

Robert B. Dove
Parliamentarian Emeritus
U. S. Senate

For 13 years, Parliamentarian Emeritus Robert Dove served as the United States Senate's referee. Since his retirement in May, 2001, he has served of counsel to Washington's largest law firm, Patton Boggs, and has been named Congressional Professor at George Washington University.

Dove's decades of experience in the legislative arena coupled with rigorous legal and academic training position him as a credible and valuable senior counselor for the thorniest public policy debates and an invaluable resource for students of all levels.

What Does a Parliamentarian Do?

The Parliamentarian's mission – to ensure that the rules and precedents of the Senate are followed – is simple. But the job's complexity has meant that each Parliamentarian has served an apprenticeship lasting a decade or more before taking the top job. The Parliamentarian and his small staff are charged with guiding the Presiding Officer to keep floor proceedings smooth and consistent. When he is not on the floor, the Parliamentarian provides confidential advice and counsel to Senators and staff on both sides of the aisle on legislative strategy, potential procedural pitfalls, and the drafting of bills and amendments. The office acts as traffic cop for legislation, referring bills to the proper committee of jurisdiction.