

**Records of the Committee on Ways and Means
RG.233.96.WM
96th Congress**

**Finding aid prepared by Office of Art and Archives,
Office of the Clerk, U.S. House of Representatives**

This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

March 28, 2012

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

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Table of Contents

<u>Summary Information</u>	3
<u>Biographical/Historical note</u>	4
<u>Ways and Means, 96th Congress</u>	4
<u>Administrative Information</u>	4
<u>Collection Inventory</u>	6
<u>Bill files</u>	6
<u>Budget materials</u>	6
<u>"Green" notebooks</u>	6
<u>Hearing files</u>	6
<u>Legislative files</u>	6
<u>Minutes</u>	7
<u>Official communications</u>	7
<u>Subject files</u>	7
<u>Tally sheets</u>	7
<u>Subcommittees</u>	7

Summary Information

Repository	Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration
Creator	Committee on Ways and Means.
Title	Records of the Committee on Ways and Means
Date [inclusive]	1979-1980
Extent	98.0 Linear feet (196 archival boxes)
Language	English

Biographical/Historical note

The Committee on Ways and Means is the oldest committee of the United States Congress, and is the chief tax-writing committee in the House of Representatives. The Committee derives a large share of its jurisdiction from Article I, Section VII of the U.S. Constitution which declares, "All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives."

First established as a select committee on July 24, 1789, it was discharged less than two months later. The committee was reappointed from the first session of the Fourth Congress in 1795, and was formally listed as a standing committee in the House Rules on January 7, 1802.

Until 1865, the jurisdiction of the committee (referred to as the Committee of Ways and Means before 1880) included the critically important areas of revenue, appropriations, and banking. Since 1865, the committee has continued to exercise jurisdiction over revenue and related issues such as tariffs, reciprocal trade agreements, and the bonded debt of the United States. Revenue-related aspects of the Social Security system, Medicare, and social services programs have come within Ways and Means' purview in the 20th century.

The roster of committee members who have gone on to serve in higher office is impressive. Eight Presidents and eight Vice Presidents have served on Ways and Means, as have 21 Speakers of the House of Representatives, and four Justices of the Supreme Court.

Ways and Means, 96th Congress

Files are legislative files arranged by bill number, "green" notebooks of background information on issues before the committee organized by date, petitions and memorials, bound volume of bills, GAO reports, bound volumes of hearings, subject files, required reports, presidential messages, executive communications, and 9 volumes of bound committee minutes. Subjects of interest include legislative files on H.R. 4537, the Trade Agreements Act of 1979, which eventually became P.L. 96-39.

Administrative Information

Publication Information

Center for Legislative Archives, National Archives and Records Administration

Rule VII

The records are governed by Rule VII(3)b of the House Rules: (b) (1) A record shall immediately be made available if it was previously made available for public use by the House or a committee or a subcommittee. (2) An investigative record that contains personal data relating to a specific living person (the disclosure of which would be an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy), an administrative record relating to personnel, or a record relating to a hearing that was closed under clause 2(g)(2) of rule XI shall be made available if it has been in existence for 50 years. (3) A record for which a time, schedule, or condition for availability is specified by order of the House shall be made available in accordance with that order. Except as otherwise provided by order of the House, a record of a committee for which a time, schedule, or condition for availability is specified by order of the committee (entered during the Congress in which the record is made or acquired by the committee) shall be made available in accordance with the order of the committee. (4) A record (other than a record referred to in subparagraph (1), (2), or (3)) shall be made available if it has been in existence for 30 years.

Collection Inventory

Bill files (16 volumes)

Budget materials (7 archival boxes)

Scope and Contents note

Materials, reports, analysis, and other records related to the budget for 1979-1980.

"Green" notebooks (13 archival boxes)

Scope and Contents note

"Green" notebooks of background information on issues before the committee.

Arrangement note

Arranged chronologically, and alphabetically therein.

Hearing files (135 volumes in 7 archival boxes + 1 archival box)

Legislative files (95 archival boxes)

Scope and Contents note

Minutes

Notable series of files include H.R. 3919, Crude Oil Windfall Profit Tax Act of 1980, which became P.L. 96-223, and H.R. 4537, Trade Agreements Act of 1979, which became P.L. 96-39.

Minutes (14 volumes)**Arrangement note**

Arranged chronologically by first and second session of the 96th Congress.

Official communications (1 archival box + 32 volumes)**Scope and Contents note**

Required reports, presidential messages, and executive communications.

Subject files (4 archival boxes)**Tally sheets (1 archival box)****Scope and Contents note**

Tally sheets of votes in subcommittees, 1979-1980.

Subcommittees**Subcommittee on Health (1 archival box)****Scope and Contents note**

Subcommittee on Public Assistance and Unemployment Compensation

Hearings.

Subcommittee on Public Assistance and Unemployment Compensation (5 archival boxes)

Scope and Contents note

Markups, transcripts, and subject files.

Subcommittee on Trade (8 archival boxes)

Scope and Contents note

Legislative files and subcommittee minutes.