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ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS

U.S. House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

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STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ETHICS

On November 19, 2026, the Committee on Ethics (Committee) adopted changes to the Rules of the Committee with the goal of improving the speed of investigations, increasing transparency, and protecting victims of sexual misconduct.

In the 119th Congress, the Committee encountered several notable circumstances, including multiple complex matters under review by investigative subcommittees (ISCs), an unusual number of investigations involving allegations of sexual misconduct, and the first adjudicatory subcommittee (ASC) in over a decade. The Committee reviewed its rules taking into account these experiences, the views of outside stakeholders, and best practices for ethics and compliance investigations. That review identified areas for improvement while also seeking to preserve the procedures that ensure victim and witness privacy protection, fairness, due process, and bipartisanship in all investigations.

These changes improve the speed of Committee investigations in several ways. For example, the Committee delegated subpoena authority to the Chairman and Ranking Member, acting jointly, instead of requiring that the full Committee vote on subpoenas. This should significantly expedite Committee investigations. The changes also streamline the conclusion of the Committee's ISC process by consolidating duplicative procedural steps. The rules also simplify the ASC process and make it easier to expedite the process once there is a sufficient factual record. These changes should accelerate the conclusion of investigations by several months or more while still providing for important due process protections.

To ensure transparency in sexual misconduct matters while protecting victims, the Committee codified its longstanding policy of publicly disclosing any findings that a Member engaged in sexual harassment or other sexual misconduct in violation of clauses 9 or 18 of the Code of Official Conduct with explicit requirements to protect victim identities.

Finally, the Committee also made other changes to its rules, including expanding the circumstances under which fines and denials of privileges are considered as appropriate sanctions and requiring the Committee to continually review its rules to ensure that they provide for fair, efficient, and effective investigations. Through these changes, the Committee will continue its mission to hold Members of Congress and House officers and staff to the highest ethical standards.

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