

**Statement of E. Wade Ballou, Jr., Legislative Counsel
Office of the Legislative Counsel
U.S. House of Representatives**

**Before the House Subcommittee on Legislative Branch
Appropriations
Regarding Fiscal Year 2021 Appropriations**

Mr. Chairman and distinguished Members of the Subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to present to you the fiscal year 2021 appropriation request for the Office of the Legislative Counsel.

I am pleased and honored to appear before you today in my capacity as Legislative Counsel of the House of Representatives. I appreciate the past and continuing support of the Members of the Subcommittee for the Office. The Office, established on February 24, 1919, as the Legislative Drafting Service (section 1303 of the Revenue Act of 1918 (Ch. 18, 1141)), continues to fulfill its mission, now 101 years old.

Mission

The Office advises and assists committees and Members to express their legislative policies by preparing bills, resolutions, and amendments that clearly, coherently, and faithfully express these policies (2 U.S.C. 281a). The Office is neutral as to matters of legislative policy. From its beginning the Office has provided legislative drafting assistance to Members representing all political viewpoints while maintaining confidentiality with each.

To effectively carry out its mission, the Office partners with entities throughout the legislative branch, including with the Office of the Law Revision Counsel, the Clerk of the House, the Government Publishing Office, Congress.gov, the Secretary of the Senate, and the Office of the Senate Legislative Counsel. The Office provides advice through individual counsel, its website, speaking to groups, and soon by webcast and through the Congressional Staff Academy. In addition, the Office posts its Statute Compilations with GPO collections and is working with the Clerk of the House to make available to the House comparative print capability showing the impact of legislative drafts on law and other drafts.

Members of the Office participate outside the Office in events relating to drafting legislation. The Office is frequently called upon to host delegations of members and staff from parliaments around the world. These efforts provide for a fruitful exchange of ideas and practices relating to common challenges of drafting legislation in today's world.

The Office is working on enhancing its teams, both formal and informal, in its efforts to improve its ability to carry out its mission. With the support of this Subcommittee, we would like

to continue this tradition and continue to improve our ability to provide this important service to the committees and Members of the House.

Office Budget Request

For fiscal year 2021, I am requesting \$11,937,000 for salaries and expenses of the Office of the Legislative Counsel. This is unchanged from fiscal year 2020 and includes an additional 4 full-time positions.

Services

Drafting

The primary legal service offered by the Office is the preparation of bills and resolutions for introduction, reporting by committees, and conference reports, and amendments for committee and Floor consideration, that:

- accurately reflect the Member's legislative policy objectives;
- are legally sufficient to carry out that policy; and
- are as clear and well-organized as possible given the time constraints imposed and desired scope of work.

The Office strives in each draft for clarity and technical accuracy while avoiding drafting errors, reducing unnecessary confusion, avoiding future litigation, and avoiding foreseeable (but unintended) consequences. A necessary precondition for this work is access to current Federal law databases. When Congress amends existing law, it must amend the law as actually enacted, known as positive law. For this positive law, the Office relies exclusively on the positive law titles of the United States Code produced by the Office of the Law Revision Counsel and for other Federal law on its own Statutory Compilations as well as the Statutes at Large.

Bills and amendments range from the simple to lengthy and complex solutions to public policy challenges. Many are the result of years of work by committees and Members. The work of the Office for the 1st Session of the 116th Congress is provided in the list included in Appendix II of this document. Using statistics to quantify bill drafting is difficult because some drafts require mostly formatting while others are complex, requiring months of intensive work by teams of experienced attorneys. Each final draft is often preceded by multiple earlier versions, with each version typically requiring a significant investment of time. However, raw numbers and comparisons to prior Congresses do provide a more meaningful perspective of Office workload. The following tables show the aggregate number of bills, resolutions, and amendments prepared by the Office during the 1st Session of the 116th Congress and the percentage change from the 1st Session of the 115th Congress:

Drafts by Document Type

	Bills	Amendments	Resolutions	Total
Discrete drafts	16,039	9,462	1,427	26,928
% of 115 th --1 st	115%	102%	114%	110%
All versions	59,149	21,755	5,005	85,909
% of 115 th --1 st	120%	107%	136%	117%

Average Drafts Per Member

	1 st Session 116 th	Percentage of 1 st Session 115 th
Discrete drafts	38	115%
All versions of draft	117	123%

While there is no right range for the number of versions per request, multiple versions of drafts are indicative of a healthy policy refining process. Beyond a point, however, a high number of versions is indicative of inefficiency and an inability to settle on a policy. On the other hand, too few versions is indicative of formatting with little to no legal work.

