

Committee on Government Reform
CONGRESSMAN TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



Statement of Chairman Tom Davis
Committee on Government Reform
Organizational Meeting
February 13, 2003

I would like to welcome everyone to our first meeting of the year. Welcome back to all of our returning Members, and also, welcome to our new Members who are with us for the first time today. I look forward to working with all of you.

I want to start by introducing the new Members of the Committee on our side, and then I will yield to Mr. Waxman for his statement and to introduce new Members on his side.

Next, we will take up the Committee rules. After we finish with the rules, I will introduce our subcommittee chairmen -- we have several new chairmen, and Mr. Waxman can introduce the ranking members. Then we will take up the resolutions creating our subcommittees, our oversight plan, and our budget views and estimates.

I want to welcome Mr. Waxman back as Ranking Member. I look forward to working with you.

A couple of final notes before we get down to business. We have a new Vice Chairman of the Committee, Chris Shays from Connecticut. I

want to thank Mr. Shays for agreeing to take on that role. I look forward to having your advice and input throughout the next two years.

I also want to thank Congressman Dan Burton for his service as Committee Chairman over the past six years. I look forward to continuing our relationship this Congress and I am pleased that you have agreed to become one of our subcommittee chairmen.

New Member Introductions

We have a number of new faces on the Committee this Congress, including eleven freshmen. I look forward to working with each of you. Mr. Waxman will formally introduce the five new members on his side. On the Republican side, we have seven new members, including six freshmen.

First, we have **Nathan Deal** from Georgia. Nathan is in his sixth term in Congress and we are fortunate to have his expertise on the Committee.

Next, we have **Candice Miller** of Michigan. Congresswoman Miller is in her first term from the 10th District of Michigan. She has a lot of experience in state and local politics and we look forward to working with her in the years to come. I am sure she will do a great job.

Tim Murphy is from Pennsylvania's 18th District. This is Tim's first term and he comes from the Pennsylvania State Senate and has a background in health care. He is also a psychologist.

Michael Turner, a freshman from Dayton, Ohio, has also joined the Committee. Mike served as Dayton's mayor and we welcome him to the Committee.

We also have **John Carter** from Texas. Judge Carter is coming to the Congress after serving for twenty years as a state district court judge.

I would like to welcome to the Committee the former Governor from South Dakota, **William Janklow**. I am looking forward to working with Governor Janklow. He has served as South Dakota's chief executive for 16 of the last 24 years and we hope to work with him for many years on this Committee.

Finally, last but certainly not least is **Marsha Blackburn** of Tennessee. Marsha is a former State Senator and I am very happy to welcome her to the Committee.

I look forward to working with all of our new Members. I am also happy to see so many familiar faces coming back. The challenges and opportunities facing this Committee are significant, and I look forward to working with all of you on a reform agenda that benefits all Americans.

1. COMMITTEE RULES

I will now call up the proposed committee rules. Except for one new rule, and some minor technical edits, the rules are the same as the ones from last Congress. They have served the Committee and the subcommittees well in the past, and I think they will continue to do so this Congress.

The new rule we are proposing authorizes the Chairman to establish panels or task forces to review special matters of interest that fall within the Committee's jurisdiction. Panels and task forces will have narrowly defined mandates. For example, we will establish a special task force to consider postal reform and oversight issues.

We also considered adopting a rule allowing the Chairman to postpone and "stack" committee votes. We did not include this rule at this time. However, I mention it because we may want to consider adopting it in

the future. I believe it would improve the efficiency of markups and accommodate the busy schedule of our members. It is designed for situations where the Committee had a long markup and was considering a number of bills and amendments. Since we are going to be working on a number of bills this Congress, we may want to consider adding this rule.

I will not go into a long description of the rest of the rules. They comply with the Rules of the House, and I urge their adoption.

2. SUBCOMMITTEES

The next order of business is the establishment of subcommittees and the appointment of the subcommittee members. The Committee will be establishing seven subcommittees. There have been widespread changes to the subcommittees' jurisdictions and memberships since the last Congress.

We have several new subcommittee chairs to announce. I will start with the returning subcommittee chairmen.

1. **Chris Shays** will chair the Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats and International Relations. Michael Turner will be his Vice Chairman.

2. **Mark Souder** is returning to chair the Criminal Justice, Drug Policy and Human Resources Subcommittee. Nathan Deal will be his Vice Chairman.

