

**PROPOSED RULES  
FOR THE REPUBLICAN  
CONFERENCE  
OF  
THE  
FLORIDA  
HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES  
November 21, 2016**

Prepared by  
House Republican Office

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## PRINCIPLES

The Republican Conference agrees that we will be guided by our principles and pledge to safeguard the values that unite us. The Republican Conference endorses the following guiding principles of governance:

1. Truth

As Republicans and conservatives we must acknowledge an authority greater than man, greater than any ruler, monarch, or government. The belief that truth exists beyond personal whims demands loyalty to certain broad concepts — justice, virtue, fairness, and duty. These are the cornerstones on which we must base our philosophy. Fidelity to truth and principle transcends politics and sets a standard for our political decisions.

2. Liberty

We believe that individuals possess the right to life, liberty, property, and freedom. Foremost, Floridians deserve freedom from oppression by government. This means political liberty, religious liberty, and economic liberty, the freedom to own property and operate within the free market.

When government provides freedom from regulation and a consistent tax structure, free-market capitalism flourishes and lifts more people out of poverty than any other economic system. We will reward hard work and discourage government interference.

3. Family

Government should support families rather than replace the role families should be playing in society. Our society succeeds when families succeed. When families are empowered to make financial, educational and healthcare decisions it invigorates the American spirit and reinforces the American dream.

The Republican Conference further commits to hold itself to higher ethical standards than those required under Florida Law or House Rules.

Public office is a public trust. We will be accountable to those who elected us and serve them with utmost integrity.

## **RULES OF THE REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE**

These rules shall govern the Republican Members of the Florida House of Representatives.

### **RULE ONE—MEMBERSHIP**

Every Republican Member of the Florida House of Representatives shall be a member of the Republican Conference.

### **RULE TWO—LEADER**

#### ***2.1—Election of Republican Leader***

The first order of business at the first Conference meeting after a general election is to elect the Republican Leader. The Republican Leader shall be nominated by the Conference to be Speaker of the House during the Organization Session of the House, and if elected Speaker, shall continue as Republican Leader.

#### ***2.2—Republican Leader***

The Republican Leader shall be the leader of the Republican Conference and the official spokesperson for the Conference. The Republican Leader shall represent the Republican Conference in all matters relating to or affecting state government or the operation of the House of Representatives.

#### ***2.3—Length of Service***

The term of service for Republican Leader will be limited to a period of time not to exceed one legislative term or one legislative term and a prior partial term completed because of a vacancy in the office of Republican Leader.

#### ***2.4—Vacancy in the Office of a Current Republican Leader***

If a vacancy in the office of Republican Leader occurs the Conference Chairperson shall notify the members of the vacancy and no later than 15 days after the determination of a vacancy shall convene the Conference for the purpose of electing a Leader who will fill out the remainder of the term.

### **RULE THREE—OFFICERS**

#### ***3.1—Republican Conference Officers***

With the exception of the Republican Leader, all other Republican Conference officers shall be appointed by the Republican Leader as soon as reasonably practicable after the Republican Leader assumes office.

#### ***3.2—Republican Leader pro tempore***

Upon the Republican Leader's incapacity or other inability to serve, the Republican Leader pro tempore shall exercise the duties, powers, and

prerogatives of the Republican Leader during the period of such incapacity or other inability to serve. The Republican Leader pro tempore shall assist the Republican Leader in the performance of his or her duties as determined by the Republican Leader.

### ***3.3—Conference Chairperson***

This officer shall be the Majority Leader if in the majority or the Conference Chairperson if in the minority; he or she shall preside at all Republican Conference meetings and shall aid and assist the other Conference officers as determined by the Republican Leader.

### ***3.4—Republican Whip***

This officer shall assist the Conference Chairperson in the performance of his or her duties as determined by the Conference Chairperson.

## **RULE FOUR—THE CONFERENCE**

### ***4.1—Organization Conference***

The first Conference shall be held no later than thirteen days following the general election. This organization Conference shall be called by the Leader-designate at a time and place determined by the Leader-designate and presided over by a member selected by the Leader-designate.

### ***4.2—Manner of Calling for Conference***

A Republican Conference may be called by:

- (a) The Republican Leader;
- (b) Joint written request of the Republican Leader pro tempore and the Conference Chairperson; or
- (c) Signed petition of 50 percent of the Conference members, provided that the petition states the purposes of the Conference.

### ***4.3—Quorum***

A majority of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

Pursuant to Rule 5.4(h), a quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the Conference membership for the purpose of electing a Leader-designate.

