed on the regular calendar. Any bill or resolution so removed shall be
34 considered as having appeared on the regular calendar for a period of time equivalent to that

1 during which it appeared on the consent calendar.

2 (10) At the end of legislative business on any day, upon request to the Speaker by a
3 representative, the Speaker shall declare the House in informal session, i.e., no motion shall be in
4 order, except that to adjourn, at the close of five-minute speeches, then proceed to entertain five-
5 minute speeches. Each member so recognized shall be allotted five (5) minutes in which to
6 address the House on any matter subject to these rules. No member can yield his or her time to
7 another.

8 (11) Sessions of the House during the legislative session shall convene at 4 p.m. and shall
9 adjourn by 10 p.m.; provided, that the Speaker with adequate notice to the members may
10 convene the House at another hour and/or another place.

11 Thirdly - Of Committees

12 (12)(a) The following standing committees shall be appointed each year in the month of
13 January or as soon as convenient after the adoption of House Rules, viz:

14 A committee on constituent services

15 A committee on corporations

16 A committee on environment and natural resources

17 A committee on finance

18 A committee on health, education and welfare

19 A committee on judiciary

20 A committee on labor

21 A committee on municipal government

22 A committee on rules

23 A committee on separation of powers

24 A committee on veterans' affairs.

25 (b) The Speaker shall appoint all standing committees and create such other
26 subcommittees and committees as may be required from time to time and appoint thereto. All
27 subcommittees and committees shall have proportionate minority membership when feasible.
28 The Speaker, in consultation with the Minority Leader, shall be the appointing authority for
29 minority membership on standing committees and subcommittees thereof, joint committees,
30 boards and commissions. All vacancies occurring in any committee and subcommittee after they
31 have once been named shall be filled in like manner by the Speaker. The Speaker, Majority
32 Leader and Minority Leader shall be ex officio members with voting rights of all House
33 committees but shall not be counted for purposes of determining a quorum. The Speaker shall
34 appoint the chair, vice chair and secretary of each committee. In the event that the chair of a

1 committee is unable to serve due to incapacity for medical or other reasons, the Speaker may
2 appoint an acting chair for the period of such incapacity, which acting chair shall have all of the
3 powers and duties of the chair. The chair shall determine all questions of procedure before the
4 committee in cases not provided for in these rules.

5 (c) A committee shall not consider any bill in the absence of a quorum, which shall
6 consist of a majority of the committee's membership.

7 (d) All committee meetings shall be open to the public, but public participation shall be
8 limited to testimony on the matters before the committee. The chair of any committee may limit
9 the length of a witness' testimony in order to afford all witnesses the opportunity to be heard.

10 (e) It shall be the duty of the committee on finance to take into consideration all
11 propositions relative to the revenue, to inquire into the state of the public debt and to report from
12 time to time their opinion thereon and such propositions relative thereto as to them shall
13 seem expedient.

14 (f) Upon introduction of the annual state budget to the House on behalf of the Governor,
15 the budget shall be referred to the finance committee. Within two (2) weeks following receipt
16 thereof, the finance committee's fiscal advisor shall provide to each member of the House a brief
17 but thorough summary of budget issues. Within three (3) weeks following the receipt of the
18 budget, the committee shall schedule such meetings as it deems necessary to receive comment on
19 the budget as a whole from all House members who wish to appear before it for that purpose.

20 (g) The Speaker may appoint from time to time subcommittees of a given standing
21 committee, which shall consist only of members of the committee from which it was appointed.
22 The chair of each standing committee shall be considered a member of each subcommittee of
23 such committee. Each subcommittee may hear testimony on bills and resolutions falling within
24 the subject matter of its charge and shall report to the committee from which it was appointed.
25 Subcommittees will otherwise conduct themselves in conformity with these rules. The Speaker
26 shall appoint the chair of each subcommittee.

27 (13)(a) Committees shall take into consideration all such petitions, resolves, bills, matters
28 or things as may be referred to them by the House with power to report by bill or otherwise;
29 provided, however, that committees shall, whenever possible, consider all bills of substantially
30 the same or of a similar nature at the same time in a manner that is otherwise in conformity with
31 these rules.

32 (b) A committee shall not consider any public bill or resolution not previously distributed
33 in print or electronically to its members except by a vote of the majority of the members of the
34 committee.