3. **Doug Ose** will once again chair the Subcommittee on Energy Policy, Natural Resources and Regulatory Affairs. William Janklow will be his Vice Chairman.

You have all done excellent work and I am sure that will continue for the next two years.

Now we have four new subcommittee chairmen.

1. **Dan Burton** will chair the Subcommittee on Human Rights and Wellness. Chris Cannon will be his Vice Chairman.

2. **Adam Putnam** will chair the Subcommittee on Technology, Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations and the Census. Candice Miller will be his Vice Chairman.

3. **Todd Platts** will chair the Government Efficiency and Financial Management Subcommittee. Marsha Blackburn will be his Vice Chair.

4. And finally, my friend from Virginia, **Jo Ann Davis**, takes over as chairman of the Civil Service and Agency Organization Subcommittee. Tim Murphy will be her Vice Chairman.

Oversight is a very important job. I know all of our subcommittee chairmen take it seriously. The Committee's jurisdiction is quite broad and we have many agencies to oversee, so there is certainly plenty of work to do. I hope all of our chairmen will work with their ranking members and all the members of their subcommittees to address those areas that are most important.

I will now call up the three Committee resolutions regarding the subcommittees. The first resolution establishes the subcommittees and their jurisdictions. The second appoints majority members to the subcommittees. The third, Mr. Waxman's resolution, appoints minority members to the subcommittees.

3. OVERSIGHT PLAN

The Rules of the House require each Committee to adopt its oversight plan, and submit those plans to this Committee and the House Administration Committee. This Committee will then report the plans to the House, with recommendations to ensure the effective coordination of the Committees' oversight plans.

As you can probably see from the oversight plan, we will be very busy this year. The plan is more than twenty pages long. We will cover a number of longstanding government management issues such as the GAO "High Risk" List, the Government Performance and Results Act, federal acquisition and issues related to the Census.

We will also take on some important new projects. For example, we intend to review the recommendations of the latest Volcker Commission on the Public Service. We will ask the Commission members to appear at a hearing very soon to discuss their ideas for improving the organizational structure and effectiveness of the Federal government.

This Committee also has a responsibility to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the newly formed Department of Homeland Security. The new department faces a number of significant management challenges – including procurement, personnel, information security and property management. Our oversight in these areas will be critical.

I will not go into any more detail now. I hope Members have had a chance to review the plan. If anyone has any questions or comments, I would be happy to address them, or have one of our subcommittee chairmen address them.

4. BUDGET VIEWS AND ESTIMATES

House Rules require that each standing committee submit to the Budget Committee its views and estimates on the President's Budget. This is an opportunity to voice our views on the Budget and it is also a chance to request funding authority in the budget resolution for bills that we intend to move this session. I have circulated Committee views and estimates as well as views and estimates from each of our subcommittees. I want to thank the subcommittees for their hard work putting this information together. These views and estimates also incorporate some suggestions made by the minority.

I will ask that the Committee approve these views and estimates. Once approved, the views and estimates will be provided to the Budget Committee. They will not be binding upon the Budget Committee, but it may use them in putting together the budget resolution.

The Committee has a defined legislative jurisdiction covering various aspects of government operations. We also have extremely broad oversight jurisdiction. As a result, our views and estimates, like our oversight plan, is quite long. I would like to highlight a couple of these.

First, we are requesting sufficient authority in the budget resolution to correct a problem with the amount the Postal Service pays into the Civil Service Retirement Fund. According to the Office of Personnel Management, the Postal Service is on track to overfund its obligations to the CSRS by more than \$70 billion dollars. This problem needs to be corrected legislatively. Yesterday, I along with Mr. Waxman, Danny Davis and John McHugh introduced a bill to fix this overfunding problem. I want to thank Mr. Waxman for working with us on this bill. We intend to move quickly.

If the bill passes, the Postal Service would use the money saved to pay down its debt to the Treasury and to delay a rate increase until 2006. Without this bill, rates will go up again next year. This bill is important for the Postal Service, postal customers and mailers.

We have also requested budgetary authority for a few other initiatives, including property reform and services acquisition reform. These bills are designed to improve government efficiency and I am hopeful that they will actually generate savings. We covered a number of other areas in the document and I encourage everyone to review it.