

## **APPENDIX C**

### **GLOSSARY OF LEGISLATIVE TERMS**

**ACT** - A bill or measure after it has passed one or both chambers. Also used to denote a law in place.

**ACTION** – A description of a step that a bill undergoes as it moves through the legislative process.

**ADJOURNMENT** - Ends a legislative day (recess does not end a day).

**ADJOURNMENT SINE DIE** - Adjournment with no set time to meet again. Denotes the end of a Congressional session.

**ADOPTION** – Approval or acceptance. Usually applied to amendments or resolutions.

**ADVICE AND CONSENT** - Constitutionally based power of the Senate to advise the President and give consent to proposed treaties and Presidential appointments.

**AMENDMENT** - A proposal to change, or an actual change to a bill, motion, act, or the Constitution.

**APPORTIONMENT** - Allocation of legislative seats by law. The seats in the House of Representatives are apportioned to states based on each state's population.

**APPROPRIATION** – An authorization by the legislature for the expenditure of money for a public purpose. In most instances, money cannot be withdrawn from a "treasury" except through a specific appropriation.

**AUTHOR** – The legislator who files a bill and guides it through the legislative process.

**AUTHORIZATION** - A legislative action establishing a program and general amounts of money to fund that program. An appropriation provides the actual funds.

**BILL** - A proposed law that requires passage by both the House of Representatives and Senate. A bill is the primary means used to create and change the laws. Bill types include: Senate and House bills, Senate and House joint resolutions, Senate and House concurrent resolutions, and Senate and House resolutions.

**BILL ANALYSIS** – A document prepared for all bills reported out of committee that explains in non-legal language what a bill will do. A bill analysis may include background information on the measure, a statement of purpose, and a section-by-section analysis.

**BIPARTISAN** – A term used to refer to an effort endorsed by both political parties or a group composed of members of both political parties.

**BLOC** - Representative or Senators who are members of a group with common interests.

**BUDGET** - The President's annual proposal to Congress anticipating revenue and expenditures by the federal government for the upcoming fiscal year.

**CALENDAR** - A list of bills or resolutions to be considered by a committee, the House, or the Senate.

**CAUCUS** - The meeting of members of a political party, usually to decide policy or select members to fill positions. Also refers to the group itself.

**CHAMBER** - Either the House of Representatives or the Senate.

**CLERK OF THE HOUSE** - Chief administrative officer of the House of Representatives.

**CLOTURE** - The closing of debate in the Senate, or ending of a filibuster by the required three-fifths vote (60 senators), thereby allowing a bill to be voted on.

**COMMITTEE REPORT** – The text of a bill or resolution and its required attachments that is prepared when the measure is reported from a committee for further consideration by the members of the chamber. The committee report includes the recommendations of the committee regarding action on the measure by the full House or Senate and is generally necessary before a measure can proceed through the legislative process.

**COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE** - Business is expedited in the House of Representatives when it resolves itself to the "*Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union.*" Rules are relaxed and a quorum is easier to obtain. The committee must comprise a minimum of one hundred members.

**CONFEREES** - Members of a conference committee that is composed of Senators and Representatives named to work out differences between same-subject bills passed by both chambers.

**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD** - The Government Printing Office publishes this daily account of House and Senate debates, votes, and comments.

**CONSTITUENT** – A citizen residing within the district of an elected representative.

**CONTINUING RESOLUTION** - Legislation providing continued funding for a federal department or program, usually at the previous fiscal level. Used when Congress has failed to pass necessary appropriations bills for a new fiscal year.

**CONVENE** – To assemble or call to order the members of a legislative body.

**ENACTING CLAUSE** - The initial language in a bill saying “*be it enacted.*” To kill a bill, a legislator will move to “*strike the enacting clause.*”

**ENGROSSED BILL** - Official copy of a bill passed by the House or Senate.

**ENROLLED BILL** - Final certified copy of a bill passed in identical form by the House and Senate.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** - A meeting closed to the public.

**EXTENSION OF REMARKS** - Comments that were not spoken on the floor but inserted into the Congressional Record by a Senator or Representative.

**FILIBUSTER** - Talking and debating a bill in an effort to change it or kill it. Easier in the Senate than in the House because of the Senate’s more relaxed rules concerning debate.

**FISCAL YEAR** - A twelve month period for using federal funds, beginning October 1<sup>st</sup>. It is the year in which the period ends.

**FLOOR** – A traditional term for the meeting chamber of either house.

**FLOOR ACTION** – Action taken by either house on a bill reported y a committee. Subject to rules adopted by the respective house, its members may propose amendments, enter debate, seek to promote or prevent a bill’s passage, and vote on its final passage in that house.