1 (c) The Chair of every committee shall post, in print and electronically, at least forty-
2 eight (48) hours prior to any committee meeting, a list by number and title of the bills
3 and resolutions to be heard at that meeting. Such postings shall be made electronically and on the
4 Legislative Data Bulletin Board. The electronic posting shall be considered the official date of the
5 posting. In the event that the electronic posting system is inoperable then the official posting shall
6 be the printed posting on the Legislative Data Bulletin Board. The Chair shall limit such listings
7 to the number of bills or resolutions he or she reasonably expects can be taken up by the
8 committee at that meeting. Any bill or resolution so posted which the committee is not able to
9 take up at the stated meeting must be re-posted as stated above. Such postings shall be made
10 electronically, and on the House bulletin board or on the Legislative Data bulletin board. Copies
11 of all posted bills or resolutions shall be provided in print or electronically to all committee
12 members and principal sponsors. A committee shall not hear any said bill or resolution without
13 such notice except by the consent of a majority of its members and with at least one (1) day's
14 notification to the principal sponsor. The sponsor may, however, waive such one-day notification.
15 The time requirements of this section shall not apply to House bills returned from the Senate with
16 amendment, or, after the 50th legislative day, to any bill originating in the Senate.

17 (d) Every standing committee shall meet at least once weekly if any requests for hearings
18 on or consideration of bills or resolutions are pending before it. The right to be heard on any such
19 bill or resolution may be granted, upon written or electronic request, to the principal sponsor
20 thereof as provided in these rules. No committee shall hear more than thirty (30) bills (exclusive
21 of city and town bills and those to be placed on the consent calendar) at any one (1) meeting.

22 (e) Upon receipt of a written request from the principal House sponsor of a bill or
23 resolution, a copy of which is to be given to the recording clerk, the committee shall grant to said
24 principal House sponsor a hearing on any said bill or resolution within thirty (30) calendar days
25 of the request, and provided further, that said committee shall grant to the principal House
26 sponsor consideration of his or her bill or resolution prior to the deadline for committee action on
27 such bill or resolution. The principal sponsor, with the concurrence of the Chair, may cancel a
28 scheduled hearing with twenty-four (24) hours' notice to the Chair, which notice shall be posted
29 electronically. A hearing postponed twice at the sponsor's request need not be re-scheduled. For
30 the purpose of the rule, consideration shall mean a majority vote on one (1) of the following:

31 (i) a motion to report the bill or resolution to the House with arecommendation of
32 passage;

33 (ii) a motion to report the bill or resolution as amended, or in substitute form, to the
34 House with a recommendation of passage; or

1 (iii) a motion to report the bill or resolution to the House without recommendation; or

2 (iv) a motion to report the bill or resolution to the House with a recommendation of no
3 passage; or

4 (v) a motion to report the bill or resolution to the House with a recommendation that it be
5 held for further study.

6 In the event of a tie vote on any of the motions specified in (i), (ii), (iii), (iv) or (v)
7 hereof, the bill or resolution shall be lost.

8 The originals of bills or resolutions which have failed in committee shall be transmitted
9 by the committee clerks to the Secretary of State for the State Archives, with an appropriate
10 notation thereon.

11 (f) Once a committee has considered a bill or resolution the principal House sponsor shall
12 be notified in writing or electronically by the end of the second legislative day following such
13 action including the vote tally within the committee and the date thereof, prior to the report being
14 made to the full House. Committee Chairs shall bring reports of committee actions to the floor no
15 later than two (2) weeks following the committee votes thereon, provided that this shall not apply
16 to the Committee on Finance, nor shall it apply to bills being held for further study under
17 subdivision (e)(v). A committee member may move reconsideration of any vote taken so long as
18 the subject matter of the vote remains in the possession of the committee. Any reconsideration
19 shall be consistent with the provisions of Rule 40.

20 Bills or resolutions concerning appropriations, revenue or expenditures shall not be
21 subject to the above time limits.

22 (g) In the event a committee shall fail to afford consideration to any bill or resolution
23 within the prescribed time, the principal sponsor may report such failure in writing to the Speaker
24 of the House and the Speaker thereupon may order the immediate discharge of the bill or
25 resolution from a committee to the House floor.

