



The Public HEARING PROCESS

A Guide for Members of Parliament and
Parliamentary Staff



SERVICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY



The Public **HEARING PROCESS**

A Guide for Members of Parliament
and Parliamentary Staff

SERVICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

December 2011



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Service and Accountability The Public Hearing Process

A Guide for Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Staff

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FOREWORD

Being a Member of Parliament (MP) is not easy. In fact the reality is quite the opposite and the effectiveness of an MP often depends upon how well the Member achieves, and maintains, balance and purpose in the wide range of roles and responsibilities they have to carry out.

An effective MP is an accomplished legislator, a diligent committee member and a committed public servant; and in carrying out these three roles, an MP has to balance the demands of the party with the views of constituents, as well as with their own personal opinions and conscience.

An MP's various roles and responsibilities often come together in the committee room and through the public hearing process. Effective committee work depends upon effective public hearings.

The National Democratic Institute for International Affairs has developed this guide as one in a series of six publications, entitled *Service and Accountability* that focus on aspects of good governance.

This specific publication, *Service and Accountability, The Public Hearing Process, A Guide for Members of Parliament and Parliamentary Staff*, was first published in November 2007. It was well received by both MPs and parliamentary staff and was reprinted with amendments in 2009. This current edition has been updated to take into account improvements in practice, the adoption of the Law on Parliament in 2009 and the introduction of revised Rules of Procedure in 2010. It is primarily intended for use by presidents of committees, committee members and committee clerks, all of whom play a critical role in the challenge of organizing and managing effective public hearings.

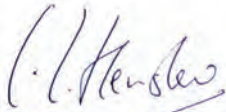
The guide was developed with input and advice from presidents of parliament and chairs of parliamentary committees. It draws on NDI's experience, in working with parliament on the provision of public hearings, and on best practice in parliaments that have extensive experience of committee hearings. The guide is very much a practical hands on tool, complete with CD that provides standardized templates developed especially for use by committee staff.

This guide should be used in conjunction with the *The Oversight Hearing Process: 33 Steps to Organizing an Oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia*, a pocket guide in the *Service and Accountability* series that is intended for use by committees in organizing and managing oversight hearings in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

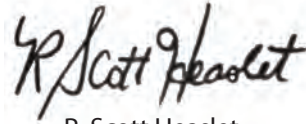
The public perception of Parliament and MPs in Macedonia, and the work they do, is a critical one. This comes through clearly in the results of opinion polls. Public hearings can help improve public opinion for they are not only held in the public domain but also

allow invited experts, interested bodies and members of the public to appear in front of the hearing, give evidence and contribute to the review and scrutiny process of a range of issues connected to good governance.

We commend this publication. We trust it will prove a useful tool in the gradual development and improvement of good practice that is growing out of the adoption of the Law on Parliament, revised Rules of Procedure and the establishment of the Parliamentary Institute of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.



Chris Henshaw
Country Director



R. Scott Heaslet
Program Director

Skopje, December 2011

WHAT ARE PUBLIC HEARINGS?

Public hearings are information-gathering mechanisms used by parliamentary committees as tools for analyzing and designing policies and laws, and for oversight and scrutiny purposes. Public hearings are most commonly held to review draft and proposed laws.

Public hearings enable members of parliament (MPs), parliamentary staff, invited experts, interested bodies and the public to review, scrutinize and investigate a range of issues connected to good governance. They help elected representatives to determine the measures needed to improve a piece of legislation and/or the workings of government. Public hearings also inform MPs and parliament on the level of public support for a particular law and allow citizens to play their part in the development of public policy.

Why Hold Public Hearings?

Keith Schulz, Legislative Strengthening Advisor, USAID, Skopje, 2005 (during a training for Committee Presidents on Public Hearings and Committee Procedures)

- hearings improve the quality of work carried out by legislators, committees and parliament
- hearings improve legislative transparency
- hearings increase citizen participation
- hearings save time by allowing a large number of opinions to be considered on any issue, in a short amount of time.

A public hearing may be timetabled as an agenda item at a regular or special committee meeting, or may be the sole purpose of a special meeting or series of meetings where no other matters are addressed.

Public hearings are conducted for different purposes. The two principal types of public hearing currently being employed in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia are legislative and oversight.

Public hearings may serve a dual purpose in, for example, focusing on both legislation and related oversight of the executive branch of government.

The Importance of Hearings in the Macedonian Context

Silvana Boneva, Parliamentary Group Coordinator of VMRO-DPMNE, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2011.

“With the institutionalization of the oversight hearing process through the Law on the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, parliament has been conducting a quiet revolution in accountability.”

The Importance of Hearings in the Macedonian Context

Igor Ivanovski, Parliamentary Group Coordinator of SDSM, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2011

“There is no real parliamentary democracy, without a strong Parliament, that exercises its legislative and oversight functions in their entirety. More effort, determination and concrete activities are needed, for the Republic of Macedonia to claim the title of a parliamentary democracy representing civil society. Holding oversight hearings in the Assembly is a single but sure step in that direction.”

In the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, there is still a lack of uniformity between committees in how public hearings are organized, conducted and publicized. However, it is usual practice for all public hearings to be announced on the Assembly website (www.sobranie.mk).

Public Hearings and Rules of Procedure

Rule XI. 2 (a)(1), Rules of the House of Representatives One Hundred Twelfth Congress. U.S. Government Printing Office, House of Representatives, United States, January 2011.

Each standing committee shall adopt written rules governing its procedure. Such rules:

(A) shall be adopted in a meeting that is open to the public unless the committee, in open session and with a quorum present, determines by record vote that all or part of the meeting on that day shall be closed to the public;

(B) may not be inconsistent with the Rules of the House or with those provisions of law having the force and effect of Rules of the House.

While in some countries, it is possible for citizens to attend a public hearing without an invitation, it is more difficult to attend hearings in the Republic of Macedonia because the parliament building is not open to the public. Macedonian citizens must therefore be invited by the committee to testify at a public hearing.

LEGISLATIVE HEARINGS

Parliamentary committees conduct legislative public hearings on issues and problems related to particular draft laws, or in order to determine the necessity for a new law. Parliamentary committees sometimes hold such hearings to help initiate additional activities for the committee or parliament. More often, the purpose of a legislative hearing is to devise or amend draft legislation in a manner that takes advantage of the available expertise as well as reflects the public interest.

Legislative hearings often take the form of a forum at which facts and opinions on an act are presented by witnesses for consideration by the committee. Witnesses come from

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all walks of life and include MPs, government officials, representatives of interest groups, civil society organizations (CSOs) and citizens who have an opinion to voice or have been, or would be, affected by the legislation in question.

Legislative Hearings, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010.

Article 145

On a law proposal of broader public interest, the Assembly, following the general debate, may decide to carry out a public debate and determine a relevant working body to organise the public debate.

Article 146

The working body organising the public debate shall:

- ensure that the law proposal is published and thus made available to the citizens, public organisations, institutions, civil associations, political parties, trade unions and other interested subjects;
- ensure collection and arranging of the opinions and suggestions presented during the public debate;
- prepare report on the results of the public debate.

For implementation of the duties of paragraph 1 in this Article, the relevant working body may establish a separate working group.

Article 147

The law proposal put for public debate shall be published in a daily newspaper determined by the relevant working body.

An appeal for presenting opinions and suggestions and the timeframe for their submission shall be announced together with the law proposal.

Article 148

On the basis of the opinions and proposals presented in the public debate, the relevant working body shall prepare a report and submit it to the Assembly together with the law proposal for a second reading.

The common goal of all participants in legislative hearings should be to determine how best the matter under consideration can be legislated for by an act of parliament.

In the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, CSOs can only give testimony on draft legislation between the first and second reading, but can continue to advise MPs in making their decision when the proposed law has gone into the second reading stage.

OVERSIGHT HEARINGS

Oversight public hearings examine the work of the government, namely the implementation by government of promulgated laws, and the performance of government officials in executing legislative mandates.

In oversight hearings, MPs examine the extent to which the government's implementation of the law follows the letter and spirit of the legislation on which it is based and, more broadly, whether the public interest is being served. They may also, where appropriate, look at draft legislation and proposed acts of parliament.



A Government representative gives testimony during an oversight hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

Oversight Hearings, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

Law on the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2009.

Article 20

- (1) An oversight hearing is held in order to obtain information and experts' opinions from the area of competence of the relevant working bodies in relation to the establishment and the implementation of the policies, the implementation of the laws and the other activities of the Government and the state bodies.
- (2) The oversight hearing is conducted by the relevant working body of the Assembly which can invite at its meetings authorized representatives from the Government or from other state bodies, and request from them information and clarification regarding the subject of the oversight hearing.
- (3) At the oversight hearing other persons can be invited that can give information regarding the subject of the oversight hearing.
- (4) The invited authorized representatives have an obligation to be present at the ▶

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◀ meeting on which the oversight hearing is held.

(5) The Chairperson of the working body shall notify the President of the Assembly on the holding of the oversight meeting, after which he/she shall send a written notification to the Government. With the notification the President of the Assembly will request that the Government appoints authorized representative(s) for the subject of the oversight hearing.

(6) The Chairperson of the working body shall send a written notification to the authorized representatives of the Government or the state body, to invite them to the meeting of the working body at which the oversight hearing will be held, and notifies them of the subject of the hearing; he/she can also request the information, opinions and views to be sent in a written form at least three days before the holding of the meeting of the body.

(7) Finances for holding of the oversight meeting shall be secured from the Assembly's finances within the Budget of the Republic of Macedonia.