**FRANKING PRIVILEGE** - The right of a Senator or Representative (or member of a federal agency) to use the U.S. Postal Service for official business at no charge.

**GERMANE** - Pertinent, bearing on the subject.

**GERRYMANDER** – To divide a state, county, or other political subdivision into election districts in an unnatural manner to give a political party or ethnic group advantage over its opponents.

**HOPPER** - Box in which proposed bills are placed.

**INTRODUCED** – The version of a bill or resolution as it was filed in the House or Senate.

**JOINT COMMITTEE** - A committee of Senators and Representatives.

**MAJORITY LEADER** - Leader of the majority party in either the House or the Senate.

**MARKUP** - The section-by-section review and revision of a bill by committee members.

**MOTION** – A formal suggestion presented to a legislative body for action by one of its members while the body is meeting.

**NONPARTISAN** – Free from party domination.

**PAIRING** - An agreement by two members of Congress to be recorded on opposite sides of an issue if one or both persons will be absent when the vote is taken. The votes are not counted, but make the members' positions known.

**PASSAGE** – Approval of a measure by the full body.

**POINT OF ORDER** - An objection by a Senator or Representative to a rule being violated.

**PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE** - The Vice President is president of the Senate, but is present only for crucial votes. In his place, the Senate elects a president pro tempore, or temporary president, who presides, or, when routine measures are being considered, assigns the job to a junior Senator.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR** – Permission to view the proceedings from the floor of the chamber rather than from the public gallery.

**PREVIOUS QUESTION** - By a motion to “*move the previous question*,” a Representative seeks to end debate and bring an issue to a vote. Senators do not have this debate-limiting device.

**PRIVATE BILL** - A bill that provides for special treatment of an individual or business entity. Such a bill is subject to presidential veto.

**PRIVILEGE** - A privileged question is a motion that is considered before other motions. A “*question of privilege*” relates to the personal privilege of a Senator or Representative.

**PUBLIC HEARING** – A meeting of a House or Senate committee or subcommittee during which public testimony may be heard and formal action may be taken on any measure or matter before the committee or subcommittee.

**QUORUM** - The number of members of a legislative body who must be present before business may be conducted.

**RANKING MEMBER** - A member of the majority party on a committee who ranks first in seniority after the chair.

**RANKING MINORITY MEMBER** - The senior member (in terms of service) of the minority party on a committee.

**RECESS** - Concludes legislative business and sets time for the next meeting of the legislative body.

**REPORT** - A committee's written record of its actions and views on a bill. The committee reports its findings to the House or Senate.

**RESOLUTION** - A formal statement of a decision or opinion by the House or Senate, or both. A simple resolution is made by one chamber and generally deals with that chamber's rules or prerogatives. A concurrent resolution is presented in both chambers and usually expresses a Congressional view on a matter not within Congressional

jurisdiction. A joint resolution requires approval in both chambers and goes to the President for approval. Simple and concurrent resolutions do not go to the President.

**RIDER** - A provision added to a bill so it may "*ride*" to approval on the strength of the bill. Generally, riders are placed on appropriations bills.

**SECRETARY OF THE SENATE** - The chief administrative officer of the Senate.

**SENATORIAL COURTESY** - The Senate's tradition of honoring any objections by Senators of the President's party to appointments in the states of the objecting Senators.

**SERGEANT AT ARMS** - Legislative officer who maintains order and controls access to the chamber at the direction of the presiding officer.

**SPEAKER** - Speaker of the House of Representatives; presides over the House. Elected, in effect, by the majority party in the House. Next in the line of succession to the Presidency after the Vice President.

**SUSPEND THE RULES** - A motion in the House intended to quickly bring a bill to a vote.

**TABLE A BILL** - A motion to, in effect, put a bill aside and thereby remove it from consideration, or "*kill*" it.

**TELLER VOTE** - A House vote in which members' votes are counted "*for*" or "*against*" as representatives file past tellers in the front of the chamber. A count is taken, but there is not an official record of how each representative voted.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT** - A timesaving procedure for non-controversial measures. Measures are adopted without a vote when a member simply says, "*I ask unanimous consent for...*" and states the proposal.

**UNION CALENDAR** - The calendar on which money bills are placed in order of the dates on which they are to be reported by committees.

**WHIP** - A legislator who is chosen to be assistant to the leader of the party in both the House and Senate.

(Adapted from the U.S. Congress Handbook)