26 (h) All bills or resolutions reported from committee shall be placed on the calendar or,
27 pursuant to the restrictions of these rules, on the consent calendar for the required period of time
28 according to these rules before House consideration. Bills and resolutions reported from
29 committees and received by the Clerk of the House prior to the convening of the session on a
30 given legislative day shall be deemed to have been received, and therefore in order to be placed
31 upon the appropriate calendar, as of that day. Bills and resolutions so received after the convening
32 of the session on a given legislative day shall be deemed to have been received, and therefore in
33 order to be placed upon the appropriate calendar, on the next legislative day and shall be
34 considered a part of that day's business.

1 House Rule 13(e) through (h) shall not apply to any bill or resolution which shall
2 have originated in the Senate.

3 (i) No public bill or resolution which originated in the House shall be considered by a
4 House committee unless the committee has held a hearing on that bill or resolution by April 12,
5 2007 (or April 10, 2008, in the case of 2008), and thereafter the committees of the House shall
6 not consider public bills or resolutions except those which have been acted upon by the Senate
7 and transmitted by the Senate to the House of Representatives, provided however, that
8 the committee on finance may hear and consider such House bills, acts or resolutions as it deems
9 to have a fiscal impact after April 12, 2007 (or April 10, 2008, in the case of 2008), except
10 as provided in section (j) hereof, and provided further, that each other House committee may
11 complete consideration of not more than three (3) House bills or resolutions after said date,
12 on which such committee had not been able to complete action, upon approval by the Speaker of
13 a written request from the Chair. All such requests must be filed with the Clerk of the House no
14 later than April 12, 2007 (or April 10, 2008, in the case of 2008). The provisions of this paragraph
15 shall not apply to House bills of which Senate duplicates have passed the House.

16 (j) No House bill which relates to an individual's pension or retirement shall be accepted
17 as a committee report from the committee on finance unless it shall have been considered by the
18 committee on or before April 12, 2007 (or April 10, 2008, in the case of 2008), and shall have
19 been heard in the committee no later than one (1) week prior to that date.

20 (k) Transfers – With the approval of the Speaker, or his or her designee, a bill or
21 resolution may be transferred by the chairperson from one committee to another at any time. The
22 committee receiving the transferred bill or resolution must comply with the posting and time
23 requirements of this section.

24 (14)(a) Committees shall keep a permanent record of their written submissions and of
25 their voting tally sheets, and the same shall be public records and available to any member and to
26 any person within two (2) legislative days upon written request.

27 (b) Each committee shall file with the Clerk of the House and with legislative data
28 services a list of all measures on which formal action was taken and a copy of the recorded vote
29 tally on each such measure.

30 Fourthly - Of Bills and Petitions

31 (15)(a) No bill or resolution shall be considered or acted upon by the House if objection
32 is made unless the same has been considered by, reported, or recalled from a committee thereof,
33 from a joint committee, or by two-thirds (2/3) of members present. This rule shall not apply to a
34 House bill of which the Senate duplicate has passed the House.

1 (b) When a bill or resolution is postponed indefinitely, the same shall not be acted upon
2 again during the session. If the reading of any printed or written paper be objected to, it shall be
3 determined by a vote of the House without debate.

4 (c) No bill or resolution shall be passed or concurred in without two (2) readings. The
5 first reading shall take place by acceptance of the bill or resolution and publication in the House
6 Journal and the second after it has been placed upon the calendar. No bill or resolution upon the
7 calendar shall be taken up for consideration unless copies thereof, in the form in which it was
8 reported from committee, shall have been made available in print or electronically to the
9 members no later than the rise of the House on the legislative day preceding the day on which it
10 shall be in order for consideration. No matter of business on the calendar shall be considered
11 upon its merits prior to the legislative day after it shall have been placed on the calendar except
12 by vote of the majority of the members present and voting. The provisions of this paragraph shall
13 not apply to Senate bills received by the House which are duplicates of House bills.

14 (d) No more than fifty (50) public bills shall be considered upon their merits during any
15 one (1) legislative day, provided, however, that House bills returned from the Senate, Senate bills
16 which are duplicates of and identical to House bills, and bills removed from the consent calendar
17 pursuant to the provisions of Rule 9 may be considered notwithstanding this limit and provided
18 further, that Senate bills which are duplicates of and identical to House bills, and House bills
19 returned from the Senate, may without objection be bundled and passed by one vote provided that
20 they are provided to members electronically prior to consideration.