(8) The public shall be informed about the oversight meetings through the Assembly's website and the Assembly TV Channel.

Article 21

(1) Initiative for holding an oversight hearing can be instigated by one member of the relevant working body.

(2) On holding an oversight hearing the working body shall decide with majority of the votes from the present members, and with at least one third from the total number of members.

(3) If 15 MPs file a written request for holding an oversight hearing, through the President of the Assembly to the Chairperson of the working body, then the Chairperson of the working body is obliged to convene a hearing.

(4) The President of the Assembly with the Vice-Presidents and the Coordinators of the Parliamentary Groups shall give a recommendation for holding certain oversight hearings, to the Chairperson and the members of the working body.

Article 22

(1) During the oversight hearing, the members of the relevant working body and the MPs that are not members of the relevant working body can ask the authorized representatives of the Government or the state bodies invited at the hearing questions related only to the subject of the hearing.

(2) During the oversight hearing there can be a discussion with the invited persons that have the information only if it is necessary to harmonize or clarify concrete issues and facts.

(3) The relevant working body shall decide on the duration of the hearing, ensuring the participation of every member of the relevant working body in the debate.

The process of oversight hearings in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia started in January 2010. In that year, the Assembly held five separate oversight hearings on a wide range of legislation. A number of Macedonian civil society organizations provided

expert witness testimonies at these hearings.

In September 2011 NDI published, in partnership with the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, “The Oversight Hearing Process: 33 Steps to Organizing an oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia” as a guide to organizing and managing oversight hearings.

Oversight Hearings and Government

Nexhati Jakupi, Minister for Environment and Physical Planning, Government of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010 (during an oversight hearing on landfills and waste collection held by Committee on Transport, Communications and Environment).

“It is a privilege to be part of this oversight hearing and am looking forward to questions from the MPs and I salute this step forward in parliamentary democracy.”

INQUIRY AND INVESTIGATIVE HEARINGS

Investigative public hearings share similar features with legislative and oversight hearings but focus on the investigation of particular activities. The Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia cannot hold investigative hearings yet may establish ad-hoc inquiry committees (anketna komisija) in every field and every issue of public interest. In the past such committees have only been established for issues pertaining to the Assembly.

In other parliaments investigative hearings take place when there is an indication, evidence or public concern that an offence has been committed by a public official and/or government department; or where a private or public company has acted inappropriately in dealing with government bodies or officials.

Some parliaments establish special investigative committees, tasked with investigating a particular issue or series of events. In countries with democratic traditions, parliamentary working bodies may conduct such investigations as part of their regular activities.

Inquiry Hearings, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010.

Article 118

The permanent working bodies shall be established by a decision of the Assembly. The Assembly shall, with a decision, also establish temporary working bodies for particular duties.

The Assembly may, with a decision, also establish inquiry committees in every sphere and for every issue of public interest. ▶

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With the decision for establishment of working bodies and inquiry committees, the field of competence and the number of members shall also be determined.

The composition of the working bodies and inquiry committees shall be determined by a decision of the Assembly, subject to the number of Members in parliamentary groups, number of Members of the Assembly that are not organised in parliamentary groups and in accordance with the Law on Equal Opportunities Between Women and Men

FIELD HEARINGS

Most public hearings are held in parliament but a parliamentary committee or special committee may decide that there is a need for a public hearing to be held elsewhere. A public hearing brings parliament closer to the people. Through hearings outside of parliament, committees may hear testimony from witnesses who are unable or unwilling to come to the seat of government to testify. Such hearings also bring the attention of the public, at the local level, to the matter being discussed especially if the hearing is held in a relevant location, such as a hospital or school.

By conducting a public hearing outside of parliament the hearing may discuss a problem or an issue with the people most directly affected by it. It is important to note though, that on outside visits a committee can only gather and share information. Sessions, with the committee making binding decisions, cannot take place in the field.

Field visits involving the whole committee will only take place where they are essential for the committee's deliberations. On the other hand individual committee members are free to make any visits that they deem necessary for their personal information gathering. Rules of procedure on whether a quorate (see page 16) is required may be relaxed, at the discretion of the chairperson, for the purposes of a field hearing.

WHO DOES WHAT? - ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The committees in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia are comprised of a chairperson, a committee clerk and between five and 17 MPs and their deputies (MPs who substitute for the member of the committee when s/he is absent). The most important roles in the management of a public hearing are those of the committee clerk and the chairperson.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE CLERK

The clerk of the committee is the procedural and administrative adviser to both the chairperson and the committee. The clerk carries out her/his duties and responsibilities in consultation with the chairperson and at the direction of the committee. (*Appendix 1, Checklist for Organizing a Public Hearing and Appendix 2, Sample Timeline for Organizing a Public Hearing*).

The clerk is an expert in committee procedural and administrative rules and is therefore the person to whom the committee and chairperson should direct any questions. In addition to procedural and administrative assistance the clerk should also assist the chairperson in facilitating the proper running of the public hearing. S/he is also, therefore, the main point of contact for witnesses ahead of a scheduled committee meeting or hearing. In situations where the committee allows uninvited members of the public to give testimony the clerk should facilitate the registration process and help ensure that the testimony process is orderly and fair.

THE ROLE OF THE CHAIRPERSON

The chairperson of a hearing is its presiding officer (*Appendix 5, Guidance for the Chairperson*). During the hearing, it is her/his duty to maintain order and decorum; indicate which members are to speak and when; and rule on questions of procedure, such as whether or not motions proposed by members are procedurally correct.

The chairperson is also responsible for ensuring the progress of business, and may participate in the proceedings.

The chairperson of the committee usually chairs the hearings and may participate in the proceedings. In her/his absence, the deputy chair of the committee should take the chair. In her/his absence, the most senior committee member shall chair the hearing.

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Presiding over a Committee Session

Committee Process, Section 3, chapter 1 of 5, Thomas Carr, U.S. Capitol, Committee on Rules Legislative Process Program, 2010.

When present, the committee chair ordinarily will preside over its hearings. House rules allow each committee chair to designate a majority party member to be the vice chair of the full committee or a subcommittee, and stipulate that the vice chair presides in the temporary absence of the chair (House Rule XI, clause 2(d)). If both the chair and vice chair are absent, the most senior majority party member present presides.

At the opening of a public hearing, the chairperson should give introductory remarks introducing the purpose of the hearing and any important events that led up to the hearing. At the end of this introduction the chairperson should introduce the next committee member who wishes to provide opening remarks.

If all of the committee members wish to provide introductory remarks, the chairperson may limit the speaking time for each member to five minutes. The chairperson should not encourage all committee members to provide introductory remarks, mainly because of the time. It is however common practice for the chairperson to invite written submissions from committee members rather than oral introductions.

QUORUM

A public hearing cannot start unless it is quorate. If the rules of procedure do not state otherwise, a quorum exists if one half of committee members are present.

If at any time during the hearing, committee members leave so that the hearing is no longer quorate, then proceedings should be brought to a halt as soon as the person currently testifying finishes giving her/his testimony and members still present have had the opportunity to ask the witness questions. The hearing should be restarted when a quorum has been achieved. Time lost due to a hearing being inquorate can be added on at the discretion of the chairperson.

At the discretion of the chairperson, rules governing the quorum might be relaxed for a field hearing.

THE ROLE OF THE WITNESS

Although witnesses have no managerial role their contribution to a public hearing is crucial. They provide the information to the committee which will help it to take into account more opinions and attitudes when assessing how laws should be drafted and whether amendments are needed. *Appendix 6, Guidance for Witnesses* gives advice for witnesses

that will help ensure their contribution is effectively utilized. NDI has also prepared a publication “The Public Hearing Process – A Guide for Citizens” as part of its Service and Accountability Series of publications. This guide principally focuses on the role of the witness and provides a great deal of practical guidance for anyone giving testimony at a public hearing.

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

INITIAL DECISIONS

To accomplish their purpose as an Assembly mechanism, hearings should be scheduled well in advance and properly organized by committee presidents, MPs and committee staff. At the outset of the year committees usually outline their annual activities. The committee considers what draft laws need to be reviewed and what issues potentially warrant the oversight attention of the committee, although oversight hearings can not always be predicted as to when they will be held and what will be their purpose.

Before deciding whether or not to hold a public hearing on a particular issue, a parliamentary committee must first be clear about the information it wishes to obtain and whether or not a public hearing is a useful way of obtaining this information.

Scheduling

CRS Report for Congress, House Committee Hearing: Scheduling and Notification, Christopher Davis, Congressional Research Center, The Library of Congress, 2007.

House committees may hold hearings at any time, except during a joint session of the House and Senate or during recess when a joint meeting of the House and Senate is in progress (House Rule XI, Clause 2(i)). Paramount in scheduling for many committees is choosing a date and time convenient for committee leaders.

Several factors will determine the effectiveness of a public hearing, including:

- the wider political importance of the subject in question. This will not be easy to determine as views of what is important will vary but an understanding of the full implications of the subject and public interest, and the media reaction to that subject, will help define importance. For example: In June 2010, the Committee on Culture, organized an oversight hearing focusing on the implementation of legislation on sponsorships and donations. Witnesses included the Ministers for Justice, Culture and Education, as well as representatives from the Ministry of Finance, the Director of the Revenue Office, the Directors of the National Opera, Ballet and the Philharmonic and representatives from academia. After the three-day hearing which featured prominently in the media, the committee unanimously adopted a set of recommendations for drafting a new version of the law in partnership with a civil society organization. The government is now working on revising the legislation based on these recommendations;
- the level of interest of different groups in that subject. Again difficult to determine but the considerations outlined above will help determine level of interest;
- the significance of the public hearing and its outcomes for the parliament itself;
- in some legislatures there is a requirement that public hearings must be held for

certain types of bills. For example, if a certain proposal law requires controversial and difficult legislative changes, then the legislature requires public hearings to take place therefore allowing professional associations and the public to present their case.

