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2025-2026 COMMITTEE RULES

1. SETTING OF BILLS

- a. **Setting of Bills:** Pursuant to the Chair's authority, Committee staff shall be responsible for preparing Committee hearing agendas. Bills referred to the Committee shall be set for hearing as soon as practicable and in a manner that enables the Committee to meet its workload and schedule. Bills relating to the same subject matter may be set for hearing on the same day, as deemed appropriate by the Chair.
- b. **Restriction on the Setting of Bills:** A bill shall be set for hearing in the Committee no more than three times. A bill is "set" for the purposes of this subsection whenever notice of the hearing has been published in the Senate Daily File for one or more days.
 - (1) **Author's Set:** If a bill is withdrawn at the request of the author from the hearing in which it was set, or is not heard to permit the preparation of amendments or compliance with any other Committee rules, the set shall be deemed an author's set.
 - (2) **Committee Set:** If a bill is set for hearing and the Committee postpones the hearing of the bill on its sole initiative, or adjourns the hearing while testimony is being taken, such hearing shall not be counted as one of the three times a bill may be set.
- c. **Special Order of Business:** The Committee may set any bill for a special order of business so that the bill may be heard at a time certain, or as the Chair deems appropriate.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION REQUEST

- a. When a bill is referred to the Committee, the Committee shall forward to the author a background information request to aid in the preparation of the Committee analysis.
- b. The author shall deliver the completed background information request and background materials to the Committee, as prescribed by the Committee. Electronic copies of completed background materials shall be sent to the Committee Consultant, Committee Assistant, and Minority Consultants. Completed background sheets and materials are due to the Committee no later than seven calendar days after the background information request is delivered to the

- author's office, unless otherwise requested by the Committee. The Committee reserves the right to postpone a hearing on any bill if the background materials have not been submitted at least 10 days prior to the scheduled hearing.
- c. Any background materials, support and/or opposition letters, or any other documentation related to a bill submitted after the initial completed background information request and materials received by the Committee shall be provided by the author to both the Committee and the Minority Consultants. The delivery of the aforementioned background request and background materials shall be in accordance with the deadlines described in #2b.
 - d. The completed background information request shall contain the names of any person in the author's office who may be contacted regarding the bill and any sponsor(s) who may be contacted regarding the bill; the author's statement of the purpose of the bill; including a statement of the problem or deficiency in existing law which the bill seeks to remedy; studies, reports, statistics and facts which support the conclusion that there is a problem and that the proposed legislation will properly address that problem; and, a complete list of known support and opposition.
 - e. If a bill has been set for hearing, and a completed background information request and any other supporting documentation has not been received to the satisfaction of the Committee, the Committee may reset the bill for a subsequent hearing. Such a set shall be deemed an author's set.

3. **AMENDMENTS**

- a. **Timing of Submission:** An author may, subject to the Joint Rules, amend a bill at any time prior to the hearing, provided that author's amendments have been submitted to the Committee no later than noon 10 calendar days prior to the hearing at which the bill has been set.
- b. **Form of Amendments:** All author's amendments shall be submitted to the Committee (the original, signed by the author, and including the in-context version of the amendment) in Legislative Counsel Form.
- c. **Subsequent hearing:** The Chair reserves the right to reset, for a subsequent hearing, any bill for which amendments are submitted after the deadline in #3a. Such a set shall be deemed an author's set.
- d. **Late Amendments or Amendments Offered at Hearing:** If an author offers substantive amendments to their bill later than 10 calendar days prior to the Committee hearing for which the bill is set, or during the hearing, the hearing may, at the discretion of the Chair, be postponed in order to place the amendments in print and permit appropriate analysis by Committee staff. Such a set shall be deemed an author's set.
- e. **Committee Amendments:** Amendments made to a bill during a hearing shall be drafted by Committee staff.
- f. **Mock-ups:** With permission of the Committee, an author may submit amendments after normal Committee deadlines. In such instances, if the author does not have the amendments in Legislative Counsel in-context form, the author shall provide a written mockup of the bill with the proposed amendments at the Committee hearing. The author shall provide the mockup to Committee staff for

review no later than two calendar days prior to the hearing, unless the Chair deems otherwise.

- g. **Urgency Clauses:** A bill may not be amended to add an urgency clause unless the author of the amendment has secured prior approval of the Senate Rules Committee.