In addition to bill and amendment drafting, the Office prepares the reported version of each bill and resolution as ordered reported by committee, together with the accompanying document (Ramseyer) showing changes in current law made by amendments and repeals contained in the bill, as required by clause 3(e) of House Rule XIII. This, together with the report prepared by committee staff, memorializes for the public record the committee recommendations for the bill. As part of the reported bill process, each bill and resolution is reviewed for technical legal issues. The Office also prepares comparison prints upon request of the Rules Committee in compliance with clause 12a of Rule XXI. During the 116th Congress, the Office prepared report materials for 487 reported bills.

Anecdotal reporting within the Office indicates that there was a substantial increase in advice provided during the 1st Session of the 116th Congress as well, which is not surprising considering the number of Members and staff new to their roles. Additional anecdotal reporting observed that there was more repeated rewriting of straight forward drafts than usual.

Formatting Requested by Members

Among the necessary legislative duties that are ancillary to the Office's primary purpose of providing legal services are requests to put Member-provided legislative language into appropriate XML format and bill style but *without analysis, review, or legal advice*. This typically occurs when the Member either requests that we not perform our normal service or requires a faster turnaround than we are able to provide. Unfortunately, this is not an insignificant part of our work and leads to a misallocation of resources away from legal work. Our paralegal staff formats these requests with little attorney supervision. We recognize the institutional need for a better way to accommodate these kinds of requests.

Services Not Performed

The Office, as part of maintaining impartiality and focusing resources on its primary mission, does not prepare explanatory language for committee reports, other types of summaries or analyses of legislative proposals, or any other material which might be construed as explaining, defending, promoting, or justifying any particular legislative proposal. The Office also does not prepare documents relating to the oversight or constituent services responsibilities of Members, or materials such as committee rules and proposed amendments to committee rules which are used for internal committee deliberations or similar activities which are not part of the process for the enactment of legislation by the House. These tasks are more appropriately performed by other offices in Congress. However, we have partnered with the Clerk of the House to develop and deploy software tools for the preparation of comparative prints.

Managing the Work

The pace of the legislative drafting process is rapid. Demand for legal drafting services within specified, compressed time limits continues to increase. From time to time the demand exceeds the capacity of subject matter teams in the Office to deliver the desired service. The House and its committees have requirements that affect bill drafting to meet legislative schedules, internal deadlines, and procedural requirements.

For example, the key drafting stages of a bill prior to Floor consideration typically have not less than four deadlines: introduction, hearing, markup, and reporting the bill. Additionally, a Rules Committee Print for the bill is frequently required to meet the compressed schedule for Floor consideration. Simultaneously with the preparation of these drafts the Office is handling requests for similar bills and amendments for committee markup and the Floor. Recent practices contribute to this challenge. These practices include the following:

- Marking up many bills on the same topic prior to reconciling them under the tight time constraints of the Floor process.
- Preparing comprehensive bills with their complex internal references and dependent structures and then separating them into many discrete bills for introduction, which

results in losing their internal coordination and requiring them to be rewritten to execute correctly to current law.

- Scheduling the same or similar subject matters for consideration at the same time, including scheduling bills addressing the same subject matter for simultaneous consideration on the Floor and at committee markup.
- Allowing only the minimum required time between committee markup of a bill and Floor consideration of that bill.

When institutional considerations result in insufficient time for the preparation of drafts, the risk of decreased quality of these drafts increases and the risk increases that these drafts fail to faithfully express Members' policies.

In this context, assembling multifaceted legislation in a thoroughly professional manner while minimizing errors is challenging, even for very experienced staff. Attorneys are managing these deadlines and backlogs with night and weekend work. Both attorneys in the Office and the clients of the Office are increasingly expressing dissatisfaction with these arrangements.

Turnaround Time

Members often ask how soon the Office can “turn around” their projects. There is no single answer to this question. Drafting is an iterative process requiring that Members provide policy specifications, answer clarifying questions, review drafts, make refinements, and repeat as needed. Therefore, Member engagement is necessary. Short cuts to this process increase the risk that the draft will not—

- achieve the legal result its sponsor desires,
- be referred to the desired committee,
- be enforceable,
- avoid conflicts with existing law,
- give authority to the correct Federal agency,
- be well-organized and free of technical errors,
- avoid litigation, or
- avoid questions from the public that cannot easily be answered.

Even in cases in which the Member or committee desires to have the best possible draft prepared, the turnaround time varies. It often takes much longer to review, analyze, and rebuild a draft prepared by outside groups than to draft from scratch.

Office coverage of Federal law is broad but without a deep bench. Attorneys specialize in subject areas and have portfolios consisting of several subject areas. Much of the work is performed by teams, both formal and informal. When a subject area is of great interest to many Members, the team responsible for that area is often inundated with drafting requests. The Office prioritizes these requests on the basis of the House and committee schedules on a first-come-

first-served basis in accordance with its statutory authority (2 U.S.C. 281b) in the following order: matters in conference; Floor; committee; and introduction. As a result, absent wasteful and unlimited resources, the Office will not be able to fulfill every request at the time it is made.

Personnel

Staff

The authorized staffing level of the Office is 87 full-time employees. As of January 1, 2020, the Office has a staff of 76 full-time employees, 5 contract attorneys, 4 employees of GPO, allocated as follows:

- 55 attorneys, of whom 1 is the Legislative Counsel, 1 is half-time, and 13 of whom are in the Office training program.
- 5 retired attorneys on contract.
- 7 clerk-paralegals.
- 5 publications paralegals.
- 3 information technology personnel.
- 1 office administrator.
- 1 human resources administrator.
- 4 front office support staff.
- 2 readers on assignment from GPO.
- 2 typesetters on assignment from GPO.

During calendar year 2020, a total of 6 new attorneys are expected to join the Office: 2 joined in January; 1 is expected in April; and 3 are expected in late summer. The Office also expects 3 law students to join as summer associates this year.

Two senior attorneys retired during 2019 and 3 junior attorneys left in November 2019. During the period from August 2016 to December 2019, 17 attorneys left the office. Of these 10 were senior attorneys, each with approximately 30 or more years of service.

Management

Managing the Office, while complex, has little formal structure. The Legislative Counsel does not have a drafting portfolio. The branches within the office are attorneys, clerk-paralegals, publications, information technology, and front office communications.

The attorneys are generally organized by portfolios into teams and form project-based teams as needed for the duration of projects. The Office has 10 senior attorneys who have been with the Office for more than 20 years: of these, 6 have been with the Office for more than 30 years, and 2 for more than 40 years. Planning for the retirement of so many attorneys in the near

future, as well as the unanticipated departure of other attorneys, requires the Office to continually hire new attorneys—

- to address the pace and volume of requests the Office receives,
- to have attorneys who are sufficiently trained in the relevant subject areas positioned to assume primary drafting responsibilities when a senior attorney retires or a more junior attorney leaves the Office, and
- to have sufficient personnel to allow attorneys to work in teams.

There is a similar situation with our clerk-paralegal staff. Our senior clerk-paralegal has more than 30 years of experience, 1 has more than 20 years of experience, 1 has 2 years of experience, and 2 have 1 year of experience. The Office needs to add 3 more clerk-paralegals to better balance their work with the attorneys.

The publications staff of the Office is responsible for providing comparative prints in compliance with clause 3(e) of Rule XIII and clause 12 of Rule XXI of the House Rules. Our senior publications paralegal has almost 30 years of experience and our next most senior person has almost 19 years of experience. Experience levels then drop to 6 and 2 years. Their work is critical to the success of creating and maintaining Statute Compilations.

The IT staff has many years of experience as well, with 20, 15, and 13 years of experience.

The addition of both attorneys and clerk-paralegals will require additional office space.

Training

The Office uses an apprenticeship model to train its employees. Years of training are required to train an attorney to become a legislative drafter producing the high-quality work to which the Office aspires. Training a drafter is a multiyear process. The basic tutorial generally requires two years under close supervision of experienced attorneys. During the first year of tutorial, the new attorney progresses through increasingly more difficult and complex legislative requests and masters not only basic drafting but client-relation skills and House procedure. The new attorney then graduates to mentorship on one or more subject matter teams and remains in mentorship for at least an additional year. Complex areas such as Medicare, Medicaid, and tax require considerably longer mentorships. It is estimated that it generally takes about seven years to attain drafting competency.

During 2019 no fewer than 25 attorneys served as tutors in the Office's attorney training program, which is approximately 45 percent of the total number of attorneys in the Office (and an even higher percentage if attorneys who are in tutorial, or otherwise ineligible to tutor, are excluded from that total number). In addition to the tutoring provided for full-time attorneys, the Office hosted 2 summer associates in 2019 (of whom 1 will be returning as a full-time attorney in 2020). 3 attorneys assisted in the summer program as mentors.

Recruitment and Retention of Attorneys

Recruiting and retaining well-qualified attorneys is difficult. The high salary levels of attorneys in private practice creates a huge disparity between private-practice salaries and those of Government lawyers, and housing costs in the Washington metropolitan area are high and rising. The salary cap was increased in January 2020 after being frozen since 2009. Inflation during this period is approximately 20%. While appreciative of the increase, the Office does not expect the new cap to address this pay disparity in a meaningful way. Pay was a factor in the departure of junior attorneys in 2019. On the positive side, the House student loan repayment program has been very helpful to Office recruiting efforts. Overall, however, Federal budgetary uncertainties and possibilities of indefinite salary freezes and reductions in benefits may be discouraging the best of the law student pool from considering working in the Office. The Office remains concerned about retaining new and midlevel attorneys in this environment, given the years required to train each new attorney. The ability to provide regular, predictable merit raises for the extraordinary work performed by the attorneys in the Office continues to be extremely important to retaining skilled attorneys. In order to accommodate that, the Office's attorney salary schedule provides predictable raises during an attorney's first 15 years of service, subject to the availability of appropriations.

Nonpersonnel Expenditures

The major nonpersonnel expenditures for the Office are associated with the maintenance and enhancement of existing Office software systems to better serve our clients, as well as periodic updates to Office computer hardware.

The Office has an IT team consisting of 3 persons as well as contracts with several vendors for software support and development. Major work is as follows:

Comparative Print Project

An important part of clearly expressing a Member's policy is understanding the impact of the policy in the context of the law affected. Toward this end, the Office continues its innovative development and use of information technology. The Office has been using 3 comparative print software tools for many years to improve the quality of its work. These 3 are comparite, mini-ramseyer, and amendment impact program. These programs provide a document-to-document comparison, a bill amendments impact to current law comparison, and an amendment impact to bill comparison.

These tools were built on software platforms that are more than 20 years old. Some of the software is no longer supported. These tools rely on data stored on servers inside the Office on its confidential and secured network. While the accuracy of the tools has generally been improved over the years, their performance has never achieved a level acceptable for broader

distribution. However, these tools have been generally sufficient for expert users to quickly evaluate the information they provide.

At the beginning of the 115th Congress, the House adopted as part of its rules a new comparative print requirement. The new clause 12 of Rule XXI of the House Rules, requires a bill amendments impact to current law comparison (clause 12a) and a document-to-document comparison (clause 12b). This necessitated a current technology solution to fully meet the requirements. The Clerk of the House and the Legislative Counsel of the House worked together to meet this new requirement. Initially, to meet the December 31, 2017, deadline specified by the Rule, they undertook a phase 1 project and repurposed the Office's bill amendments impact to current law comparison (known as the Ramseyer tool) and developed and deployed on a limited basis a new document-to-document comparison tool. Both tools need specialists to review their output and correct it as needed. Phase 1 was successfully completed on time and succeeding phases are underway. Successful deployment of these tools requires an acceptable level of accuracy in their outputs; accessible databases of statutory laws, public bills, and committee prints; a secure and confidential ability to upload nonpublic drafts; servers capable of handling the expected load; user education in understanding both how to use these tools and how to interpret their outputs; and a help desk to provide assistance when needed.

In a separate but related effort, the House began a transparency modernization effort in 2012 based on XML, Extensible Markup Language. First, building on the original exchange of information requirement in 1996 for legislative data and for improved information technology and planning (2 U.S.C. 181), under the more recent modernization effort the Office of the Law Revision Counsel now produces and maintains the United States Code in XML format using the United States Legislative Markup (USLM) schema. They continue to refine their process. The most recent effort has resulted in a subset of the enrolled bills and statutes at large being produced in the new schema. The Government Publishing Office, with the assistance of the Office of the Legislative Counsel and the Clerk of the House, is beginning to convert the Statutory Compilations developed and maintained by the Office of the Legislative Counsel to the USLM schema. This work is a prerequisite to the development and deployment of these new comparative print tools. This GPO-lead USLM conversion project for Statutory Compilations formally begins in March 2020.

The Legislative Counsel continues to partner with the Clerk, the Government Publishing Office, and the Office of the Law Revision Counsel to develop, deploy, and then maintain all the tools related to the drafting and maintenance of current law. During the first quarter of calendar year 2020, the Clerk and the Legislative Counsel are providing small demonstrations of the progress made to date and incorporating feedback from these demonstrations into the development work. It is hoped that a pilot group can be formed and operational before the end of March 2020.

These projects and their success are a testament of how well staff from disparate House entities have come together to achieve this common mission. There is much support and genuine

respect for what each brings to these projects. Our people are literally the reason why so much has been obtained by so few, especially in an era of limited resources of time and money.

Microcomp Replacement

The Office uses a XML authoring tool (known as XMetal) to produce draft legislation. Part of this process relies on GPO's Microcomp to print legislative drafts in PDF format for delivery to Members. The Office is participating with GPO in the development of a replacement for Microcomp.

XMetal

XMetal is the authoring tool developed and maintained by the Clerk of the House for use in legislative drafting. The Office, others throughout the House, and GPO use this tool. It has been in use since 2004 and is near the end of its useful life in its present form. There is a need to investigate the current needs of the House relating to legislative drafting and determine what the next tool should be. The Office recognizes the difficulty of using MS Word as a tool to produce legislative data (XML without additional coding inserted).

iManage

The Office first deployed iManage (its document management system) in 2004 and is updating its functionality to better leverage its capabilities.

Office 365 Development and Deployment

The Office is in phase VI of a project which has replaced its wiki intranet with a Sharepoint site and is working with HIR to leverage more of the capacities of Office 365 to enhance Office functions. This project is expected to continue through the 116th Congress. Internally, the Office expects to make business process improvements based in part on management advice obtained through a partnership with the Inspector General of the House. In addition, the Office is in the early stages of building a Member portal on Sharepoint to replace its Member website.

Office servers and related software

The Office continues to enhance its hardware and related software to provide for better service to Members and to enhance its capacity for continuing operations in light of threat environments to the House of Representatives.

Conclusion

Thank you for the support this Subcommittee has given the Office. This support has enabled us to develop and maintain the ability to provide quick, efficient, and expert drafting assistance to the Members and committees of the House. We are continuing our efforts to improve our services wherever possible.

This completes my testimony. I am happy to answer any questions that any Member of the Subcommittee may have.

E. Wade Ballou, Jr.
Legislative Counsel

Biography

Wade Ballou was appointed Legislative Counsel of the House of Representatives in July of 2016. He has been drafting legislation for the Office of the Legislative Counsel since 1983 and has worked in many areas of Federal law during his drafting career, including natural resources, Native American issues, veterans, foreign affairs, and intelligence. Since 1996, Wade has concentrated in tax and public debt matters.

Wade earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry, Industrial Forestry Operations option, and Cooperative Education Certificate in Forestry from Virginia Tech (1980) and Juris Doctor from the University of Virginia (1983). In 2013 Wade earned a Graduate Certificate in Spiritual Direction Studies from the Washington Theological Union.

Appendix

I. History of Office

While Members of the Subcommittee are familiar with the Office, for the benefit of others who may review this testimony, it may be helpful to provide a brief synopsis of our functions and history.

Professional legislative drafting in the House of Representatives began in 1916 as an experiment offered to the House by a professor at Columbia Law School, Middleton Beaman. The experiment was regarded by the House as a success, and Mr. Beaman was appointed Legislative Counsel to the House in 1918 pursuant to an amendment to the Revenue Act of 1918. At first, the Office focused primarily on tax legislation. Over the following decades, the work of the Office gradually expanded to cover every area of Federal law. Much of this work is amendatory in nature because the drafter is striving to achieve coherence by placing the new policy into existing law. On January 28, 1929, the House adopted the Ramseyer Rule, which required a comparative print showing changes to existing law proposed to be made by reported bills to enable the reader to more quickly comprehend the impact of the proposed changes. These Ramseyers had the salutary effect of improving the draft, thereby helping to avoid drafting errors, reduce unnecessary confusion, avoid future litigation, and avoid foreseeable, but unintended, consequences. Ramseyers are necessary complements to amendatory bills.

A statutory charter for the Office was enacted in the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 (2 U.S.C. 281 et seq.). This was followed by an expansion in staff and, over time, a gradual change that resulted in the current specialization system within the Office. Under this system, each attorney accumulates a portfolio of subject matter specialties and strives to achieve a high level of substantive knowledge and expertise in those areas. In addition, the Office has a staff of 5 professionals dedicated to preparing the comparative prints required by House Rules and building and maintaining the Statute compilations database.

The Office has long maintained Statute Compilations of nonpositive law to aid in the drafting of bills and amendments. These compilations are now in electronic form and are necessary for the preparation of comparative prints. Early versions of compilations were maintained in notebooks and contained the up-to-date law with amendments taped onto statutes. From time to time, these notebooks would be printed by the Government Publishing Office upon request of a committee and made available for widespread use. When available, the Office would use these GPO prints as a new base and begin again the scissors and taping process. During the 1990s, the Office had all of its compilations typeset and proofread by GPO, thereby creating our first electronic database. These compilations were coded using GPO locator codes. Since then, the database has been converted into XML format through a project with the Senate Secretary's Office and the Office of the Legislative Counsel of the Senate. The Office now publishes many of its compilations of major laws on GPO's collections website at

<https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps> in the form of Adobe Acrobat PDF files. These documents are essential to the lawmaking process but are not available in such a definitive, updated manner from any other source inside the Congress or elsewhere other than the United States Code provisions available from the Law Revision Counsel or copyrighted, outside, nongovernmental sources.

In order to provide for the more timely preparation of the Ramseyers, particularly for larger bills with shorter reporting deadlines, and with funding from this Subcommittee, in 2004 the Office began developing the Ramseyer suite of software tools. These tools not only aid in the preparation of Ramseyers, they also are used to maintain and update the statute compilation database and to aid drafters by quickly providing a view of the changes to law during the drafting process. While these programs are helpful, they require an expert to review (and correct where appropriate) their output for technical accuracy. The original reason for the Ramseyer Rule remains, more than 90 years after its adoption. In fact, due to the vast change in the legislative process enabled by computer technology, the desire for these comparative prints has intensified. The current comparative print project is updating these tools for their broader use in the House. The status of this project is described above under the comparative print project heading.

II. Sampling of Work Performed During 2019

This Appendix contains a list of some of the work performed by the Office during 2019. The overarching theme for the year was providing more advice and more rewrites of bills than usual. As a result this led to a high number of versions for some bills. More committee markups were more contentious than in past years with more amendments and last-minute work.

Appropriations: The appropriations team, consisting of 3 core members, 12 bill coordinators, and most of the rest of the office was extremely busy with the new incoming Congress and staff beginning on top of the extended Government shutdown. During the course of consideration under regular order for the FY20 process, the Office as a whole drafted well over 1,000 amendments for floor consideration as well as a considerable number of amendments for committee and subcommittee consideration. For the first time, the Office incorporated the clerk-paralegals as more integral to the appropriations process, which proved to be critically important to the Office's ability to address competing committee demands, especially relating to the NDAA, during a busy summer session. The clerk-paralegals are also taking the lead on other measures as well, including many of the resolutions and naming bills.

Judiciary: The judiciary team was responsible for the 961 bills and 159 resolutions originating in the House of Representatives that received a primary or subsequent referral to the Committee on the Judiciary. Of that number, 69 passed the House and the following 14 became law:

- H.R. 5277: An Act to amend section 442 of title 18, United States Code, to exempt certain interests in mutual funds, unit investment trusts, employee benefit plans, and retirement plans from conflict of interest limitations for the GPO (Public Law 116-78).
- H.R. 4258: Reauthorizing Security for Supreme Court Justices Act of 2019 (Public Law 116-278).
- H.R. 3311: Small Business Reorganization Act (Public Law 116-54).
- H.R. 3304: National Guard and Reservists Debt Relief Extension Act of 2019 (Public Law 116-53).
- H.R. 2938: HAVEN Act (Public Law 116-52).
- H.R. 2379: An Act to reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Partnership Grant Program (Public Law 116-18).
- H.R. 2336: Family Farmer Relief Act of 2019 (Public Law 116-51).
- H.R. 1569: An Act to amend title 28, United States Code, to add Flagstaff and Yuma to the list of locations in which court shall be held in the judicial district for the State of Arizona (Public Law 116-40).
- H.R. 1327: Never Forget the Heroes: James Zadroga, Ray Pfeifer, and Luis Alvarez Permanent Authorization of the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund Act (Public Law 116-34).

- H.R. 1123: Divisional Realignment for the Eastern District of Arkansas Act of 2019 (Public Law 116-73).
- H.R. 777: Debbie Smith Reauthorization Act of 2019 (Public Law 116-104).
- H.R. 724: Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture Act (Public Law 116-72).
- H.R. 559: Northern Mariana Islands Long-Term Legal Residents Relief Act (Public Law 116-24).
- H.R. 439: National FFA Organization's Federal Charter Amendments Act (Public Law 116-7).

The following list highlights a few other significant measures include:

- H. Res. 755: Articles of Impeachment.
- H.R. 1: For the People Act of 2019.
- H.R. 4: Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2019.
- H.R. 5: Equality Act.
- H.R. 8: Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2019.
- H.R. 1585: Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2019.

Immigration matters required a significant commitment of time and effort from the judiciary and homeland security teams: 200 immigration bills and 8 immigration resolutions originated in the House. A few of the significant bills are as follows:

- H.R. 5038: Farm Workforce Modernization Act of 2019. Passed the House on 12/11/19.
- H.R. 4803: Citizenship for Children of Military Members and Civil Servants Act. Passed the House on 12/03/19.
- H.R. 6: American Dream and Promise Act of 2019. Passed the House on 6/04/19.
- H.R.1044: Fairness for High-Skilled Immigrants Act of 2019. Passed the House on 2/7/19.
- H.R. 3239: Humanitarian Standards for Individuals in Customs and Border Protection Custody Act. Passed the House on 7/24/19.
- H.R. 3524: Northern Triangle and Border Stabilization Act. Introduced.
- H.R. 5210: Refugee Protection Act of 2019. Introduced.
- H.R. 5383: New Way Forward Act. Introduced.

NDAA (National Defense Authorization Act): The defense and NDAA teams continue to encounter an increasing volume of work throughout the NDAA process. The FY2020 bill also included the Intelligence Authorization Act as well. The amendments filed at the Rules Committee for this bill have increased over 200 percent from the 1st Session of the 112th Congress. The conference report for fiscal year 2020 was more than 30 percent larger than the conference report for fiscal year 2019.

Homeland Security: The Homeland Security team drafted across a broad swath of domestic security topics, ranging from acquisition and border to terrorism and threats to transit and virtual currency.

Education: The education team, comprised of 4 full-time attorneys (and 1 part-time attorney) devoted many evenings and weekends to the production of H.R. 4674 (College Affordability Act), together with its intermediate stages and spinoff bills for many of these stages.

Financial Services: The financial services teams was continuously occupied with a higher than average volume of work in 2019, often with quick turnaround times.

House Administration: The House team produced H.R. 1 (the “For the People Act”), H.R. 2722 (the “SAFE Act”), a bill to establish security standards for voting systems and other elements used in administering elections, including standards for ballots and balloting equipment, and H.R. 4617 (the “SHIELD Act”), a bill to deter foreign interference in elections, regulate online political activity, and expand disclosure and disclaimer requirements for online political advertising.

Oversight and Reform: The oversight team was also consistently busy. While over 600 bills and resolutions were introduced and referred to the committee, 21 of the 80 bills reported by the committee becoming law, including H.R. 3889, the ONDCP Technical Corrections Act of 2019, H.R. 1079, the Creating Advanced Streamlined Electronic Services for Constituents Act of 2019, and H.R. 150, Grant Reporting Efficiency and Agreements Transparency Act of 2019.

Intellectual Property: The intellectual property team participated with other teams on a variety of bills. Of these, The Satellite Television Community Protection and Promotion Act of 2019 (title XI of division P of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020) became part of Public Law 116-94 and H.R. 3991 (changed the process for subsection (k) applicants to resolve patent infringement claims for biological products) and H.R. 2426: Established an alternative dispute resolution program for copyright small claims passed the House.