Parliamentary committees world-wide receive thousands of requests for public hearings. Committees must therefore decide whether or not a public hearing on a particular topic is appropriate. The remit and the terms of reference of committees will help in reaching a decision in this respect. Committees must also consider if a hearing would be time well spent and the best utilization of funds and personnel. Finally, committees must consider whether or not a public hearing can fit into their work timetable.

Approval

CRS Report for Congress, Hearings in the House of Representatives: A Guide for Preparation and Procedure, Thomas Carr, Congressional Research Center, The Library of Congress, 2006.

To obtain approval for a hearing, committee staff often prepare a preliminary hearing memorandum for the chair that includes information such as the scope and purpose of the hearing, the expected outcome, possible witnesses, how many hearing days are planned, and perhaps the views of the minority party.

OBTAINING ADVICE

As most public hearings focus on government programs or potential programs, numerous government and non-government resources are available to parliamentary committees to advise them in conducting hearings.

Government and its agencies may often be the best source of information on who should be called before the committee. So a committee should first explore what information can be obtained directly from government.

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) are a rich source of information for parliamentary committees. In addition academics, independent experts, and personnel from various associations and professional organizations and institutions are often willing to provide assistance by presenting specific data, analyses and statements.

Testifying before a parliamentary committee, during a public hearing, is an important and effective method of amending legislation and is therefore valued by civil society organizations.

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Consulting with experts and interest groups provides committees with information and assistance from those who have had direct experience of the proposed law or issue, and who have been or will be directly affected by legislative decisions made by the committee and parliament. In this respect the committee should, where appropriate, ensure that the voices of ordinary citizens are represented.

Announcing the Session

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010.

Article 146

The working body organising the public debate shall:

- ensure that the law proposal is published and thus made available to the citizens, public organisations, institutions, civil associations, political parties, trade unions and other interested subjects;
- ensure collection and arranging of the opinions and suggestions presented during the public debate;
- prepare a report on the results of the public debate.

For implementation of the duties of paragraph 1 in this Article, the relevant working body may establish a separate working group.

Article 147

The law proposal put for public debate shall be published in a daily newspaper determined by the relevant working body.

An appeal for presenting opinions and suggestions and the timeframe for their submission shall be announced together with the law proposal.

With legislative hearings it should be possible for civil society organizations, groups of citizens or individual experts, who consider that they can provide input in the process of reviewing and amending a draft law, and who have not been invited to testify, to still be offered the opportunity to attend the hearing. Such persons should be able to directly contact the committee staff as indicated in the announcement for the hearing and express their interest to contribute. Due to the nature of oversight hearings such practice may not be possible with this type of hearing.

Consideration also needs to be given to the importance of hearing testimony from groups representing the interests of women, minority communities and people with disabilities.

ANNOUNCING HEARING SCHEDULES

The chairperson of the committee should announce the public hearing time, date and topic no less than seven days prior to the hearing. In exceptional circumstances public hearings may be held at shorter notice.

The announcement should be published on the Assembly website, the Assembly TV channel and in daily newspapers (*Template 4, Invitation Letter to the Media*) and if possible in any other media. The committee clerk can obtain assistance in preparing the announcements, from the Assembly Unit for Public Relations and Preparation of Statistics Materials.

Once either the Assembly in the plenary or the committee at a meeting has reached a decision to hold a public hearing the chairperson should inform committee members of the time, place and topic of the public hearing and should supply members, in advance, with all the relevant materials and a list of witnesses and possibly their written testimonies (*Template 1, Invitation Letter to Committee Members*).

Announcing a Hearing

Rule XI. (2)(g)(3), Rules of the House of Representatives One Hundred Twelfth Congress. U.S. Government Printing Office, House of Representatives, United States, January 2011.

The chair of a committee shall announce the date, place, and subject matter of a committee hearing, which may not commence earlier than one week after such notice; or a committee meeting, which may not commence earlier than the third day on which members have notice thereof.

The chairman of each committee (other than the Committee on Rules) shall make public announcement of the date, place, and subject matter of the committee hearing at least one week before the commencement of the hearing.

An announcement made under this subparagraph shall be published promptly in the Daily Digest and made available in electronic form

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PLANNING THE AGENDA

A well-organized agenda is essential for conducting an effective hearing. The agenda establishes a structure for discussion, encourages participation and helps achieve results. It may be useful to organize a preparatory committee meeting to brainstorm issues before finalizing the agenda. This may help in determining how to approach certain issues and assist in developing a list of names of experts and other witnesses to participate in the hearing.

Answers to the following questions will help in devising an effective agenda and will also ensure that the hearing itself is effective:

- What is the purpose of the hearing?
- What background information do participants need?
- How will the hearing proceed and be managed?
- What are the hearing's specific goals, tasks and intended outcomes?
- What are the important topics to be covered?
- What information previously discussed needs to be reviewed?
- What new information needs to be presented or solicited?
- How much time should be devoted to each topic?
- Who is the best person to present information on each topic?
- Who will be the hearing chairperson, discussion leaders and recorders?
- How should the discussion be structured?
- What participation techniques might be appropriate?
- What specific questions can be asked to stimulate and guide the discussion?
- What information or decision(s) should be highlighted in the summary?
- What follow-up activities will likely result from the hearing?
- Who should be responsible for each activity?
- What is a reasonable schedule for accomplishing each follow-up activity?
- Who should deliver the closing remarks?
- How can every participant's contribution be acknowledged?

The agenda for an oversight hearing may be more time specific than that for a legislative hearing (*Template 7, Agenda for Oversight Hearings* and *Appendix 7 – The Oversight Hearing Process: 33 Steps to Organizing an Oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia*).

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minority groups are included, especially when the issues under consideration can have a direct impact or bearing on their livelihood and well being. Even when this might not be the case it is important to have a balance between men and women and majority and minority communities in selecting witnesses so as to ensure that all views are represented and to give credence to any final recommendations.

In the United States, the Rules of Procedure of the House of Representatives allow opposition committee members to invite witnesses of their own choice during the hearing process. In addition to this formal right, opposition committee members hold informal discussions with the majority committee members on the selection of witnesses to be invited.

Selecting and Inviting Witnesses

The Oversight Hearing Process: 33 Steps to Organizing an Oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), 2011.

Step 9:

The decision on which witnesses to call will be made from separate lists prepared by the committee's government and opposition members. The president of the committee will pull both lists together to create a final list of witnesses. Every member of the committee has the right to propose witnesses for the oversight hearing.

The number of witnesses participating at oversight hearings depends on invitations issued by the committee. Usually the committee decides to invite ministers, their deputies, senior government officials, heads of independent institutions or other representatives of state institutions. Depending on the oversight topic, those civil society organizations that have a stake in the matter discussed as well as specialized institutions on the given topic may be invited to provide their view on the matter.

In many but not all parliamentary systems witnesses must be formally invited by the parliamentary committee (*Template 2, Invitation Letter to Witnesses*). Prior to the official invitation, the committee clerk may identify all potential witnesses and hold brief interviews with them. Once a list of suitable witnesses has been determined, the chairperson of the committee will send official invitations.

The invitation should provide the witness with basic information on the public hearing, including purpose, topic, date and venue. In addition to detailing the issue the witness should focus on during their oral testimony, the invitation should also include a note on the time allowed for their contribution. This will need to be decided by the committee prior to the start of the hearing, unless otherwise prescribed. Usually a witness appearing before a hearing will be given between five to ten minutes to state her or his views.

In certain instances committees might call for witnesses who have not been officially

invited to testify. This is done by allowing ordinary members of the public to show up and register at the hearing. The registration of such witnesses can be done by filling in a witness registration card (*Template 3, Sample Witness Card*). Such witnesses are usually given two minutes to speak. They will usually be divided into three groups, “for” “against” or “for information purposes only” and will testify in alternate order. Managing uninvited witnesses and maintaining order takes certain skills and requires that the chairperson clearly explains to the witnesses what the rules are and then maintains them.

Where written evidence (*Appendix 4, Sample Written Testimony*) is to be requested, a timetable for the submission of such evidence should be set out in the invitation. Written evidence is usually required at least a week before the date fixed for the hearing, and in the case of oversight hearings it should be submitted no later than three days before the date of the hearing according to “The Oversight Hearing Process: 33 Steps to Organizing an Oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia” guide. Where written evidence is not considered as important, witnesses may still be asked to bring copies of their testimony (i.e. a written copy of what they intend to say at the hearing) to the hearing.

If considered appropriate the committee may supply witnesses with additional information such as the names of committee members, rules of conduct of the public hearing, relevant extracts from legislative acts related to the subject matter etc.

The committee may reimburse the witnesses’ travel costs, if they have to travel to the venue. If such reimbursement is to be provided, it should be indicated in the invitation.

Selecting and Inviting Witnesses

Rules of Organisation and Procedure of the National Assembly, National Assembly of the Republic of Bulgaria, 2011.

