

Rules Ranking Member Louise Slaughter Statement to House Administration Mar. 1 2011

Thank you Chairman Lungren, Ranking Member Brady and Members of the Committee. It is a pleasure to appear in front of you today with Chairman Dreier to discuss the budget request for the Committee on Rules. We fully support the majority's budget request, which Mr. Dreier has laid out for you this afternoon.

I think it's important to note that the Rules Committee – despite its sometimes partisan outward image – is really one of the most collegial committees in the House with regard to its day-to-day activities.

Mr. Dreier and I share the unique honor of having served as both the chair and ranking member of our committee. As such we share a unique insight into the challenges facing both the majority and minority roles, whether it be handling one of our infamous late-night meetings or, more to our point this afternoon, addressing the administrative work of the committee.

With regard to the specifics of the 112th Congress, I want to express my full support for the Chairman's request to reduce the Committee's funding by 5 percent. These are tough economic times. And even if Mr. Dreier and I sometimes disagree on the best approach, it is clear that we must tackle this ever-growing budget deficit. We need to start by setting an example and cutting our own budgets, and this request does just that. I am confident that the funds Mr. Dreier has requested will be spent wisely and effectively by both the majority and minority.

We would also like to express our gratitude to the majority for following the practice of many other committees in giving the minority control over 1/3 of the committee's budget for the 112th Congress.

In the past, the Rules Committee majority has controlled the entire budget except staff salary. In practice, the majority – whether controlled by Democrats or Republicans – has administered the committee in a collegial, non-partisan manner. But we appreciate the majority's decision to formalize that tradition in this year's request.

As we begin the 112th Congress, I am pleased to see that the majority is continuing and expanding the transparency initiatives that we set in motion over the last four years. We both share the commitment to ensuring that the American people have up-to-the-minute access to the work of our committee. As Ranking Member, I look forward to working with Chairman Dreier to continue to make our committee transparent, fair and responsible.