21 (e) The budget bill shall be prepared by the Legislative Council. The budget bill shall not
22 be considered by the House unless copies thereof as approved by the finance committee have
23 been available to the members for seven (7) calendar days. No amendment which is intended to
24 make a substantive change in the budget bill may be offered other than by the Chair of the finance
25 committee, except with the agreement of two-thirds (2/3) of the members present, unless the text
26 thereof shall have been submitted to the Legislative Council and made available to the
27 members two (2) calendar days prior to the day on which the budget bill shall be in order for
28 consideration.

29 (f) An amendment which was germane when prepared, and which was offered in a timely
30 fashion, but is no longer germane because of an intervening amendment, may, with the agreement
31 of the majority leader and minority leader, be revised orally or in writing by the sponsor without
32 renewed compliance with the requirements hereof.

33 (g) After the 50th legislative day, bills or resolutions received back from the Senate with
34 amendments requiring House concurrence shall, with the agreement of the House sponsor and the

1 Majority Leader, be placed on the calendar in order for the day upon which they are received.

2 (16)(a) There shall be attached to every public bill or resolution when first introduced an
3 explanation of such bill or resolution indicating the proposed changes, and/or the statute or
4 existing law which such bill or resolution purports to amend. Each original bill or resolution
5 introduced shall be accompanied by at least four (4) copies which may be typewritten
6 or reproduced by any legible mechanical process, and the Clerk of the House may decline to
7 receive and process bills and resolutions not accompanied by such copies.

8 (b) When any bill or resolution is offered which is intended to amend any part or parts of
9 an existing statute, or the Constitution of the State of Rhode Island, or the House Rules, any part
10 or parts intended to be stricken shall be contained in the bill or resolution and by
11 appropriate mechanical mark, shall be crossed out. All new matter contained in the bill or
12 resolution shall be underlined, so that the new matter may be easily discerned. Existing language
13 not intended to be amended shall be reproduced without change.

14 (c) "Public bill" shall include all bills or resolutions which in any way have general
15 application throughout the state or which are of a nature for which the constitution requires
16 special treatment, and bills which relate to an individual's pension or retirement benefits. Bills or
17 resolutions of a private or local nature shall not be considered "Public bills" and shall include:
18 those which pertain to a particular city or town or local entity; those making claims against the
19 state; those which pertain to private corporation charters and amendments thereto and restoration
20 thereof, and to amendments to authorize holdings by non-profit organizations of a charitable,
21 civic, library or like nature; resolutions memorializing congress, or of congratulations or
22 expressing sympathy or condolences; resolutions requesting the several departments of state
23 government to grant some privilege, consideration or relief; and others of like private and local
24 nature.

25 (d) All bills and resolutions, private as well as public, and all proposed amendments
26 thereto, shall be prepared by the Legislative Council, and the Clerk of the House may decline to
27 accept for introduction any bill, resolution or transmittal not in conformity herewith. Once
28 introduced and referred, all bills and resolutions shall be printed and made available
29 electronically, except resolutions of congratulation and condolence. The Legislative Council may
30 decline to accept for drafting any proposal for an amendment submitted to it later than 3 p.m. on
31 the day on which the bill or resolution to be amended is to be heard, provided that the Speaker or
32 his or her designee may waive this restriction.

33 (e) All bills and resolutions which have been introduced at the request of one of the
34 general officers shall bear a stamp indicating such request.

1 (i) Upon presentation of testimony before a committee, the prime sponsor of a bill or
2 resolution shall provide to the committee the name of any individual, group or organization
3 responsible for the substantive basis or text of the bill.

4 (f) A prime sponsor may withdraw a bill or resolution previously introduced at any time,
5 upon written request to the Clerk of the House on a form which the Clerk of the House shall
6 provide.

7 (g) In the event a bill is amended or substituted by a committee for floor action, the
8 sponsor or sponsors of that bill may elect, in writing, to have their names disassociated from said
9 bill and the committee report shall reflect this election.

10 (h)(i) A bill or resolution may be filed by any member or member-elect with the Clerk of
11 the House at any time from November 15 to the day prior to the commencement of the regular
12 annual session. The clerk shall order it printed, and made available for the first reading on the
13 second day of the succeeding session.

14 (ii) Only the bills or resolutions filed by members elected and qualified shall receive the
15 first reading.