Article 99

- (1) The National Assembly, or its elected Committees, may conduct investigations, inquiries and hearings on matters concerning state or public interests.
- (2) When the National Assembly proceeds with a hearing the mover of the proposal shall present the issues within ten minutes. The person that is being heard shall inform the National Assembly on the issues that are the subject of the hearing. Two Members of the National Assembly from each parliamentary group and one independent Member of the National Assembly may ask each additional question within two minutes time limit. The person that is being heard shall respond to all questions after all additional questions have been posed.
- (3) Parliamentary Committees may require that Ministers appear before their meetings and answer their questions. Within seven days after holding the hearing

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- ◀ the respective committee shall submit to the Chairperson of the National Assembly a report of the hearing which shall be distributed to the Members of the National Assembly.

Article 102

(1) Officials and members of the public, if invited, shall be bound to appear before the Committees of the National Assembly and to provide any requested information and papers.

(2) The summons for such appearance shall be served by offices of the National Assembly.

OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

A number of other administrative and organizational issues must be completed prior to the hearing (*Appendix 2, Sample Timeline for Organizing a Public Hearing*). This is usually the responsibility of the clerk (*Appendix 1, Checklist for Organizing a Public Hearing*).

Administrative details include the layout of the room (*Appendix 3, Room Layout for a Public Hearing*). For example where will the panel sit; where will witnesses be sat; what space is reserved for the media and personnel from ministries; where do the clerks and any additional support staff sit; and if the hearing is televised where will the cameras be placed?

Equipment and other logistical matters must be decided in advance. This includes: providing equipment such as name tags, writing materials, water, clocks and notebooks; providing all the committee members with an adequate number of information packages and Rules of Procedure, the Law on Parliament and if it is an oversight hearing a copy of the "The Oversight Hearing Process: 33 Steps to Organizing an Oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia;" providing microphones and other audio equipment; and providing an adequate number of witness statements and other materials relevant to the hearing.

PUBLICITY AND THE MEDIA

THE MEDIA

Public hearings are more than information gathering exercises for members of parliament. They are an opportunity for broader public discussion around issues of public interest and serve to raise public awareness of the important work of parliament in seeking legislative solutions to society's problems.

It is often the case that public institutions, and those who manage them, are more likely to respond to an issue that has been widely publicized in the media. In order to publicize the hearing the committee may decide to invite the media and issue a press release (*Template 4, Invitation Letter to the Media* and *Template 6, Press Release*).

The current Rules of Procedure and the Law on Parliament of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia provide access for the media to public hearings and to any documentation presented to the hearing. Some Rules of Procedure of legislatures such as the United States Congress, provide further accessibility whereby public hearings should be open to the general public, as well as radio reporters, TV and photographers, unless a committee decides otherwise.

Hearings may be closed to the public but only for a limited number of specified reasons, e.g. if the information under consideration could compromise national security.

Publicity and the Media

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010.

Article 228

Media representatives shall have at their disposal the acts discussed and adopted by the Assembly, the information and documents regarding the issues debated at the sessions of the Assembly and the working bodies, reports on the activities of the working bodies and minutes from the sessions, unless the Assembly i.e. a working body decides to examine a particular issue without the presence of media representatives.

In organizing a hearing committees need to consider the following in relation to the media:

- Radio and TV coverage of public hearings cannot be used for party-campaign purposes or to promote or discredit a person as a political candidate;
- Media coverage should be in accordance with the acceptable standards of dignity,

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propriety, civility and decency practiced by the parliament;

- The chairperson of the committee should decide on the maximum number of cameras, media representatives and journalists allowed into the hearing and to ensure that adequate and appropriate space and seating is provided;
- TV cameras and reporters must not be placed between the table for witnesses and committee members, and photographers must not be placed in such a way as to hinder the hearing itself;
- TV and radio equipment must be set prior to the beginning of the hearing in positions that remain fixed throughout the hearing;
- Technicians may install additional sources of lighting in the hearing room in order to improve the light during the hearing, but only to the required minimum to ensure effective TV coverage; and
- Journalists must register as attendees (*Template 5, Registration Form*).

Publicity and the Media

Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2010.

Article 231

The Assembly and the working bodies may decide, for the purpose of informing the public on the work of the Assembly, to issue a press release following an Assembly or a working body session held without the presence of the public, i.e. without the presence of the media representatives, as well as in other cases when the Assembly or the working body decide so.

Article 232

A press conference regarding the work of the Assembly shall be held when it is decided by the President of the Assembly, a parliamentary group, working body or head of a delegation following a visit abroad, who shall assign the representative to give the press conference.

BRIEFING PACK

In the United States, chairpersons often require committee staff to prepare for members a briefing pack containing information on the hearing and, as appropriate, summarized or full copies of statements already received. The information given will describe the scope and purpose of the hearing and contain explanations and overviews of all the issues to be considered. The basic information provided may include relevant statutes, provisions, court decisions, news articles, agency reports, academic studies and a chronological overview of key events. This briefing pack may also contain a list of all witnesses, listed

in the order they will be testifying, and summaries of their written statements together with biographies.

A similar but less detailed briefing pack may be given to the media to educate them on the public policy under discussion.

WITNESS TESTIMONY

The success of a public hearing depends very much on the contribution of the witnesses that appear before it. *Appendix 6, Guidance for Witnesses* provides advice that will help witnesses contribute effectively to the outcomes of the hearing.

Witnesses that appear at a public hearing to give an oral testimony are usually required to provide written evidence to committee members in advance of the hearing (*Appendix 4, Sample Written Testimony*).



Government ministers wait their turn to testify before an oversight hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

The committee staff should also let witnesses know if the hearing might necessitate them gathering together information or views, and, if permitted by the president of the committee, the committee clerk may be able to give the witness an informal indication of possible lines of committee inquiry, in order to assist them in preparing for the session. Although one cannot expect the committee to restrict itself to these lines of inquiry.

At the hearing the witness usually provides an opening statement followed by a brief presentation on the written evidence s/he has submitted. The witness then answers questions posed by committee members, before another witness starts her or his testimony. The committee will decide on the format and the sequence of testimonies before

the hearing so that exact times can be stipulated on the invitations sent to witnesses.

Recent public hearing practice in some legislatures involves witness panels where more than one witness from the same or a different organization, present their views, and then committee members ask questions of the entire panel. This public hearing format has proven useful in stimulating discussion and can be an efficient use of time.

Parliamentary practice, involving committees, has developed other ways of gathering suitable information, which are not formally referred to as public hearings. For example, a committee may hold a seminar, during which experts present their opinions on a given subject matter, with opportunities for informal questions and discussions; or a round table discussion which gives committee members and clerks an opportunity for open dialogue with individuals who have knowledge and experience in a particular field.

A decision on the sequence of testimonies during a hearing is at the discretion of the parliamentary committee. In the United States, protocol requires elected representatives who want to testify to speak first, and a similar privilege exists for senior government officials. Celebrity witnesses must be scheduled very carefully, as they may often generate considerable media and public attention, thus their appearance is often scheduled for the beginning of the hearing.

The sequence of testimonies of academics, representatives of educational institutions, CSOs and other citizens should be decided in such a way that the information is provided in a logical, consistent and progressive manner. For example, the committee may decide on a sequence in which one witness might challenge or support the testimony of another.

Government representatives, usually departmental staff, might require clearance from their superiors (Minister or Deputy Minister) when they testify in front of a committee. In order to allow ministry staff to attend a public hearing it is customary to send advance notice and invitations. If clearance is needed for a staff member to testify the invite should be sent in sufficient time for clearance procedures to take place.

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

For public hearings in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia there is currently no rule that states written testimonies must be provided. A written testimony is, however, extremely useful and should be submitted when the witness gives her/his testimony, so that the committee members have something to reference when they make their decision on the matter in hand, and when the committee prepares its report on the hearing.

Written evidence should be submitted in advance so that all committee members can examine and read the statements on a particular issue before the witness testifies. When inviting a witness, the committee clerk will specify whether or not the committee expects to receive a written brief (*Template 2, Invitation Letter to Witnesses*).

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If a written brief or a presentation is required, witnesses may be asked to submit it in advance if circumstances permit. If a presentation is required then the invitation should also detail the equipment available for the witness to make their presentation.

Written Testimony

Rule XI. (2)(g)(5), Rules of the House of Representatives One Hundred Twelfth Congress. U.S. Government Printing Office, House of Representatives, United States, January 2011.

Each committee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, require witnesses who appear before it to submit in advance written statements of proposed testimony and to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof.

There are no rules about the form written evidence should take. The information given below is presented as a good practice guide and is based on what has proven useful to committees in the past.

A written testimony should be accompanied by a covering letter.

The covering letter should contain:

- the name and address of the person (if appropriate), institution, association or organization providing testimony;
- a brief introduction of the persons or organizations submitting evidence, perhaps stating their area of expertise, and other relevant details.

The testimony should be well structured and must contain:

- the factual information they have to offer from which the committee might be able to draw conclusions or which could be put to other witnesses for their reaction;
- any recommendations for action by the government or others which the witness would like the committee to consider for inclusion in its report (*Appendix 4, Sample Written Testimony*).

Written Testimony

Fact sheet P2: Procedure Series, Departmental Select Committees, House of Commons Information Office, revised edition, August 2010.

After publishing its terms of reference, a committee seeks written evidence from interested parties (although anyone can submit relevant information). The government department is also asked to provide detailed written evidence on the inquiry topic. Committees have the power to call for “persons, papers or records”, though these powers do not in general apply to Ministers and their departments. Although the existence of these powers to demand that witnesses attend or that evidence is submitted are an important underpinning of the committees’ role, they are rarely used.

If written evidence is very brief, it can be sent as a letter, but otherwise it is helpful for the evidence to be in the form of a memorandum, with any request to give oral evidence in a covering letter. If the memorandum is particularly lengthy it should have numbered paragraphs, a one-page summary of the main points and, if appropriate, a table of contents (*Appendix 6, Guidance for Witnesses*).