## **RULE FIVE—REPUBLICAN LEADER DESIGNATE**

### ***5.1—The Republican Leader-Designate***

There shall be elected a Republican Leader-designate who shall serve as Republican Leader for the next legislative term. The Republican Leader-designate shall assume his or her position upon election as Leader-designate and shall serve until the organization session of the next legislative term. The Republican Leader-designate shall assist the Republican Party of Florida in the promotion, recruitment, training and preparation of Republican candidates for legislative offices.

### **5.2—Rules for Candidacy**

Prior to the election of the Republican Leader-designate the following rules shall apply:

#### (a) Eligibility

- (1) A candidate for the office of Republican Leader-designate must be a seated member of the Florida House of Representatives.
- (2) A candidate for the office of Republican Leader-designate may not have directly or indirectly solicited or accepted a formal or informal pledge of support prior to June 30 of the year following the general election in which the final members of their legislative class were elected.
- (3) An intended candidate for the office of Republican Leader-designate may not have raised money for or spent money from, or allowed a surrogate to raise money for or spend money from, a political committee for the purpose of contesting Republican primary races to influence their Leader-designate race.
- (4) A violation of subparagraph (a) will render a candidate ineligible to stand for election before the House Republican Conference as either the Republican Leader-designate or the Republican Leader.

#### (b) Schedule

- (1) Rule 5.2 shall apply to any member whose constitutional eligibility to serve consecutive terms expires in 2024 or beyond.
- (2) Subparagraph (a)(2) and (a)(3) shall not apply to any conduct that occurred prior to the initial adoption of this rule.
- (3) Any pledges of support, whether formal or informal, solicited or accepted by or on behalf of any member covered under subparagraph (b)(1) are hereby null and void.

### **5.3—Designation Process**

- (a) Members wishing to be nominated as the Republican Leader-designate shall notify the Conference Chairperson of their intent to seek the nomination in writing. Notification must be made prior to the completion of the first interim committee week in January during the first year of the member's third consecutive full term of office.
- (b) The Conference Chairperson shall transmit a list of those seeking the office of Republican Leader-designate to all Conference members as soon as practicable following the *sine die* adjournment of the first regular session after a general election.

- (c) Any member who has filed with the Conference Chairperson to seek nomination for Leader-designate can withdraw his or her name from consideration by notifying the Conference Chairperson in writing at any time prior to the Designation Conference. The Conference Chairperson shall, in turn, notify the members of the Conference of such withdrawal.

#### ***5.4—Conference for Designation of Nominee***

The following provisions will apply to the Designation Conference:

- (a) In conjunction with a gathering of the House of Representatives, or its committees, between September 1, and October 30, in odd numbered years the sitting Republican Leader shall convene the Conference for the purpose of electing the Republican Leader-designate.
- (b) In the event that the House does not convene for official business within the aforementioned time period, the sitting Republican Leader shall call a meeting of the Conference for the purpose of electing a Leader-designate in a swift and timely manner but not later than the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. The Republican Leader may designate a location outside of Tallahassee for the Conference meeting if this provision is utilized.
- (c) The current Conference Chairperson shall preside unless he or she is a candidate and, if a candidate, the Republican Leader or another officer of his or her choice will preside over the Designation Conference.
- (d) Nominations from the floor are prohibited.
- (e) Proxy voting is prohibited.
- (f) Each candidate shall be nominated by a Conference member with not more than one seconding nomination.
- (g) All sitting members of the Conference shall be voting members for the purpose of electing the Leader-designate.
- (h) For the purpose of electing the Leader-designate, a quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the Conference membership.
- (i) A majority of the members present and voting shall be required for election as Leader-designate.
- (j) If no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election will be immediately held at the same Conference between the top two vote-getters. In the event of a tie between candidates receiving the second highest number of votes, a run-off election shall include the highest vote-getter and the candidates who tied for the second highest vote.
- (k) At no point shall there be more than one Republican Leader-designate elected by the Conference.

***5.5—Vacancy in the Office of Leader-Designate***

In the event that a Leader-designate vacates the position of Leader-designate or is defeated in an election, the outgoing Leader shall convene a Conference and a new Leader-designate shall be elected.

**RULE SIX—PROCEDURAL RULES**

The Rules of the Florida House and provisions of Article III of the Constitution of Florida shall be the procedural rules of the Conference, insofar as these are applicable, except that motions shall be seconded.

**RULE SEVEN—ADOPTION, AMENDMENT OR RECISSION OF RULES**

- (a) These rules shall be readopted, amended or rescinded during the organization Conference in each legislative term by a majority vote.
- (b) Rules may be amended periodically by a majority vote after notice in writing of the proposed rule changes 15 days prior to calling a Conference to hear the proposed rule changes.