16 (iii) In the event that any member or member-elect shall die after filing and before the
17 first reading, the death of said member or member-elect shall constitute automatic withdrawal of
18 said bill or resolution and automatic withdrawal of the number of said bill or resolution and said
19 number shall not be used again during the legislative session; provided, however, that where a bill
20 or resolution shall have had more than one sponsor, said bill or resolution and number shall not be
21 withdrawn and the member whose name appears second on said bill or resolution shall become
22 the prime sponsor.

23 (17) A member may introduce a public bill or resolution after the third Thursday in
24 February only if, one (1) day previous to such introduction, the member shall have notified the
25 House of his or her intention to introduce said bill or resolution by reading the title and giving a
26 brief explanation of the contents thereof. A member may avail himself or herself of the
27 opportunity afforded by this rule three (3) times only in each calendar year, and in no event after
28 the fortieth (40th) legislative day, provided that these limitations shall not apply to municipal bills,
29 bills to create or extend the reporting dates of study commissions, appropriations and budget bills
30 (regular or supplemental) or to bills which under these rules are eligible for placement on the
31 consent calendar, and provided further that this rule shall not apply to any matter submitted with
32 the approval of the Speaker.

33 House committees may, but shall not be obliged to, hear and consider public bills or
34 resolutions approved for introduction pursuant to this rule notwithstanding the provisions of Rule

1 13(i).

2 (18) No measure without a body or substantive content shall be accepted at any time, nor
3 shall a substitute bill be accepted which is not consistent with the title and substance of the
4 original bill. No motion or proposition of a subject different from that under consideration shall
5 be admitted under color of amendment.

6 (19)(a) No amendment to a pending bill or resolution may be considered by the House,
7 except by unanimous consent, unless copies of the same shall be on the desks of the members in
8 typed form or accessible electronically.

9 (b) When an amendment proposed to any pending measure is laid on the table, it shall not
10 carry with it or prejudice such measure.

11 (c) The motion to lay on the table and the motion to take from the table shall be non-
12 debatable; provided, however, that the mover of an amendment shall be allowed two (2) minutes
13 to reply when a motion is made to table his or her amendment; whereupon the Speaker shall put
14 the question on the motion to table.

15 (20) Amendments, articles or sections of the State budget shall concern only
16 appropriations, expenditures, revenue or matters related thereto.

17 (21) Except with respect to present and former members of the General Assembly,
18 general officers, members of the judiciary, and elected state and federal officials, all expressions
19 in the nature of condolences and in the nature of congratulations shall be presented in omnibus
20 resolutions which shall not require concurrent action and which, upon passage, shall be forthwith
21 transmitted to the Secretary of State.

22 (22) On any day any member of the House may present a petition in writing to discharge
23 a committee from further consideration of a public bill or resolution which has been referred to a
24 committee, and by no other procedure, but only one petition may be presented for a public bill
25 or resolution during the course of a session. The petition shall be placed in the custody of the
26 recording clerk of the House who shall arrange some convenient place for the signatures of the
27 members to be placed thereon in the presence of said clerk; provided, however, that the member
28 presenting such petition may take custody of the petition and solicit signatures. Such member
29 shall attest to the authenticity of each signature so solicited by initialing the same. A signature
30 may be withdrawn by a member at any time before the petition receives sufficient signatures to
31 become effective, and such petitions shall become effective, and shall serve to discharge
32 a committee from further consideration of the public bill or resolution and shall cause said public
33 bill or resolution to be placed upon the calendar for action, when any thirty-eight (38)
34 representatives shall have affixed their signatures thereto. No such petition shall be presented for

1 signatures to discharge a public bill or resolution unless the same shall have been in the
2 possession of the committee for no less than sixteen (16) legislative days, and in no event until
3 after the fiftieth (50th) legislative day. During House consideration of any discharged public bill
4 or resolution, no motion to recommit or lay on the table shall be entertained by the Speaker
5 until every member desiring to be heard has been recognized.

6 (23) No vote or act which has been passed by the House shall be sent by the clerk to the
7 Senate or to the Governor before the expiration of the time limit for its reconsideration under rule
8 40, except those passed on the last day and those which shall have been reconsidered.

9 (24) Any bill or resolution which has been introduced in one (1) session need not be
10 reintroduced in the succeeding session unless the same shall have been defeated in committee or
11 on the floor of either house; provided, however, that no general election shall have intervened.

