

# **What You Need to Know About the Republican Rules Package**

The House of Representatives will consider its rules package for the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress when it convenes on January 6. At the start of a new Congress, it is important that any changes to the rules of the House reflect the interests of the American people and allow the House to address the important issues facing our nation. However, even after Republicans wrapped up one of the most unproductive – and the most-closed – Congress’ in modern history last month, it seems as if they are using their rules package to continue that trend. Below is a review of House Republicans’ proposed rules package, characterized by continued partisanship and a lack of transparency:

## **1. Dynamic Scoring that Misrepresents Fiscal Outlook**

House Republicans’ rules package would expand on the use of so-called "dynamic scoring" of legislation, allowing them to hide the cost to the deficit of enacting tax cuts. Republicans continue to suggest that tax cuts pay for themselves, when experience with their reckless fiscal policies shows otherwise. Implementing dynamic scoring will, simply put, detach important budget debates from reality and drive up future deficits.

## **2. Continues Partisan Focus on Disproven Benghazi Conspiracy Theories**

House Republicans’ rules package would continue politicizing a national tragedy by continuing the partisan select committee on Benghazi, despite the fact that it has already been thoroughly investigated by the independent Accountability Review Board and by three congressional committees (two led by Republicans). Chairman Mike Rogers (R-MI) and Ranking Member Dutch Ruppersberger (D-MD) of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence issued a bipartisan report stating, “For over two years, the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence exhaustively investigated the September 11, 2012 terrorist attacks in Benghazi Libya. We spent thousands of hours asking questions, poring over documents, reviewing intelligence assessments, reading cables and emails, and held a total of 20 Committee events and hearings.... We also concluded that there was no intelligence failure prior to the attacks.... Finally, the Committee found no evidence that CIA conducted any unauthorized activities in Benghazi and CIA did not intimidate any officer or otherwise dissuade them from telling their stories to Congress.” Despite the fact that the Select Committee has already cost the taxpayers more than \$1 million, the rules package reauthorizes the Committee without placing any limits on how long it will go, or how much more money it will spend.

## **3. Partisan “Lawstunt” Against the President**

House Republicans’ rules package would continue wasting taxpayers’ time and money by authorizing the continuation of a partisan lawsuit against the President – even though constitutional experts, including several conservative legal scholars, have spoken out in opposition to the lawsuit, arguing that House Republicans’ [political lawsuit has little standing](#). In addition, the [majority of Americans](#) agree that Speaker Boehner’s lawsuit is a political stunt that will only result in more wasteful spending.

#### **4. Denies the Vote to House Delegates**

House Republicans' rules package would continue to deny voting privileges to House Delegates and the Resident Commissioner in the Committee of the Whole House. These Members of Congress, who collectively represent almost five million Americans, have had the right to vote in House committees since 1971, and have been able to cast votes in the Committee of the Whole in prior Congresses. Allowing them to do so this Congress would improve the legislative process and ensure better representation to the millions of American citizens who elected them.

#### **5. Denies Employment Protections to LGBT Community**

House Republicans' rules package would continue denying current employment protections to congressional employees who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. The House has no official policy prohibiting employment discrimination against House employees on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, and House Republicans have decided not to adjust the rules to prohibit this discrimination and create a safe and fair work environment.

#### **6. Prioritizes Partisan Investigations Over Productive Policymaking**

House Republicans' rules package would add to their record of partisanship by allowing staff deposition authority for the Committees on Energy and Commerce, Financial Services, Science, Space, and Technology, and Ways and Means. These four committees would give deposition authority to staff, in addition to Members, during the first session of the 114th Congress, which illustrates their focus on partisan investigations rather than addressing important legislative priorities.

#### **7. Limits Transparency on Committee Activity**

House Republicans' rules package would diminish transparency by reducing the frequency of committee activity reports from two times per Congress to one time per Congress.

#### **8. Limits the IPAB's Ability to Offer Health Care Quality and Cost Savings Recommendations**

House Republicans' rules package would eliminate the provisions contained in the Affordable Care Act that ensure the solvency of the Medicare program in the event that spending exceeds targets established in the law. The IPAB recommends policies to Congress to provide better care at lower costs in order to sustain Medicare financing over the long-term. In fact, in part due to the success of the Affordable Care Act containing the rate of growth of health care spending, CBO estimates that IPAB will not be triggered during this Congress, or even this decade.

#### **9. Endangers Social Security Disability Insurance**

House Republicans' rules package limits the ability of Congress to reallocate resources between Social Security Trust Funds, making it more difficult to prevent automatic benefit cuts to Social Security Disability Insurance. The Social Security Disability Insurance Trust Fund is projected to be exhausted in 2016, which would lead to a 20% benefit cut unless Congress takes action.