



Legislative Bulletin.....March 8, 2007

**H. Res. 202 — Providing for the expenses of certain committees of the House of Representatives in the One Hundred Tenth Congress
(*Millender-McDonald, D-CA*)**

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled for consideration on March 8, 2007, under a closed rule, providing for one hour of debate ([H.Res. 219](#)).

Note: The rule makes in order a self-executing amendment, which will be considered as adopted on passage of the rule. This amendment creates a new Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming (see summary below). The rule allows a motion to recommit *without* instructions, and waives all points of order against the resolution.

Summary: H. Res. 202 would set funding levels, including staff salaries, for all 110th Congress Committees (21 total), and would set amounts they are not to exceed for each session. The total amount authorized is \$291.7 million, an increase of *13.3 percent* over the 109th Congress. On a per-year basis, the resolution provides a roughly 3.6 percent annual increase over 2006, and a 4.8 percent increase over 2007 (general inflation/CPI for 2006 is 2.5 percent. *Source: [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#)*).

Self-Executing Amendment: The amendment would create a new Select Committee on Energy Independence and Global Warming, and allocate \$3,725,467 for its operation in the 110th Congress. The amendment also stipulates the following requirements for the operation of this new Global Warming committee:

- It will consist of 15 Members appointed by the Speaker, including six Members based on the recommendation of the Minority Leader; the Speaker will designate the Chairman;
- It will have no legislative jurisdiction and no authority to take legislative action on any bill or resolution. Its sole authority “shall be to investigate, study, make findings, and develop recommendations on policies, strategies, technologies and other innovations, intended to reduce the dependence of the United States on foreign sources of energy and achieve substantial and permanent reductions in emissions and other activities that contribute to climate change and global warming;”
- Except as noted above, it shall have the same authority and responsibility as other standing committees;
- It may report to the House “from time to time the results of its investigations and studies, together with such detailed findings and recommendations as it may deem advisable,” and all such reports must be submitted by October 31, 2008;
- It shall “cease to exist” on December 31, 2008, and all records will become the records of whichever standing committee the Speaker designates.

Note: The committee funding resolution for the **109th Congress (H.Res.224)** also included a section that set additional requirements and restrictions on committee franking and mass mailing privileges for committees. H.Res. 202 does *not* include those restrictions (summarized below), and is therefore no longer subject to the 109th Congress’ restrictions on franking and mailing.

The following restrictions included in the 109th committee funding resolution are not included in the 110th committee funding resolution (H.Res. 202) under Democrat control:

- The mailing is a press release to the media, a hearing or markup schedule, or a request for the views of the public or other authorities on a matter that the committee has jurisdiction over and is essential to the work of the committee, or
- Prior to the mailing, the Franking Commission determines that:
 - a) the mailing is “ordinary and necessary” to the normal and regular business of the committee, and
 - b) the mailing would be in compliance with the normal requirements and prohibitions that Members are subject to, and
 - c) the total amount that will be spent in franking costs by the committee during the current session will not exceed \$5,000.

Note: Prior to the 109th Congress, committees were not subject to the same franking limitations as Member offices, nor was there a cap on the amount per session that could be spent on mass mailings.

Possible Conservative Concerns: When Republicans gained control of the House in the 104th Congress, committee funding levels were dramatically decreased by more than 30 percent. Since then, however, they have risen steadily, particularly in the last several Congresses (see table and graph). In the 110th Congress, funding levels continue to go up, especially when compared to the inflation rate over the same period.