12 The concurrence of both houses in the same session shall be necessary for the enactment
13 of all laws.

14 [Fifthly - Of Decorum and Debates](#)

15 (25) When any member is about to speak in debate, or to deliver any matter to the House,
16 he or she shall activate his or her recognition button, and when recognized rise and proceed
17 by respectfully addressing the Speaker.

18 (26) When two (2) or more members seek to be recognized, the Speaker shall select the
19 member who is to speak first.

20 (27) No member shall speak more than twice, nor the Majority and Minority Whips and
21 the Speaker pro tempore more than four (4) times, to the same question without the leave of the
22 House, nor more than once until every member choosing to speak shall have spoken, nor for
23 longer than five (5) minutes without the leave of the House. The first two (2) clauses of this rule
24 shall not apply to the Majority and Minority Leaders, nor to the principal sponsor or floor
25 manager of any bill, resolution or amendment on the floor.

26 (28) If any member, in speaking or otherwise, transgresses any rule of the House, the
27 Speaker shall, or any member may, call him or her to order, in which case the member called to
28 order shall immediately sit down, unless permitted by the Speaker to explain and the House shall,
29 if appealed to, decide on the case but without debate.

30 (29) While the Speaker is putting any question, or addressing the House, or when a
31 member is speaking, none shall entertain private discourse in person or by phone, nor
32 walk between the member who is addressing the Speaker and the chair. At no time while the
33 House is in session shall any person use cell phones or audible pagers in the House Chamber.
34 During legislative sessions, video or photographic equipment shall not be used by members of the

1 House on the floor of the House or in committee hearing rooms when committee meetings are in
2 session unless he or she has the permission of the Speaker. This section shall not apply to
3 properly credentialed representatives of the news media.

4 (30) When a motion is made and seconded, it shall be stated by the Speaker, or, being in
5 writing, shall be handed to the Speaker and read by the Clerk of the House before debate. Any
6 motion shall be reduced to writing before debate whenever the Speaker shall so direct.

7 (31) Any bill or resolution of more than one section shall be passed upon by section,
8 at the request of any member. With the leave of the Speaker, a section that is susceptible of
9 division shall be divided and put separately upon the propositions of which it is compounded, but
10 a motion to strike out and substitute shall not be divided.

11 (32) After a motion is stated by the Speaker, or read by the clerk, it shall be deemed to be
12 in possession of the House, but any motion may be withdrawn by the mover at any time before a
13 decision or amendment, except a motion to reconsider, which shall not be withdrawn after the
14 time has elapsed within which it might originally have been made.

15 (33) When a question is under debate no motion shall be received, except to adjourn, for
16 the previous question, to take a recess, to lay on the table, to fix a time for closing debate, to
17 postpone indefinitely, to postpone to a day certain, to commit, or to amend, which several
18 questions shall have precedence in the order in which they are here arranged.

19 (34) Motions to commit shall have precedence in the following order: to a standing
20 committee of the House, to a select committee of the House, to a joint standing committee, to a
21 joint select committee.

22 (35) When a time for a meeting of the House shall have been previously fixed upon, a
23 motion to adjourn shall be always in order, except as provided in Rule 39. The motions to lay on
24 the table, to take from the table, to reconsider, for the previous question, to take a recess, to
25 adjourn, and for the vote, shall be decided without debate.

26 (36) No member shall vote on any question of private property in the event of which he
27 or she is immediately and particularly interested.

28 (37)(a) No member shall speak or vote, unless within the bar of the House and at his or
29 her seat, except as hereinafter provided. Every member (except as provided in Rule 3) who shall
30 be in his or her seat in the House Chamber when the question is put, shall give his or her vote,
31 unless prior thereto the Speaker shall have excused him or her in accordance with the provisions
32 of the Code of Ethics statute (RIGL 36-14-6). No member may vote for another member, nor
33 activate another member's voting machine except by the express direction of that member who is
34 present in the House chamber. No one may occupy the vacant seat of a member.

1 (b) When a violation of Rule 37(a) is alleged in writing by a member, the Speaker may
2 refer said written allegation to the House Rules Committee to investigate, hold hearings, ascertain
3 the facts and report its findings and recommendation to the House, which may then take
4 appropriate action including but not limited to expulsion as authorized by Article 6, Section 7 of
5 the Constitution of the State.