4. **COMMITTEE ANALYSES**

- a. **Availability:** Committee agendas and analyses of bills scheduled for hearing shall be made available to the public by the end of the day, two calendar days prior to each hearing, except in cases when it is not feasible due to holidays or extraordinary Committee workload. In the case of special hearings, including hearings pursuant to SR 29.10, the analyses shall be made available to the public at the time of the hearing and prior to any testimony being taken on the bill.
- b. **Distribution:** A copy of the analysis shall be delivered by Committee staff to the bill's author and to Committee members prior to its distribution to the public.
- c. **Notation of Support and Opposition:** Support and opposition letters received by the Committee later than noon seven calendar days prior to a hearing are not assured of being reflected in a Committee analysis. Only those letters which clearly indicate "Support" or "Oppose" to the current version of the bill may be noted in the Committee analysis.

5. **MEETING AND QUORUM**

- a. **Commencement of Hearings:** The Chair shall promptly call all meetings to order at the time and place designated in the Senate Daily File. If a quorum is not present, the Chair may commence the hearing as a subcommittee subject to both Senate and Joint Rules.
- b. **Quorum:** A majority of the membership of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.
- c. **Presiding:** The Chair shall preside at meetings when present except when the Committee is considering a bill of which the Chair is the author. Whenever the Chair is not presiding, the Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair. In the absence of both, a member designated by the Chair shall preside.

6. **ORDER OF AGENDA**

- a. **File Order:** Bills set for hearing shall be heard in file order, except as the Chair otherwise deems appropriate. The Chair may choose to permit an author to present all of their bills at one time, or may take an author out of order out of courtesy or special circumstances. If an author is not present, when the author's bill is up on the agenda, bills subsequently on the agenda may be taken up.
- b. **Absence of Author:** If an author does not present a bill at the hearing at which it is set, the bill may be passed on file and put over to a subsequent hearing, which will be considered an author's set, unless the Chair otherwise deems appropriate.
- c. **Committee Members:** Committee members shall present their bills after non-member authors, unless the Chair deems otherwise.

7. **CONSENT CALENDAR**

- a. **Preparation of Consent Calendar:** The Committee staff may, in consultation with the Minority Consultant, prepare a proposed consent calendar prior to a Committee hearing which may include any uncontested bill for which no opposition has been brought to the attention of the Committee. The consent calendar shall be made available to the public the morning of the hearing.
- b. **Taking up Consent Calendar:** The Chair may take up the consent calendar at any convenient opportunity during the Committee hearing. Authors of bills placed on the consent calendar need not be present when the consent calendar is taken up. All items on the consent calendar shall be voted on by the Committee without testimony, unless the Chair deems otherwise.
- c. **Removal of Items from Consent Calendar:** Any member of the Committee may request a bill be taken off the consent calendar before the consent calendar is taken up for a vote. In this instance, the Chair shall direct the Sergeant-at-Arms to call the author's office and notify the author of the need to present the bill before the Committee. The bill shall either be taken up in the order specified in #6 or at the next scheduled Committee hearing, as the Chair deems appropriate. Such a set shall be considered a Committee set.
- d. **Amending a Bill While on Consent:** A bill may be amended while on consent provided the amendments are noncontroversial and have been approved by the Chair. The bill shall be placed on the consent calendar with the notation that the vote shall be "Do Pass as Amended with Recommendation to Consent Calendar".

8. **TESTIMONY AT HEARINGS**

- a. **Author's Absence:** A bill may not be considered in the absence of the author without the author's consent, except that a bill may be presented by the author's representative per a written request by the author.
- b. **Written Testimony:** The Chair may require any author wishing to present written testimony on any bill before the Committee to deliver the testimony in written form to the Committee at least one working day prior to the hearing.

9. **VOTING**

- a. **Majority Required:** A majority of the Committee membership is required to pass a bill from the Committee. A simple majority of those present and voting is sufficient to recommend the adoption of Committee amendments, provided that a quorum is present.
- b. **Recorded Voting:** All actions taken on a bill by the Committee shall be by recorded roll call vote only, except as noted in #9e or in the Joint Rules or the Rules of the Senate. The vote shall be announced upon conclusion of a roll call vote, absent an approved motion or author's request to place a bill on call.
- c. **Substitute Roll Calls:** A roll call vote on a previous bill may be substituted by unanimous consent, provided the members whose votes are substituted are present at the time of substitution.
- d. **Placing Measures on Call:** Prior to announcement of the vote, upon the request of the author or any member of the Committee, the Chair shall announce that the bill will be placed on call. The period of time for the call shall not exceed the adjournment of the Committee meeting. The Chair shall announce the time or

times when the roll shall be opened for a vote on any bill which is on call. When a bill is on call, a member may vote on the bill only when the call is lifted. At the time that a call on a bill is being lifted, any member of the Committee who has previously voted on the measure may change their vote. However, a member who has voted "aye" or "no" may not change to "no vote recorded" and may not add their vote to any bill after the vote has been announced.