Civil society representative testifies at a public hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

It is important that the written testimony is kept short, is well laid-out and where it cannot be short is organized into sections of main text and appendices as an attachment, and it must be relevant to the hearing.

The preferred form of submission is by e-mail attachment to the Committee's mailbox address as set out in the Press Notice, and shown on the Committee's website. It should be in MS Word; this makes it easier should the Committee decide to print the memorandum. Memoranda can also be submitted on a disk or flash memory card.

Memoranda can also be sent in hard copy. If this is the case it is helpful for future copying if the evidence is simply stapled together rather than put in any complicated type of binding. Numbered endnotes are preferred to footnotes. Material printed in colour should be avoided as much as possible; graphs in particular should not rely on colour to

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indicate different data series. Logos, graphs, tables and diagrams should be in black ink as other colours may not photocopy well. Any separate photographs accompanying the submission should if possible be in black and white and on glossy paper. Submissions should be sent to either the Clerk of the Committee or as instructed in the Press Notice.

Beside written evidence witnesses should bring with them any additional information they feel might prove useful. For example background information on their organization, other sources of information on the subject under review, copies of presentations they are giving etc. If possible they should submit this information in advance or be ready to provide a copy to the committee clerk during the hearing.

ORAL TESTIMONY

Committees sometimes ask witnesses for a brief opening statement. This however is not compulsory and such a statement could, if desired, be included in any written evidence provided.

The witnesses should briefly state their name, unless presented by the chairperson of the committee conducting the hearing, and if applicable their occupation and the type of work their organization does. Each committee should request witnesses to limit their testimonies to a brief presentation of arguments.



Mayor of Skopje testifies before the Committee on Transport, Communications and Environment in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

NDI's "The Oversight Hearing Process: 33 Steps to Organizing an Oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia," recommends that an oral testimony should last for five minutes. The witness can then be asked questions for a further ten minutes. Such time limitations do not apply to legislative hearings, where the tempo of the speaking

and questioning time is largely determined by the chairperson of the committee. In some cases, the chairperson may limit the duration of the testimony or conversely extend the agreed period if more time is needed (*Appendix 6, Guidance for Witnesses*).

Good practice shows time and time again that those witnesses keeping their testimony short and to the point will yield better results than talking for long periods of time. In order to save time and, since written statements are available to the committee, it is usually not needed or recommended for a witness to read her/his entire statement.

Oral Testimony

Rules of the House of Representatives One Hundred Twelfth Congress. U.S. Government Printing Office, House of Representatives, United States, January 2011.

Under House rules, each committee requires witnesses to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof. (House Rule XI, clause 2(g)(5)).

Oral Testimony

Committee Process, Section 3, chapter 1 of 5, Thomas Carr. U.S. Capitol, Committee on Rules Legislative Process Program, 2010.

In practice, chairs of other committees sometimes discourage opening statements in the interest of time, perhaps asking that interested members instead submit opening statements for the printed hearing record.

On some committees the chair has the discretion to determine how long a witness may speak. On the Committee on Agriculture, witnesses may be limited to brief summaries of their statements within the time allotted to them, at the discretion of the chair. Other committees have adopted rules stipulating how long a witness may speak, typically for five minutes. For instance, each witness before the Committee on Resources and the Committee on Science is restricted to a five minute summary of his or her written remarks.

As a committee's time for taking oral evidence is limited, all witnesses, even those whom a committee invites to give oral evidence, are encouraged to submit written evidence. This makes oral evidence hearings more productive, as members have the witnesses' statements in front of them, and means that if witnesses are not called to give oral evidence a Committee still has the benefit of their views (*Appendix 6, Guidance for Witnesses*).

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Oral Testimony

Fact sheet P2: Procedure Series, Departmental Select Committees, House of Commons Information Office, revised edition, August 2010.

Committees invite a limited range of individuals or representatives of organisations to give oral evidence to supplement what has been said in their written evidence. During these sessions Members have the opportunity to gain a deeper insight into the issues and follow-up on points raised by the witness' written evidence. Nearly all evidence sessions are held in public, and transcripts of the session are published on the committee's website soon after the session.

QUESTIONS

The question-and-answer time starts when the witness has finished her/his oral testimony.

Committee members use this time to ask questions and obtain additional information that may support future actions and decisions of the committee. The committee clerk may be asked in advance to prepare questions for the chairperson and other members to ask witnesses. In some cases, the line of questioning may be presented to and discussed with witnesses prior to the hearing.

Committee members should be able to present questions to each witness. Ten minutes is the usual time allowed for questions in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia. This time may be extended by a joint decision of all committee members. The order of questioning by committee members may be determined by the number of seats each party has in parliament, or at the discretion of the chairperson.

NDI's "The Oversight Hearing Process: 33 Steps to Organizing an Oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia foresees ten minutes question-and-answer time for MPs to pose their questions and receive answers. In the event there is insufficient time, the witness should answer the questions in writing.

In order to assist witnesses prepare for the session, and with the agreement of the committee, the committee clerk may give, in advance, some informal indication of possible lines of inquiry, but witnesses should not expect Members to restrict themselves to these.

Committees may also provide witnesses, for their private use, uncorrected copies of evidence already given. Committees should also try to inform witnesses in advance when some research or collection of information or views might be needed to answer questions raised by the committee.

If a witness does not have immediately available the information to answer a question, the committee may ask for this to be submitted in writing afterwards.

Questioning Witnesses

Committee Process, Section 3, chapter 1 of 5, Thomas Carr. U.S. Capitol, Committee on Rules Legislative Process Program, 2010.

The question and answer period which follows a witness's opening statement presents an opportunity for a committee to build a public record and to obtain information to support future committee actions. Committee staff sometimes prepare questions or talking points for committee leaders and other members. In some cases, the expected line of questioning is discussed in advance with witnesses. House rules generally accord committee members five minutes to question each witness until every member has had this opportunity (House Rule XI, clause 2(j)(2)).

In practice, many committees allow an extension of time by unanimous consent, and a few committees, such as Veterans' Affairs, specify this in their rules.

If a witness does not have immediately available the information to answer a question, the committee may ask for this to be submitted in writing afterwards.



Member of Parliament questions a witness during a public hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia.

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Questioning Witnesses

Rule XI. (2)(A)-(C) Rules of the House of Representatives One Hundred Twelfth Congress. U.S. Government Printing Office, House of Representatives, United States, January 2011.

(2)(A) Subject to subdivisions (B) and (C), each committee shall apply the five-minute rule during the questioning of witnesses in a hearing until such time as each member of the committee who so desires has had an opportunity to question each witness.

(B) A committee may adopt a rule or motion permitting a specified number of its members to question a witness for longer than five minutes. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this subdivision shall be equal for the majority party and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

(C) A committee may adopt a rule or motion permitting committee staff for its majority and minority party members to question a witness for equal specified periods. The time for extended questioning of a witness under this subdivision shall be equal for the majority party and the minority party and may not exceed one hour in the aggregate.

REPORTING

TRANSCRIPTS

Each public hearing should, as far as is possible, be electronically recorded and later typed up. The transcript must be true and correct, with technical, grammatical and typing corrections approved by an authorized official.

Witnesses should be sent, by e-mail if possible, the transcript of what they said, so that they can correct it and identify any supplementary information asked for by members of the committee. The transcript will be accompanied by a letter giving details of the limited types of corrections acceptable and the time within which any corrections should be sent. Failure to keep to the timetable for corrections may mean that the evidence is published without any correction. Supplementary information required should be sent in at the same time as the corrections.

It might prove difficult to ensure the recording of all public hearings particularly if the financial and technical resources are not available to record the hearing. Legislatures that lack adequate resources for transcripts should pay particular attention in preparing brief summaries of testimonies that can then accompany the written submissions in the final committee report.

In the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia it is now common practice for committees to arrange a video recording of the hearing. This can be used by the chairperson of the committee and the clerk when preparing the report to review the statements of the witnesses and as a guide to improving the committee's performance during public hearings.

Once transcripts have been approved and signed off by witnesses they should be published and distributed to all members of the committee.

REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

The reporting process includes the preparation and distribution of transcripts of witness testimony to committee members and the production and approval by the committee of its report, which might also include conclusions and recommendations.

Once the committee has exhausted all sources of information and is satisfied that they have heard sufficient testimony they need to agree the format and content of the final report. One option is for the committee clerk to prepare, in cooperation with the chairperson of the committee, a draft report which may if the committee decides, contain conclusions and recommendations, which will be later discussed in the committee and approved by them. The committee may also if it wishes set up a working group to draft conclusions and recommendations.

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The committee also needs to consider what documents if any are to accompany the report. Accompanying documents may include written witness statements, tables, committee research findings and written testimonies submitted by witnesses unable to attend the hearing, as well as witness responses to questions asked by committee members during the hearing.

The final report once agreed by the committee is submitted to the Assembly (in the case of a legislative hearing it contains a copy of the law proposal for the second reading). In the case of oversight hearings the report containing the conclusions and recommendations is also distributed to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.

It is advisable that agreement on the final report, its format and content, and any conclusions or recommendations is reached by consensus among committee members. However, if this is not the case and a large minority in the committee disagrees with the outcome, the committee members may issue a minority report which differs from the official report of the committee.

Reporting and Record Keeping

Law on the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, 2009.