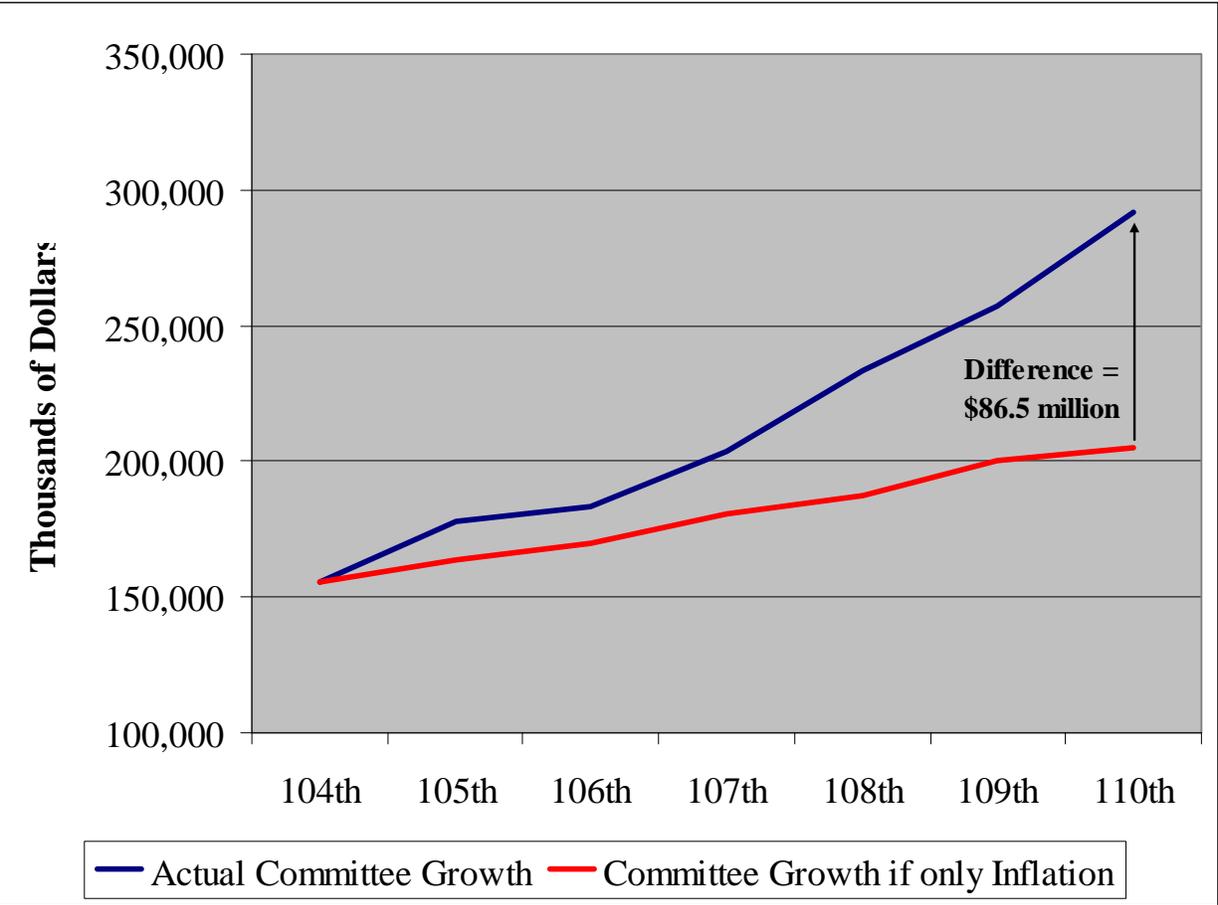
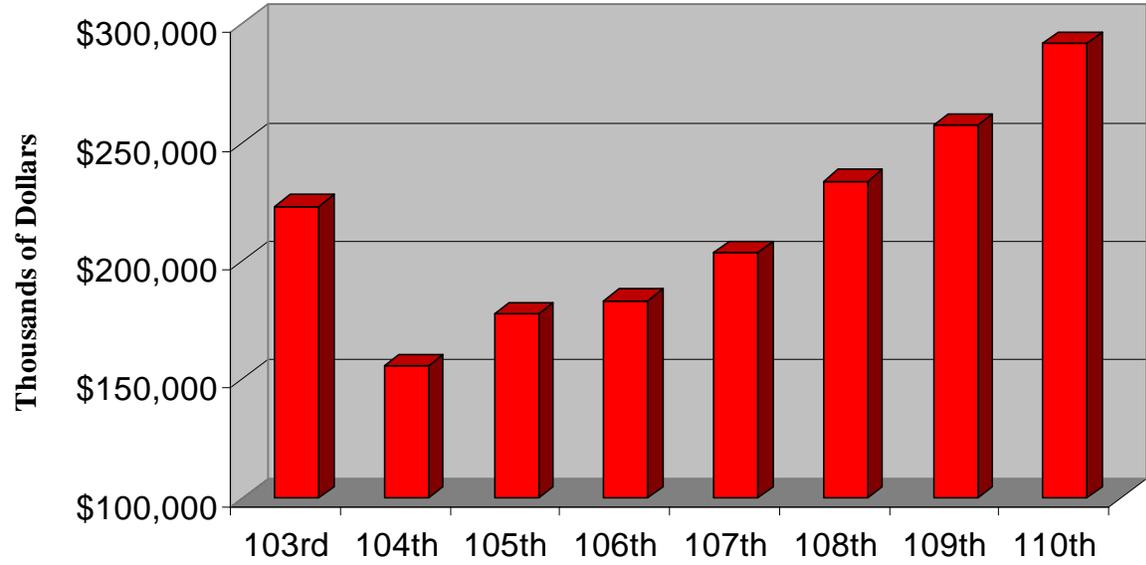
Some have argued that committee funding should be adjusted for inflation. Committee funding levels in this bill are 6.2 percent *over inflation* since the 109th Congress and 42 percent *over inflation* (based on CPI-U) since the 104th Congress (the first year of GOP control). In addition, adjusting Committee funding based on inflation rates may be not be the most appropriate gauge.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the mostly widely used and accepted measure of inflation is the Consumer Price Index (CPI). According to CRS, the top three items used to determine inflation are housing (32.6), transportation (17.4%), and food and beverage (15.2%). It could be argued that committee funding is not affected by housing costs, and minimally affected by transportation and food and beverage costs, and that therefore committee funding should not be tied or compared to inflation.

Congress	104th	105th	106th	107th	108th	109th	110th
Percent Change	-30.27%	14.19%	3.15%	10.98%	14.87%	10.11%	13.34%
Percent Change*	-30.27%	14.19%	3.15%	10.98%	9.49%	9.24%	13.07%

* Excludes Homeland Security Committee funding, which did not exist in the 104th Congress and was created 108th Congress.

Committee Funding



Committee Action: H. Res. 202 was introduced on February 28, 2007, and referred to the Committee on House Administration. The bill was marked-up and reported out by the full Committee on March 1, 2007, by a voice vote. No Committee Report is available.

Cost to Taxpayers: The committee funds were appropriated in the continuing resolution passed earlier this year ([H.J.Res. 20](#)). This resolution divides up those appropriated funds between the specific committees. The total amount authorized is \$288 million, an increase of 11.89 percent over the 109th Congress.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: As noted above, the bill would create a temporary House Select Committee and authorize \$3.7 million for the 110th Congress for its operation, over and above the amounts authorized in the reported version of the resolution.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Constitutional Authority: House Report [110-29](#) does not contain a statement on constitutional authority.

RSC Staff Contact: Derek V. Baker; derek.baker@mail.house.gov; 202-226-8585