- e. **When Recorded Votes Not Required:** A recorded roll call vote is not required on the following actions by the Committee:
 - (1) Procedural motions that do not have the effect of disposing of a bill.
 - (2) An author's request to withdraw a bill from the Committee calendar.
 - (3) The return of a bill to the Secretary of Senate where the bill has not been voted upon by the Committee.
- f. **Tie Votes:** In the case of a tie vote, a motion fails.

10. **RECONSIDERATION**

- a. **Reconsideration of Bill Allowed Only Once:** After a bill has been defeated by the Committee, reconsideration of the bill may be granted one time.
- b. **Reconsideration Request:** A request for reconsideration shall be made by the author either at the hearing in which the bill was defeated or within 15 legislative days of the bill's defeat, or prior to the interim joint recess, whichever occurs first.
- c. **Majority Vote Required for A Reconsideration Vote to Be Granted:** Following a proper request for reconsideration, the Committee may grant reconsideration of a bill by a majority of the membership, recorded roll call vote only. Absent an objection by a Committee member, the vote to reconsider the bill may be granted by unanimous consent. If the request for reconsideration fails, the bill shall be immediately returned to the Secretary of the Senate.
- d. **Reconsideration Vote At Subsequent Hearing:** If a second and final vote on the bill is scheduled by the Committee for a subsequent hearing, the vote must be properly noticed in the Senate Daily File, and shall, at the Chair's discretion, be listed as either "Reconsideration or Vote Only". Author need not be present.

11. **SUBCOMMITTEES**

- a. **Study:** The Chair may, subject to approval by the Committee on Rules, create subcommittees for the in-depth study of a particular subject matter or bills.
- b. **To Request a Hearing:** Subcommittees must submit a letter to the Chair requesting approval to have a hearing.
- c. **Rules:** Subcommittees shall operate under the same rules as the full Committee.

12. **MISCELLANEOUS PROCEDURAL RULES**

- a. **Appealing the Decision of the Chair:** Any Committee member may appeal a decision or ruling of the Chair on a point of order. Such appeals shall be decided by a majority of those members present and voting. A majority of those members present and voting or a tie vote sustains the decision or ruling of the Chair.
- b. **Substitute Motions:** A substitute motion or substitute amendment may be offered to replace an original motion before the Committee.

- (1) A motion to substitute shall be deemed a motion to amend, is debatable, and can be adopted by a majority of those members present and voting.
- (2) If the substitute motion is adopted, it becomes the new "main" motion.
- (3) A substitute motion which has been adopted is subject to the same voting requirement as if it were the original motion. If the substitute motion fails, the original motion is again before the Committee and is subject to the normal voting requirements.

c. **Vacancies:** A vacancy on the Committee does not reduce the quorum requirement or the number of votes required to take action on a bill.

13. BILLS RELATING TO MANDATED BENEFITS OR SERVICES

Consistent with AB 1996 (Chapter 795, Statutes of 2002) and SB 1704 (Chapter 684, Statutes of 2006), the Chair will request that the University of California, through the California Health Benefits Review Program, review any bill proposing or repealing a health care service plan or health insurer mandated benefit or service. The Committee may, at the Chair's discretion, decide to not hear a "mandate bill" until the University's assessment is received and has been reviewed by Committee staff.

14. COMMITTEE BILLS AND OMNIBUS BILLS

The Committee may introduce a bill germane to any subject within the proper consideration of such Committee in the same manner as any member. A Committee bill shall contain signatures of all members of the committee.

15. LEGISLATIVE RECORDS

Members of the public requesting to examine Senate committee records on legislation must submit the request via email to Senate.Rules@sen.ca.gov, or by visiting 1020 N St., Room 250, Sacramento, CA 95814.

16. AMENDMENT OF THESE RULES

These rules may be changed by a majority vote of the Committee, consistent with the Joint Rules and the Rules of the Senate.