Article 23

- (1) The oversight hearing shall be recorded electronically and minutes shall be kept; while technical and other corrections shall be done in agreement with the person that has given a statement.
- (2) The working body shall prepare a report from the hearing and shall submit it to the Assembly; the report shall contain the essence of the presentations and it may contain conclusions which shall be distributed to the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.
- (3) The conclusions from the oversight hearing shall be posted on the web site of the Assembly.

Reporting and Record Keeping

Rule XI. (e)(1)(A) Rules of the House of Representatives One Hundred Twelfth Congress. U.S. Government Printing Office, House of Representatives, United States, January 2011.

Each committee shall keep a complete record of all committee action which shall include:

- (i) In the case of a meeting or hearing transcript, a substantially verbatim account of remarks actually made during the proceedings, subject only to technical, grammatical and typographical correction authorized by the person making the remarks involved;
- (ii) a record of the votes on any question on which a record vote is demanded.

When a Committee has concluded its deliberations and agreed a report it may decide to issue embargoed copies up to 48 hours in advance of publication. Instructions for obtaining such copies will be sent to those concerned, normally in the press notice announcing publication.

The Committee may also decide to hold a press conference. While these are primarily for the press they are held in public and witnesses may attend. Details are normally given at the same time as publication is announced.

Reports

Fact sheet P2: Procedure Series, Departmental Select Committees, House of Commons Information Office, revised edition, August 2010.

All select committees shall have power to authorize the Clerk of the House to supply copies of reports to officers of government departments, to such witnesses who have given evidence to committees or to their sub-committees as those committees consider appropriate, to lobby journalists, and to such other press representatives as the committee thinks fit, after those reports have been laid upon the Table but not more than forty eight hours before the intended time for publication of such reports. All select committees having power to send for persons, papers and records shall have power to publish the names of the persons who have appeared to witness before them, and to authorize the publication by the witnesses concerned or otherwise of memoranda of evidence submitted to them.

Once written evidence has been submitted to the hearing it is for the committee to decide the manner and timing of its publication and the committee's permission (which is often given) is required if witnesses wish to distribute or publish such evidence before the committee has decided to publish its final report. Witnesses should therefore consult the clerk in advance if they wish to publish their evidence.

If a witness gives oral evidence, and she/he has submitted written evidence it will usually be made available to the press and public at the hearing, and may thereafter be treated as in the public domain. Written evidence which is not the subject of a hearing may not be published until considerably later, or at all (the restriction on publication does not, of course, apply to material already published elsewhere which is simply sent to the committee for information and which will not normally be reprinted by the committee).

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1, Checklist for Organizing a Public Hearing

Appendix 2, Sample Timeline for Organizing a Public Hearing

Appendix 3, Room Layout for a Public Hearing

Appendix 4, Sample Written Testimony

Appendix 5, Guidance for the Chairperson

Appendix 6, Guidance for Witnesses

Appendix 7, The Oversight Hearing Process - 33 Steps to Organizing an Oversight Hearing in the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia

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APPENDIX 1, CHECKLIST FOR ORGANIZING A PUBLIC HEARING

BEFORE THE HEARING

Progress		Action	Comments
✓	N/A		
Before the hearing		Has all the relevant information been sent to the chairperson?	
		Has all the relevant information been sent to committee members?	
		Has all the relevant information been sent to witnesses?	
		Has all the relevant information been sent to the media?	
		Have you booked the hearing venue? Have you obtained the key to the room?	
		Is there a need to hire a photographer?	
		Is the room prepared with seats, tables, a backdrop and has catering been organized?	
		Do witnesses need transportation to and from the hearing, or expenses for a hotel?	
		Do the microphones work?	
		Is there a sign-in desk?	
		Are notices, nameplates and any directional signs needed, properly displayed?	
		Do witnesses know where to go, what they are expected to say, how long they are expected to speak, and what time they will be able to leave?	
	Will witnesses be offered food and drink?		

✓ - Action complete (it may be useful, if appropriate, to insert the date the action was completed in this box).

N/A - Action not applicable

AFTER THE HEARING

Progress			Action	Comments
	✓	N/A		
After the hearing			Thank, in writing, your witnesses and any others who helped	
			Send any follow up information, reports, etc to attendees and to those non-attendees who also need to be informed	
			Phone target journalists and tell them about the hearing	
			Ensure that all witnesses' expenses have been covered and that the costs of hiring the hall and the catering have been settled	
			Follow up on any other action that needs to be taken as a result of the hearing	
			Arrange for a small working group to evaluate the success of the hearing and plan for the next one	

✓ - Action complete (it may be useful, if appropriate, to insert the date the action was completed in this box).

N/A - Action not applicable

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APPENDIX 2, SAMPLE TIMELINE FOR ORGANIZING A PUBLIC HEARING

Progress		Action	Comments
✓	N/A		
Before the hearing		10 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING:	
		Set a date and time for the public hearing	
		Arrange a venue and a room for the hearing	
		Confirm the list of witnesses and questions with the committee (or the committee chairperson in the absence of the entire committee)	
		9 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING:	
		Prepare and send invitations to witnesses	
		Arrange for translation and transcription personnel and equipment	
		8 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING:	
		Prepare the press announcement and get the approval of the chairperson for its release	
		7 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING:	
		Prepare an agenda and submit it to the chairperson for approval	
		Prepare a briefing pack and send it to members of the committee	
		Confirm attendance of invited witnesses and members of the committee	
		5 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING:	
		Send approved press announcement to the media	
	3 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING:		
	Confirm all logistics are ready for the hearing		
	2 DAYS BEFORE THE HEARING:		
	Prepare briefing pack for the press Assemble witness list and photocopy		
	1 DAY BEFORE THE HEARING:		

			Provide written submissions to members of the committee	
			DAY OF THE PUBLIC HEARING:	
			Provide briefing pack to media attending the hearing	
			Ensure extra copies of materials are available	
			AFTER THE HEARING:	
			Review the transcript of the hearing	
			Summarize the testimony from the hearing and produce a list of recommendations	
			Based on the recommendations of the committee, produce a draft report	
			Finalize the recommendations and the report and get final approval from the committee	
			Follow up the recommendations and keep the committee chair and members informed of progress	

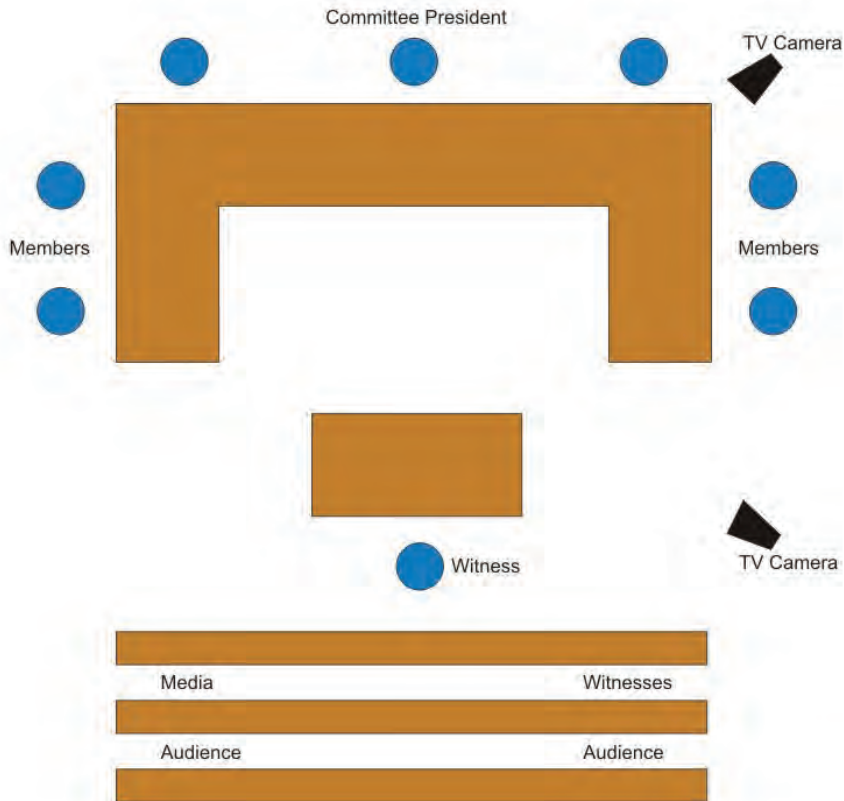
✓ - Action complete (it may be useful, if appropriate, to insert the date the action was completed in this box).

N/A - Action not applicable

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APPENDIX 3, ROOM LAYOUT FOR A PUBLIC HEARING



APPENDIX 4, SAMPLE WRITTEN TESTIMONY



September 7, 2011

To the Committee on Health,
Opposing the Amendments to the Law on Pensions and Health Insurance
Aleksandra Velkovska - Executive Director, HIFA (Health Insurance for All) Project Health,
Insurance for the Unemployed.

Honorable Chairperson, distinguished committee members I would like to thank you for the opportunity to address the committee in relation to the newly proposed amendments to the Law on Pensions and Health Insurance.

In order to maintain adequate and full health protection for the unemployed, HIFA strongly urges you not to amend the existing legislation on Health and Pension Insurance and to reject the amendments proposed by Members of Parliament coming from the NO-CARE Party.

HIFA does not support the proposed measures because they will not provide, free of charge, health protection for all citizens that are currently unemployed. As you are aware, under existing legislation unemployed citizens are entitled to free of charge health protection providing they are registered with the Unemployment Bureau. The amendments proposed by the NO-CARE Party will restrict access to these health benefits for unemployed citizens who have been out of work for more than 3 years.