6 (c) The electronic voting machine of any member not present when the quorum is called
7 shall remain locked until the member has notified the recording clerk of his or her presence.
8 Upon late arrival but prior to adjournment, a member may report his or her presence to
9 the recording clerk which shall be recorded in the journal.

10 (d) Any member who leaves the floor before adjournment for the remainder of that day's
11 session shall report to the recording clerk prior to his or her departure. The recording clerk will
12 then lock the electronic voting machine of that member.

13 (38)(a) The electronic voting system may be used to record attendance and quorums, and
14 shall be used to record all votes on public bills (as defined in rule 16(c)) and votes on rule
15 changes and suspensions. It shall be used for other votes by request of a member, and, at the
16 discretion of the Speaker, for recording the seconds to any motion.

17 (b) In the event the machine is not to be used or is not operating properly, all votes and
18 other determinations may be taken as otherwise required by House rules, either by voice vote,
19 division vote or by calling the roll alphabetically and recording the ayes and nays. If a
20 member's voting device is out of order, he or she shall rise and announce it to the presiding
21 officer and call his or her vote orally prior to the declaration of the result of the vote. Every
22 member may vote providing he or she is in the chamber of the House at the time the vote is in
23 progress and before the machine is locked.

24 (c) The electronic voting system shall be under the control of the presiding officer and
25 shall be operated by such personnel as the Speaker of the House so designates. At a reasonable
26 time, prior to any vote being taken, the presiding officer shall announce that a vote is about to
27 be taken. When any member other than the Speaker of the House is presiding, he or she shall
28 direct the voting clerk to record his or her vote as if cast at his or her voting station. Until the
29 completion of the voting, no member shall be recognized, and no other business shall be
30 transacted.

31 (d) When sufficient time has elapsed for each member to vote, the presiding officer shall
32 order the machine locked and activate the recording process. When the vote is completely
33 recorded, the clerk shall advise the presiding officer of the result; and the presiding officer shall
34 announce the result to the House and the result shall be recorded in the journal. No vote may be

1 changed after the system has been locked and the vote recorded.

2 (e) When a division is called for, those in the affirmative or the negative, as the case may
3 be, shall cast their votes accordingly and the voting clerk shall activate the recording equipment
4 so as to reflect only the numerical count. When the vote is completely recorded, the clerk
5 shall advise the presiding officer of the result; and the presiding officer shall announce the result
6 to the House. (In the event the electronic voting system is not operating properly, the division
7 vote shall be conducted as otherwise provided in House rules).

8 (f) After the question has been put, but before the system is locked, any member may call
9 for a statement of the question.

10 (g) While the presiding officer is putting the question, or the vote is being recorded, no
11 member shall speak or leave his or her place. After a vote has been ordered there shall be no
12 debate whatever.

13 (h) In case of a tie vote the question shall be lost.

14 (39) There shall be a motion for the previous question, which shall always be in order and
15 which shall not be debated, and which may be moved and ordered upon any bill or section
16 thereof, amendment, motion, resolution or question which is debatable, any of which shall be
17 considered as the main question for the purpose of applying the previous question. When a
18 motion for the previous question has been made, no other motion shall be entertained by the
19 Speaker until it has been put to the House and decided. All incidental questions of order arising
20 after a motion for the previous question has been made, and before the vote has been taken on the
21 main question, shall be decided whether on appeal or otherwise without debate. When the
22 previous question has been ordered, a motion to reconsider such vote shall not be in order, and no
23 motion to adjourn or take a recess while a quorum is present shall be entertained between the
24 taking of such vote and the taking of the vote on the main question, but ten (10) minutes shall be
25 allowed for further debate upon the main question during which no member shall speak more
26 than three (3) minutes, and a further period of ten (10) minutes, if desired, shall be allowed for
27 debate to the member introducing the bill or question to be acted upon, or to the member or
28 members to whom he or she may yield the floor, at the close of which time, or at the close of the
29 first ten (10) minutes, in case the introducer does not desire to so use his or her time, the vote on
30 the main question shall be taken. If incidental questions of order are raised after the previous
31 question has been ordered, the time occupied in deciding such question shall be deducted from
32 the time allowed for debate.

