

UPDATED RSC Policy Brief: Democrat Majority Blocked 85% of Republican Amendments Submitted to the Rules Committee

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Since Democrats took control of Congress, they have taken unprecedented steps to shut down the voice of the minority. In their efforts to pass their unpopular agenda, they have made it so that opposing voices often cannot even have their ideas considered on the House floor. One such example of this behavior is the limited number of amendments made in order for bills brought to the floor under a rule. This policy brief analyzes how the Democrat majority dealt with amendments submitted to the Rules Committee by RSC Members, all Republican Members, and finally for the House as a whole. In addition, it includes a list of 30 examples of RSC Member amendments that the House was not given the opportunity to debate (a small sample of the many important conservative amendments that the House was denied an opportunity to consider).

Note: CRS compiled the amendments offered, and which ones were made in order, through July 2010.

RSC Amendments: Through the end of July 2010, RSC Members submitted 1,957 amendments to the Rules Committee in the 111th Congress. This was 47% of all amendments submitted to the Rules Committee by all Members of the House, despite RSC Members accounting for only 26% of the House. Of these 1,957 amendments submitted:

- 619 amendments submitted by RSC Members were neither explicitly made in order nor blocked from being considered. Instead, per the rule for each bill, the author was allowed to offer a limited number (say 5 out of 20) of amendments out of those submitted, with the choice of which ones to offer left to the author (this was how the Rules Committee handled many of the earmark amendments to appropriations bills).
- 188 amendments, or **14%** of the remaining 1,338 amendments, were **made in order**.
- 1,150, or **86%** of the remaining 1,338 amendments, were **blocked** by the House Rules Committee.

Republican Amendments: Through the end of July 2010, House Republicans submitted 2,334 amendments to the House Rules Committee in the 111th Congress. This was 55.6% of all amendments submitted to the Rules Committee, despite House Republicans comprising just 41% of the House. Of these 2,334 amendments:

- 619 (as explained above in the first bullet under RSC Amendments) were neither explicitly made in order nor blocked from being considered.
- 254 amendments, or **15%** of the remaining 1,715 amendments, were **made in order**.
- 1,461 amendments, or **85%** of the remaining 1,715 amendments, were **blocked** by the House Rules Committee.

All Amendments: Through the end of July 2010, all Members (Democrat and Republican) submitted 4,196 amendments. With 619 of these amendments, the Rules Committee gave terms for consideration noted above. Of the remaining 3,581 amendments:

- 788 amendments, or **22%**, were **made in order**.
- 2,793 amendments, or **78%**, were **blocked** by the House Rules Committee.

Examples of Amendments Blocked by Rules Committee: The following are some of the notable RSC Member amendments submitted to the Rules Committee that Members were denied the opportunity to consider on the House floor. By no means does this list include all of the amendments blocked by the House Rules Committee that would have saved taxpayers money, enhanced individual freedom, or reduced the size of government:

1. **King (R-IA):** Would have repealed the Community Reinvestment Act. (H.R. 1)
2. **Flake (R-AZ):** Would have struck funding in the bill for the National Foundation on the Arts and the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts. (H.R. 1)
3. **Luetkemeyer (R-MO):** Would have prohibited funding in the bill from being used to make contributions to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (H.R. 3081)
4. **Goodlatte (R-VA) & Bilbray (R-CA):** Would have banned funding for the visa lottery program. (H.R. 3081)
5. **Hensarling (R-TX):** Would have rescinded any unobligated funding provided for the IMF in the recently-enacted FY2009 War Supplemental. (H.R. 3081)
6. **Broun (R-GA):** Would have struck funding for the International Fund for Ireland. (H.R. 3081)
7. **King (R-IA):** Would have prohibited any funds appropriated by the act from being used to violate the Second Amendment rights of the residents of the District of Columbia. (H.R. 3170)
8. **Kingston (R-GA):** Would have prohibited funds in this bill from being used to pay the salaries of “czars” which are not confirmed by the Senate. (H.R. 3170)
9. **Jordan (R-OH) & Chaffetz (R-UT):** Would have prohibited D.C. funds from being used by the District of Columbia to implement or enforce any recognition of a marriage other than traditional marriage. (H.R. 3170)
10. **Gingrey (R-GA):** Would have prohibited funds in this bill from being used to transfer detainees located in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba to the United States or its territories. (H.R. 3326)
11. **Sessions (R-TX):** Would have stated that the U.S. Congress recognizes the rapidly advancing intercontinental ballistic missile threats from Iran and North Korea and the need to support the right of Israel, Europe, and the US and its allies to an effective missile defense system by restoring full support to intercontinental ballistic missile technology, for which funding has been cut in the President’s budget and the National Defense Authorization Act. (H.R. 3326)
12. **Bachmann (R-MN):** Would have struck the requirement that individuals purchase health insurance as part of their “shared responsibility” set forth in H.R. 3962. This would further eliminate the penalty for non-compliance with this provision. (H.R. 3962)
13. **Barrett (R-SC):** Would have prohibited the coverage of Hyde-prohibited abortions in the public option. This amendment would have ensured that the public option will not facilitate the practice of abortions. (H.R. 3962)
14. **Blackburn (R-TN):** Would have prohibited the establishment of a government plan or exchange until the HHS Secretary certifies that the establishment of such will not (directly or indirectly) cause the cost of the average price of private health insurance premiums to increase. (H.R. 3962)
15. **King (R-IA):** Would have required that beneficiaries of the exchange provide proof of citizenship. (H.R. 3962)
16. **Price (R-GA):** Would have struck Sec. 2401 (Implementation of Best Practices in the Delivery of Health Care) and inserted language establishing best practice guidelines. It places limitations on noneconomic damages and punitive damages in a health care lawsuit in cases in which treatments are based on these practices. (H.R. 3962)

17. **Sessions (R-TX):** Would have created SEC disclosure requirements for any group wanting to influence the shareholder's vote on executive compensation. (H.R. 4173)
18. **Stearns (R-FL):** Would have struck Sections 9009 and 10904, which tax medical devices. (H.R. 4872)
19. **Garrett (R-NJ):** Would have raised the FHA down payment requirement from 3.5% to 5% and prohibited closing costs from being rolled in as well. (H.R. 5072)
20. **Broun (R-GA):** Would have frozen the authorization levels of section 212 (NSF), section 402 (NIST), and section 611 (DOE Office of Science) at FY2010 appropriated levels for fiscal years 2011-2013. It also would have struck the authorization levels for the entire bill for FY2014-2015. (H.R. 5116)
21. **Bachmann (R-MN):** Would have prohibited the Secretary of Defense from entering into contracts with any entity that provides Iran with censorship or surveillance technology or crime control equipment. (H.R. 5136)
22. **Broun (R-GA):** Would have expressed the sense of Congress strongly encouraging the President to order the U.S. flag to be flown on military outposts in the Republic of Haiti. (H.R. 5136)
23. **Gingrey (R-GA):** Would have prohibited federal employees under the jurisdiction of the bill from participating in collective bargaining agreement negotiations during official federal work hours. (H.R. 5136)
24. **Cole (R-OK):** Would have terminated taxpayer financing of presidential campaigns. (H.R. 5175)
25. **Flake (R-AZ):** Would have prohibited a small business from receiving a loan under the Small Business Lending Fund program if that small business was awarded an earmark as defined by House rules in the previous 1-year period. (H.R. 5297)
26. **Price (R-GA):** Would have instructed the Treasury to dispose of any asset acquired under this legislation within 30 days following repayment. (H.R. 5297)
27. **Roskam (R-IL):** Would have prohibited any regulation that would have at least a \$100 million effect on the economy from taking effect until the House and Senate vote on the regulation. (H.R. 5297)
28. **Hensarling (R-TX):** Would have struck funding in the bill for the HOPE VI program, which has completed its goal of contributing to the demolition of 100,000 severely distressed public housing units. (H.R. 5850)
29. **Schock (R-IL), Issa (R-CA), & Paulsen (R-MN):** Would have prohibited funds from being used to pay the salaries of employees who authorize or approve physical signage indicating a project was funded by the "stimulus." (H.R. 5850)
30. **Sessions (R-TX):** Would have prohibited Amtrak from using funds for long-distance routes whose total direct costs are more than twice its total revenue. (H.R. 5850)

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