

Rebuttal

[Argument about Jurisdiction]

I view the most important function of a chairman to be the responsibility of guarding the committee's prerogatives.

Over the past days, I have heard a lot of arguments about how "limited" the Rules Committee's jurisdiction is. I appreciate the opportunity to reject those assertions on the record.

Until overruled by the committee or the House, it will be the intention of the chair to seek joint referral of all matters touching on rules.

I will be scrupulous in ²limiting ~~limited~~ the reporting action of the committee to assure that the jurisdiction of other committees is protected from encroachment.

However, I will strongly resist efforts to circumscribe the context in which appropriate review and oversight is conducted.

The Rules Committee receives joint referral to act on those portions of bills which prescribe congressional procedures -- and these procedures are usually part of the political accommodation reached to meet the central legislative purpose of the bill.

It would theoretically be possible to take sissors and cut out those parts of a bill outside the committee's referral. However, such an approach would deprive the committee of an opportunity to make informed judgements within the broader context in which such bills operate.