33 (40) When any vote is passed, any member voting in the majority may move
34 to reconsider on the same or the next legislative day, except as provided in Rule 39: and when a

1 motion for reconsideration has been decided, it shall not be reconsidered. A motion to reconsider
2 shall not be debated.

3 (41)(a) A member may claim the floor on a question of personal privilege to reply to
4 criticism, or to discuss anything clearly derogatory, or which reflects upon his or her character, or
5 upon the House in general, that appears in the press or other public medium, but not to discuss
6 favorable references to himself or herself.

7 (b) No member is permitted to attack another member of the House personally, nor to
8 make false statements about, or question the integrity of, another member.

9 (42)(a) The presiding officer may refer to “Mason's Manual of Legislative Procedure,”
10 most recent edition, published by the National Conference of State Legislatures, for guidance as
11 to procedure on the floor of the House in all cases in which its provisions are not inconsistent
12 with applicable law or these rules.

13 (b) A point of order is the parliamentary device used to require a deliberative body to
14 observe its own rules and to follow established parliamentary practice. A point of order is proper
15 during a floor debate when a member questions whether there has been a breach of order or of the
16 rules. The Speaker shall not entertain one point of order while another is pending. A point of
17 order must be raised at the time the particular question is pending.

18 [Sixthly -- Of Admission to the Floor](#)

19 (43)(a) No person or persons, except currently elected members of the general assembly,
20 legislative staff and authorized representatives of the public press, as provided in the rule next
21 following, shall be admitted to the floor of the house during the session thereof, except by the
22 approval of the speaker for a designated purpose. The speaker may make special provision for
23 admission to the floor of the House during the session thereof for persons, who by reason of
24 disability, are unable to gain access to the House galleries. All persons so admitted by the Speaker
25 to the floor of the House during the session thereof shall be present for the sole purpose of
26 observing the proceedings of the House and shall remain seated, refrain from conversation,
27 maintain the decorum of the House and no such person shall contact, address, speak or gesture to,
28 or communicate in any way with any House member while present on the floor of the House. No
29 person on the floor of the chamber shall dress in a manner offensive to the decorum of the House.
30 Any House member who observes conduct in violation of the House Rules shall immediately
31 notify the Speaker thereof and the Speaker shall forthwith take appropriate corrective action and
32 may order the removal of the offending person.

33 (b) During House sessions, admission to the House lounge is limited to currently serving
34 members and staff of the General Assembly and authorized representatives of the public press.

1 (c) Complimentary items, souvenirs and gifts of food shall not be placed upon members'
2 desks nor delivered to the floor of the House or to members' mailboxes.

3 (44) Authorized representatives of the public press may be admitted by the Speaker to
4 the floor of the House and assigned seats under such regulations as he or she may from time to
5 time prescribe. Such press representatives as shall be admitted shall have no privilege upon the
6 floor other than to pass to and from the seats assigned to them.

7 Seventhly – Miscellaneous

8 (45) In the event of the calling of an extraordinary session of the General Assembly by
9 the Governor, or a reconvened session by the Speaker of the House or the President of the
10 Senate, said session shall be conducted pursuant to the foregoing rules; provided, however, that
11 the requirement for prior posting of bills by committees contained in Rule 13(c), the limitation
12 on consideration of House bills by House committees contained in Rule 13(i), the prohibition on
13 reading a bill a second time on the same day it was given first reading and the two (2)
14 day calendar requirement contained in Rule 15(c), and the deadline for new introductions
15 contained in Rule 17, shall not be applicable during such extraordinary sessions, and provided
16 further that any bill or resolution for consideration of which the session is called shall have been
17 provided electronically to the members at least twenty-four (24) hours prior to the opening of
18 the session.

19 (46)(a) No rule shall be repealed or amended, except by two-thirds (2/3) of the members
20 voting; nor shall the operation of any rule be temporarily suspended except by two-thirds (2/3) of
21 the members voting, and such action may be taken with reference to any rule, except that Rule 38
22 (a) may not be suspended. The application of this rule as it pertains to the temporary suspension
23 of the rules shall not be subject to amendment or repeal. Any motion to repeal, amend or suspend
24 any rule shall be a debatable motion under these rules.

25 (b) At the beginning of a legislative session, the rules of the previous legislative session
26 shall remain in full force and effect until the permanent rules of the House for the current session
27 have been prepared, presented, debated and adopted by a majority vote of the House.

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