



# Allegheny County Council

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## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 9346-16, **Version:** 1

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Motion of the Council of Allegheny County amending Article I Section E (1) of the Rules of Allegheny County Council, to ensure the participation of party caucus chairs in establishing the standing committees of Council.

**Whereas**, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania 2015 Voter Registration statistics for Allegheny County shows that out of the 853,647 voters registered, 232,134 registered Republican, 507,479 registered Democrat, and 114,034 registered other; and

**Whereas**, minority participation within the deliberative bodies of the Council ensure that the minority party citizens of the County of Allegheny are also represented; and

**Whereas**, special recognition of caucus chairs is prevalent in legislative bodies including the Pennsylvania General Assembly which grants unique powers and privileges to the minority and majority leaders elected by their respective party caucuses; and

**Whereas**, in the House of the General Assembly, a Committee on Committees (consisting of the Speaker, 10 Majority members, and five Minority members) recommends to the House the names of the members of the committees; and

**Whereas**, Rule 5, of the PA House Rules of 2011 provides that all Committees of Conference shall be appointed by the Speaker and shall be composed of three members, two of whom shall be selected from the majority party and one from the minority party; and

**Whereas**, the Rules of Council and the Administrative Code have provisions granting greater authority and deference to the party caucus chairs; and

**Whereas**, the Rules of Council, Article II, Section (M) (4), gives special consideration to Caucus Chairs by granting them greater opportunity for debate on proposed legislation; and

**Whereas**, the Allegheny County Code of Ordinances provides for special deference to caucus chairs in the selection of the Accountability, Conduct and Ethics Commission, § 5-1013.10, the appointment of interim members in the instance of vacancies of council, § 5-301.08, and appointments to commissions, § 215-16; and

**Whereas**, in the interest of ensuring minority participation which is a precept of our representative democracy it is the desire of Council to ensure that representation of all parties, as decided by the caucus chairs, are present in the deliberative bodies of Allegheny County Council;

**NOW THEREFORE, IT IS MOVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF ALLEGHENY COUNTY,**

That this Council hereby amends the Rules of Council as follows:

## **Article I. Organization of Council**

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### **E. Committees of Council**

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- 1. Standing Committees-**The President, upon election, shall establish the standing committees of Council and appoint the members and the chair of each committee. The caucus chair of each political party shall be consulted prior to the selection of the standing committees for their recommendation(s) on candidates who will serve on each standing committee. There shall be at least two members of the minority political party appointed to each standing committee. Standing committees shall meet Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays beginning no earlier than 4:00 p.m. When unable to attend a scheduled committee meeting, the chair of each committee may appoint a member of the committee to act as presiding officer. The number and scope of each committee shall be at the discretion of the President, except that the following shall always be established as standing committees: