

## PETITIONS

### Scope and Objective

Petitions for grievance ventilation and/or redressal may be presented to Lok Sabha with the consent of the Speaker:—

- (i) on a Bill which has been published or introduced in the House, or
- (ii) on any matter connected with the business pending before the House, or
- (iii) on any matter of general public interest provided that it is not one:
  - (a) which falls within the cognizance of a court of law having jurisdiction in any part of India or a court of inquiry or a statutory tribunal or authority or a quasi-judicial body or a commission, or
  - (b) which should ordinarily be raised in a State Legislature, or
  - (c) which can be discussed on a substantive motion or resolution, or
  - (d) for which remedy is available under the law, including subordinate legislation, or

(iv) which deals with financial matters or involves expenditure from the Consolidated Fund of India, unless it is recommended by the President.

2. Petitions serve two principal objects, namely:

- (i) to state the merits of a public matter to which the petitioner wishes to invite the attention of Lok Sabha, and
- (ii) to show and stress the degree of importance which the public outside are giving to the matter with a view to intensify and focus public opinion and ensure that the Government may be moved to quick action in cases of genuine grievances.

**Form of Petition**

3. All petitions to Lok Sabha are required to be in a prescribed form. The essential requirements in this respect are that a petition should contain:—

- (i) a formal superscription to the House (*i.e.*) it must be addressed to Lok Sabha,
- (ii) a concise statement of grievance,
- (iii) a prayer regarding the definite object in regard to the matter to which the petition relates,

(iv) name and designation of the petitioner with address, authenticated by the petitioner's signature or, if illiterate, by her/his thumb impression. However where the Petition is made online through Members' Portal, it may reflect the signature or thumb impression of the petitioner, as the case may be,

(v) Counter signature of the member presenting it.

Provided that the petition submitted online through Members' Portal shall be deemed to be countersigned by the member.

Provided further that the member may have the option to countersign the petition and upload a scanned copy thereof, and

(vi) letters, affidavits or other documents cannot be attached to any petition.

4. Language of a Petition is required to be "respectful, decorous and temperate". Every Petition should be either in Hindi or in English. If any Petition in any other Indian language is made, it should be accompanied by a translation, either in Hindi or in English, and signed by the petitioner.

**Presentation of Petition**

5. A member who intends to present a petition in Lok Sabha has to give advance intimation of one's

intention to the Secretary-General. Although no minimum period is specified in the Rules for advance notice, ordinarily, two days' notice is considered sufficient. In exceptional cases, however, the condition of advance notice may be waived. Thereafter, admissibility of each Petition is examined, according to Rules. If the Speaker admits the Petition, the member concerned is advised to seek Speaker's permission in writing indicating the date for presenting the Petition to the House. A Petition is presented to the House after the Question Hour.

6. If a Petition is received direct from any person without the counter-signature of a member and on scrutiny by the Secretariat is considered otherwise admissible, the practice in the Lok Sabha is to return it to the Petitioner, who is advised to have it countersigned by a member for presentation to the House. This practice is based on the principle that petitions are presented by members in their capacity as elected representatives of the people, and that they have to take full responsibility for the statements made therein and answer questions on them in the House, if any, are raised.

7. A member cannot present one's own petition or on behalf of another member.

8. The Petitions on a Bill pending before a Select or Joint Committee, are referred to the Select or Joint Committee concerned, without being presented to the House and the Petitioner is informed accordingly.

9. Every Petition after presentation by a member, stands referred to the Committee on Petitions. No discussion or debate is permitted on the presentation of a Petition.

#### **Committee on Petitions**

10. The Committee on Petitions is nominated by the Speaker and consists of 15 members. The Chairperson of the Committee is appointed by the Speaker from amongst the Members of the Committee. The quorum to constitute a sitting of the Committee is five. The Committee holds office till such time as a new Committee is constituted by the Speaker. However, in practice the Committee is generally constituted annually and its term is one year.

#### **Consideration by the Committee**

11. The Committee on Petitions examines every petition which, after presentation to Lok Sabha, stands referred to it. It is the function of the Committee on Petitions to report to the House on specific complaints made in the Petitions after taking such evidence as it deems fit. The Committee also suggests remedial measures, either on the specific case under review or in a general way, to prevent such cases in future. The Rules empower the Committee to direct that the petition be circulated, either

*in extenso* or in a summary form, to all Members of the House. In practice, however, the Committee directs circulation of only those Petitions which deal with Bills or the matters pending before the House. In the case of Petitions on matters of general public interest, the Committee examines the suggestions made therein, and calls for formal comments from the Ministries concerned, takes evidence of the Petitioner, where necessary, and the officials of the Ministry, before making suitable recommendations in its Report to the House.

#### **Representations**

12. Besides the Petitions presented to the House and the Petitions on Bills, the Committee also considers Representations, letters and telegrams from various individuals, associations, etc., ventilating grievances, which are otherwise not covered by the rules relating to Petitions, and gives directions for their disposal, provided that the grievances fall within the Administrative control of the Government of India.

13. Anonymous letters or letters on which names and addresses of senders are not given or are illegible and endorsement copies of letters addressed to authorities other than the Speaker or the House, unless there is a specific request on such a copy praying for redress of the grievances, are not considered by the Committee but are filed on receipt in the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

14. Only those Representations on general matters or ventilating personal grievances are entertainable by the Committee which fall within the purview of the Government of India or Parliament.

15. Representations ventilating service grievances of employees or ex-employees of Government/ Statutory Bodies are also not normally entertained by the Committee, as proper remedies are available to such employees under their service rules etc.

*[For rules and directions relating to petitions, representations and Committee on Petitions, refer Rules 160 to 169, 306 and 307 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha and Directions 38 to 40, 94 and 95 of the Directions by the Speaker. Also see Article 350 of the Constitution.]*

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
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## **PREFACE**

This Abstract is part of the Parliamentary Procedure Abstracts Series and describes in brief the procedure regarding Petitions. It is based on the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the Directions issued by the Speaker under the Rules of Procedure, and past precedents. It is intended to serve as a handy guide for ready reference.

The information contained in this Abstract is, however, not exhaustive. It will, therefore, be prudent to refer to and rely on the original sources for full information.

NEW DELHI

*Secretary General*