Currently this country has 357,000 registered unemployed. We are undergoing major privatization and structural changes in many sectors and the transition is affecting a large number of citizens who have been made redundant due to these changes. Most of those unemployed have difficulties in gaining new qualifications that will enable them to find new jobs.

According to data that my organization HIFA has collected over 20,000 persons, currently unemployed, had jobs in the engineering, metalwork and mining industries. Due to difficult work conditions and poor health protection many of them now require ongoing health protection and much of this can be accessed free of charge through the public health system. Most of these unemployed have been registered with the Unemployment Bureau for more than 3 years.

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If the amendments proposed by the NO-CARE Party are passed not only will all those unemployed for more than 3 years lose the right to free health protection but a large number of unemployed that require ongoing health protection will also lose their benefits. This will provide further misery and hardship to the most vulnerable in our society. Namely workers who have served their industry and society well and who now find themselves unemployed and suffering ill health through no fault of their own.

We have an obligation to care for the unemployed and provide them with adequate and free of charge health protection in the public health system. In order to maintain this protection I strongly urge you not to support the proposed amendments. Thank you for your attention to this highly important issue for our unemployed citizens.
Aleksandra Velkovska

Executive Director
HIFA

APPENDIX 5, GUIDANCE FOR THE CHAIRPERSON

The following guidance will help ensure a successful public hearing:

- Be prepared! Two weeks before the hearing check with the Committee Clerk that timely and proper notice is being provided to committee members, witnesses and the media;
- Two days before the hearing check with the committee clerk that all the administrative and organizational preparations, related to the hearing and the layout of the room, have been carried out;
- Check with the clerk that the recording equipment is working properly and that there is an ample supply of blank tapes. Stop any testimony during tape changes;
- Begin the hearing on time, and if possible finish on time. If the hearing is going to go on beyond the allowed time consider adjourning it and continuing on another day;
- At the start of the proceedings clearly explain the purpose of the hearing and introduce your fellow committee members;
- Be firm, but fair, in your management of the hearing. Have clear ground rules for conducting proceedings and make sure that all participants are aware of these;
- Develop an inclusive atmosphere that encourages people to participate in the proceedings. Where appropriate provide support and encouragement to witnesses that appear nervous and unsure about their role and about speaking in public;
- Keep order in the hearing and limit testimony where necessary, but maintain an impartial attitude;
- Make sure all witnesses identify themselves for the record;
- Make sure that every person or group (via a spokesperson) that wishes to speak has that opportunity;
- Ask questions of staff and people who testify.

APPENDIX 6, GUIDANCE FOR WITNESSES

- Confirm your invitation to attend the hearing both by telephone and in writing (letter or email);
- Plan your testimony. You will be more effective getting your message across if you have prepared your testimony in writing;
- An invitation to attend a hearing often contains a request for written evidence. If written evidence is requested it should:
 - be short and concise and, if possible, not exceed eight pages. Where it is longer than eight pages a summary should be provided
 - keep to the terms of reference of the hearing, concentrate on factual information, be specific in references to legislation (both existing and proposed) and be supportive of the verbal testimony you will give when you appear before the committee
 - be submitted at least two weeks in advance of the hearing when circumstances permit, so that the brief can be distributed to committee members for their consideration. Witnesses are encouraged to submit briefs electronically where possible
 - also be provided, if possible, on disc, formatted in Microsoft Word;
- Arrive early at the hearing in plenty of time to sign in so the committee knows you are present. Each committee runs their hearings differently, but the first hour (or more) of the hearing is usually reserved for public officials - other legislators, agency representatives, other elected officials. Then the committee chairs begin calling speakers from the public sign up list, usually in the order you signed up. If you have a disability or a special need, talk to the committee staff in advance of the committee so that your need can be met;
- When you are called to speak remember:
 - identify who you are and, if you represent a group, give the name of the group
 - you have only a short time to speak (usually no longer than 5 minutes), but do not rush (your words may be being interpreted and are being recorded by parliamentary reporters) and if you use less than your allotted time don't worry that's OK
 - when told that your time is over, finish the sentence, thank the committee and stop
 - to use your speaking time to summarize your points and refer the committee members to your written testimony for more details
 - that speaking from your own experience is most persuasive. Try not to just repeat other speakers' remarks
 - that after you have finished committee members may have questions for you.

Answer briefly and accurately. If you don't know an answer, say so and tell them that you will get back to them

- to be polite and respectful. Do not disparage anyone who testifies against your position. Point out the differences, answer any concerns, but do not get personal
- don't be offended if legislators come and go during the meeting. They have other simultaneous commitments including the need to be present in other meetings during the day;
- After the hearing write a thank you letter to the committee, again attaching a copy of your testimony, and any updates or answers to questions that you promised to provide.

APPENDIX 7, THE PROCESS OF OVERSIGHT HEARINGS – 33 STEPS TO ORGANIZING AN OVERSIGHT HEARING IN THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Requesting an Oversight Hearing

A request to hold an oversight hearing may be made by one member of a committee, in writing, to the president of the committee.

The president of the committee must put the request as item one on the agenda of the next session of the committee.

This committee session must be held no later than ten working days from the submission of the written request. At that same session the president must put the request to the vote.

The decision to hold the oversight hearing requires a majority vote from the members present provided at least one third of the membership of the committee is present at the meeting. The oversight hearing must be held within 15 days of the decision being made. If the outcome of the committee vote is not to hold an oversight hearing, then 15 MPs can request in writing, to the president of the committee, and through the President of the Assembly, to hold an oversight hearing. In this case, the president of the committee must immediately convene the hearing.

The President of the Assembly, with the Vice-Presidents and Coordinators of the Parliamentary Groups, will make an annual projection for the holding of oversight hearings in terms of their number. In making this projection they will consider the resources and means available for the holding of such hearings. They may also recommend the holding of certain oversight hearings to the president and members of a particular committee. The holding of oversight hearings is regulated by the Law on the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia (Articles 20, 21, 22, 23, 24)

Organizing an Oversight Hearing – The 33 Steps

- 1 The committee clerk, on hearing of the request to hold an oversight hearing, collects together the templates and documents needed to organize such a hearing, including a copy of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia and the Law on Parliament of the Republic of Macedonia.
- 2 The committee brings a decision to hold an oversight hearing.
- 3 The committee reaches agreement on a date and time to start the hearing and identifies those representatives/witnesses from the Government and other

state bodies that are to be called to testify.

- 4 The president of the committee notifies, in writing, the President of the Assembly of the date and time for the holding of the hearing.
- 5 The president of the committee requests the President of the Assembly to send a letter to the Government notifying them of both the intention to hold an oversight hearing, and of the committee's decision on which representatives/witnesses from Government and other state bodies are to be called to testify.

This letter is to be accompanied by a copy of the letter from the president of the committee to the President of the Assembly listing the people that are to be called to testify.

- 6 The committee clerk books a room (usually the Boris Trajkovski Hall) and asks the Protocol Department to prepare the hall according to the agreed arrangements for holding an oversight hearing.

The seating arrangements for committee members are prepared by Protocol, but the president of the committee should finalize and approve it, bearing in mind the comparative status of: Vice-Presidents of the Assembly; Coordinators of Parliamentary Groups; Members of Parliament and their history of parliamentary experience and their membership of major/minor opposition parliamentary groups etc. The seating arrangements for witnesses are also prepared by the Protocol Department, again taking into account the comparative status of government representatives and the other invited witnesses.

- 7 The committee clerk updates, as needed, and distributes to all members of the committee (in consultation with the president of the committee), the forms, templates and documents referred to in step one, together with basic information on the holding of the oversight hearing.
- 8 The committee clerk notifies the Translation Department of the translation/interpretation needs that will have to be met during the hearing.
- 9 The president of the committee consults committee members on the selection of other representatives/witnesses who are to be called to testify at the oversight hearing.

Other possible witnesses might include, for example, stakeholders from civil society organizations and from the academic community - experts who can provide information on the issues that are the subject of the hearing. The decision on which witnesses to call will be made from separate lists prepared by the committee's government and opposition members. The president of the committee will pull both lists together to create a final list of witnesses. Every member of the committee has the right to propose witnesses for the oversight hearing.

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- 10 The Government confirms, in writing, the list of Government and other state body representatives/witnesses requested by Parliament to testify at the hearing.
- 11 The president of the committee, on receiving a reply from the Government, sends an invitation (written and electronic) to the representatives/witnesses from the Government and other state bodies.

The invitation informs the representatives/witnesses of the subject of the hearing and gives them the opportunity to submit, in advance, written testimony outlining the information they want committee members to be aware of as well as their opinions and views on the issue. The written testimony should be submitted no later than three days before the date of the hearing.

- 12 The president of the committee sends an invitation (written and electronic) to the other representatives/witnesses that the committee wishes to hear from.

The invitation informs the representatives/witnesses of the subject of the hearing and gives them the opportunity to submit, in advance, written testimony outlining the information they want committee members to be aware of as well as their opinions and views on the issue. The written testimony should be submitted no later than three days before the date of the hearing.

- 13 The committee clerk confirms, by telephone and e-mail, receipt of the invitations, by the representatives/witnesses and their availability to attend the hearing.

The invited representatives/witnesses are bound by law to appear before the hearing. If they are unable to attend due to legitimate reasons, they have to notify the committee in writing, which will then determine an alternative date for their appearance before the committee.

- 14 The committee clerk in consultation with the president of the committee prepares the order in which representatives/witnesses will give testimony at the hearing.

- 15 The committee clerk gives the list of representatives/witnesses invited to attend the hearing to the parliamentary services responsible for security and access and to the Protocol Department.