Telecommunications: The telecom team had two bills enacted into law: Pallone-Thune Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence Act (Public Law 116-105) and Television Viewer Protection Act of 2019 (title X of division P of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (Public Law 116-94)), which reauthorized expiring satellite television provisions, among other things. The team also worked on other bills that passed the House, including:

- H.R. 1644—Restoring the FCC’s net neutrality rules. Note that this is a good example of a very short bill that generated a high volume of work that was politically sensitive.

- H.R. 4229—Adding a new title to the Communications Act of 1934 relating to FCC collection of data on broadband deployment.
- H.R. 4227—Prohibiting submission of inaccurate broadband deployment data to the FCC.
- H.R. 4998—Prohibiting certain FCC funding from being used to purchase communications equipment or services posing national security risks and providing grants to replace such equipment or services.
- *H.R. 2881—Requiring the President to develop a strategy to ensure the security of next generation mobile telecommunications systems and infrastructure.
- *H.R. 4500—Promoting United States leadership in international communications standards-setting bodies.
- *H. Res. 575—Expressing the sense of the House relating to certain principles for the security of 5G communications infrastructure.

*Ordered reported by E&C in late 2019 and passed House in early January 2020.

Foreign Affairs: The foreign affairs team, in addition to the NDAA, worked on a number of bills and resolutions, many of which involved multiple iterations prior to introduction and committee consideration to update, especially the preamble text, to reflect a rapidly changing situation on the ground or the priorities of rapidly changing politics. Major bills include H.R. 3352 (To provide for certain authorities of the Department of State, and for other purposes, (reported by the committee and passed by the House)), H.R. 3352 (To provide for matters relating to international security), as well as sanctions bills with respect to each of the following: Iran; North Korea; Russia; Syria, including H.R. 31 (introduced); Venezuela, including H.R. 920, H.R. 854, and H.R. 1477 (all passed House) as well as various foreign terrorist organizations, including Iran’s Revolutionary Guards Corps and Hamas, Human rights violations in Hong Kong, Tibet, and with respect to the Uighurs and the Rohingya. In addition the team handled major war powers-related bills and resolutions with respect to each of the following: Iran, Syria, and Yemen, including H.J. Res. 37 (passed House). The foreign affairs team also handles trade and devoted a significant portion of the year to the bill H.R. 5430, USMCA, to implement the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

Entitlement Health: The entitlement health team has been extremely busy with multiple committee referrals as a result of overlapping committee jurisdictions over the same matter (surprise billing and drug pricing), resulting in requests for simultaneous drafting before and during markups.

Public Health: The public health team focused much of the year on bills relating to drug pricing, tobacco regulation (especially relating to the public health issues arising from vaping), and extensions of expiring provisions relating to a variety of health care programs.

Clean Air/Climate Change/ EPA: The clean air/climate change/EPA team devoted significant time to proposals relating to climate change HFCs and various hazardous air pollutants.

Publications: The publications team prepared report materials for 487 bills. Several of the larger bills and Ramseyers are as follows:

- H.R. 3 (Elijah E. Cummings Lower Drug Costs Now Act),
- H.R. 4674 (higher education),
- H.R. 3299 (PRIDE Act of 2019),
- H.R. 2328 (Community Health Investment, Modernization, and Excellence Act of 2019),
- H.R. 3409 (Coast Guard Authorization of 2019),
- H.R. 3417 (Ways & Means version; BETTER Act of 2019),
- H.R. 3884 (Judiciary; Marijuana Opportunity Reinvestment and Expungement Act of 2019), and
- H.R. 3299 (Promoting Respect for Individuals' Dignity and Equality (PRIDE) Act of 2019).

The team also performed Ramseyer checks on various measures upon request from Office attorneys. In addition, the team updated Statute Compilations to reflect changes by approximately 50 public laws and created 511 new Statute Compilations. For use in the Ramseyer suite of tools, the team also migrated from reliance on a private vendor for selected positive law titles of the United States Code to the official versions of all positive law titles of the United States Code maintained by the Law Revision Counsel.

IT Team: The IT team provides personalized technical support to office members 24 hours per day to ensure functionality and maintain operational systems and laptops. This includes maintenance and management of servers, storage systems, connections with external sources for the movement of data in a timely or scheduled manner.