- 16 The committee clerk notifies the parliamentary service(s) responsible for: organizing a phonographic record of the hearing; the minutes; the broadcasting of proceedings on the parliamentary television channel; and the placing of photographs on the Parliament's website.

- 17 The committee clerk arranges, for those representatives/witnesses who want to receive it, an informal briefing on the oversight hearing process.
- 18 The committee clerk prepares a “script” for the president of the committee, based on the order of appearance of representatives/witnesses at the hearing.
- 19 The committee clerk sends invitations and materials to the committee members who will be present at the hearing.
- 20 The committee clerk sends invitations to the President and Vice-Presidents of the Assembly, as well as to the coordinators of the parliamentary groups.
- 21 The committee clerk sends invitations to other committees that might be interested in the hearing.
- 22 The president of the committee holds a short coordination meeting with the members of the committee to ensure all members are aware of practice with respect to timing - committee members may also want to discuss the possible questions that should be posed to the representatives/witnesses.

Each representative/witness has five minutes to give their presentation after which committee members and other members of parliament have ten minutes to pose questions to the representative/witness.
- 23 The committee clerk arranges for a notice to be posted on the Assembly website of the impending oversight hearing.
- 24 The committee clerk notifies the catering services of the requirements to be met during the oversight hearing.
- 25 The oversight hearing is held. The president of the committee, at the start of the hearing, reminds committee members that members of parliament who are not members of the committee also have the right to pose questions to representatives/witnesses.
- 26 The committee clerk ensures that as the hearing progresses written information on the oversight hearing is published on the Assembly website together with other basic information about the event.
- 27 The committee decides at the end of each day’s proceedings and after considering the statements that have been given, and all other submitted materials and information, whether there is a need to further invite other witnesses or to clarify certain issues by requesting additional information.
- 28 The committee clerk sends, at the end of each day’s proceedings, copies of all written statements, submitted materials and information to all the members of

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the committee (preferably in electronic form).

- 29 The committee clerk, once the committee has exhausted all sources of information and is satisfied that they have heard sufficient testimony, prepares in cooperation with the president of the committee, draft conclusions and recommendations to be discussed and approved by the committee.

The committee may if it wishes set up a working group to draft conclusions and recommendations .

- 30 The committee prepares a draft report to submit to the Assembly. The report incorporates summaries of the statements received and includes the conclusions and recommendations of the committee. The report is approved by the committee and submitted to the Assembly.
- 31 The committee clerk sends copies of the conclusions and recommendations to all interested parties.
- 32 The president of the committee sends a written thank you to the representatives/witnesses for their participation in the hearing.
- 33 The committee follows up on the implementation of any conclusions and recommendations.

TEMPLATES

Template 1, Invitation Letter to Committee Members

Template 2, Invitation Letter to Witnesses

Template 3, Sample Witness Card

Template 4, Invitation Letter to the Media

Template 5, Registration Form

Template 6, Press Release

Template 7, Information Sheet for an Oversight Hearing

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TEMPLATE 1, INVITATION LETTER TO COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Respected member (insert name of the MP)

I am inviting you to take part in the public hearing on the following:

(insert details of the subject of the hearing)

This matter is of high importance to the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia and I believe that it is important to hear the opinions of distinguished experts, concerned organizations and the wider Macedonian public regarding the above.

The public hearing will take place on *(insert day, date, month, year, time)* at *(insert address)*. The committee has invited *(insert number)* witnesses representing various organizations and institutions to participate at the hearing and provide their comments and suggestions to committee members. Presentations from witnesses will be limited to *(insert number of minutes)* minutes and committee members will have *(insert number of minutes)* minutes to ask questions. Enclosed please find the list of invited witnesses and the timetable for testimonies.

For any further information please contact the Clerk of the Committee *(insert name and surname)* on:

Tel: *(insert telephone number)* or

Fax: *(insert fax number)* or

E-mail: *(insert E-mail)*

With respect,

(insert name and signature)

Chairperson of the Committee for (insert name of the committee)

TEMPLATE 2, INVITATION LETTER TO WITNESSES

Dear Ms/Mr. *(insert name of the invitee)*

On behalf of the Committee for *(insert name of the Committee)* I would like to invite you to take part in the public hearing on the following:

(insert details of the subject of the hearing)

(insert details of legal reference, Rules of procedure or Law on parliament regarding their participation)

I believe that a public hearing is an excellent opportunity for the representatives of non-governmental organizations, academic experts, citizen's organizations, various associations and lobby groups to express their opinions and comments on the above.

The public hearing will take place on *(insert day, date, month, year, time)* at *(insert address)*. Individual witness testimonies will be limited to *(insert number)* minutes with the opportunity for committee members to ask additional questions for another *(insert number)* minutes.

If you are interested in participating in this public hearing please complete and return the attached registration form. Only registered participants will have the right to participate in the hearing and provide comments to committee members. On receiving your registration form we will notify you of the exact time when you will be able to present your comments to committee members (this paragraph is not valid for oversight hearings, since the participation of witnesses is mandatory).

If you decide to participate in this public hearing please provide an electronic version of your presentation/statement/comments by *(insert date and time)* to the clerk of the committee. This will help the committee and committee members in their preparations for the hearing.

Please send the completed registration form to *(insert name)* Clerk of the Committee *(insert the name of the committee)* by *(insert date and time)*:

Fax: *(insert fax number)* or

E-mail: *(insert E-mail)*

For any further information please contact the Clerk of the Committee *(insert name)* on:

Tel: *(insert telephone number)* or

Fax: *(insert fax number)* or

E-mail: *(insert E-mail)*

With respect,

(insert name and signature)

Chairperson of the Committee for *(insert name of the committee)*

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TEMPLATE 3, SAMPLE WITNESS CARD

WITNESS CARD

To be completed by the Committee Clerk:

Committee: _____ Date: _____

Hearing: _____

To be completed by the witness:

Please indicate below which of the three options you wish to take

1. I would like to speak ()

() in support () in opposition () information only

I will also provide additional written testimony YES / NO

Or 2. I will provide information, if requested ()

I will also provide additional written information if required YES / NO

Or 3. Although I would not like to speak or provide written information, I am:

() in support () in opposition

Name: _____

please print

Representing: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: () _____
area code

TEMPLATE 4, INVITATION LETTER TO THE MEDIA

To the editor (*insert name of media*):

The Committee for (*insert name of the committee*) intends to hold a public hearing on the following:

(insert details of the subject of the hearing)

The public hearing will take place on (*insert day, date, month, year, time*) at (*insert address*).

(*insert number of witnesses*) witnesses have been invited to provide written and oral statements to the committee.

Your newspaper/TV/radio station (*delete as appropriate*) is also invited to attend the hearing and cover the event. In order to register your intention to attend please return the attached registration form or contact the Clerk of the Committee for (*insert name of committee*), (*insert name and office address*) on:

Tel: (*insert telephone number*) or

Fax: (*insert fax number*) or

E-mail: (*insert E-mail*)

With respect,

(insert name and signature)

Chairperson of the Committee for (*insert name of the committee*)

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TEMPLATE 5, REGISTRATION FORM

Committee for
(insert name of the committee)

REGISTRATION FORM

Dear Mr/Ms *(insert name of the addressee)*

I would like to attend the public hearing organized by the Committee for *(insert name of the committee)*

I would like to attend as a:
(please mark one of the options)

- witness
- observer
- media representative

First Name / Surname:

Job Title:

Name of the organization you represent:

Your contact information:

Tel:

Fax:

Email:

If you are attending as a witness we would ask that you supply electronically if possible, a copy of your presentation/statement/ comments in advance to the committee clerk. If this creates difficulties, please don't hesitate to contact the committee clerk for advice.

Contact person, Clerk of the Committee for *(insert name of the committee)*

Fax: *(insert fax number)*

E-mail: *(insert E-mail)*

Please send this form by:

Fax: *(insert fax number)*

E-mail: *(insert E-mail)*

TEMPLATE 6, PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Insert date)

PUBLIC HEARING: COMMITTEE FOR

(insert the name of the committee)

The committee for *(insert the name of the committee)* held a public hearing on the following:
(insert details of the subject of the hearing)

During the hearing *(insert number of witnesses)* witnesses from the government and a wide range of organizations testified in front of the committee. A Report from this hearing will be presented to committee members at the committee session that will be held on *(insert date, time and venue)*.

"This public hearing....."
(insert statement by the committee president)

For more detailed information on the public hearing please contact the clerk of the Committee for *(insert name of the committee)*, *(insert name)* on:

Tel: *(insert telephone number)* or

Fax: *(insert fax number)* or

E-mail: *(insert E-mail)*

With respect,

(insert name and signature)
Chairperson of the Committee for *(insert name of the committee)*

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TEMPLATE 7, INFORMATION SHEET FOR A PUBLIC HEARING

ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

COMMITTEE NAME

GENERAL INFORMATION

OVERSIGHT HEARING ON : "TITLE OF THE HEARING"

Topic

Title	
Proposed Date	
Relevant Legislation and/or Policies	

Justification for Oversight

--

Committee

Relevant Parliamentary Committee			
Committee President (and Party)		Contact Information	
Committee Member (and Party)		Contact Information	

Committee Clerk			
-----------------	--	--	--

Government

Relevant Ministry(s)		Contact Information	
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Relevant Government Agency(s) or other bodies		Contact Information	
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Stakeholders/Witnesses

Name	Institution/Organisation	Contact Information

NOTES



NATIONAL
DEMOCRATIC
INSTITUTE
FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
