



Questions for the Record (QFRs): What They Are and Why They Matter

What is a QFR?

Questions for the Record (QFRs) are written questions submitted by Members of Congress to witnesses following a hearing. They allow Members to request additional information, clarification, or documentation that was not fully addressed during the live proceeding.

Why Do QFRs Matter?

QFRs are an important oversight and policymaking tool Members of Congress use to:

- **Extend oversight beyond the hearing.** Time constraints limit live questioning; QFRs allow Members to pursue deeper lines of inquiry.
- **Build the official record.** Responses are formally entered into the hearing record and may be cited in future legislative or oversight work.
- **Ensure accountability.** Agencies and witnesses must provide precise, on-the-record answers.
- **Inform policymaking.** QFR responses can shape appropriations decisions, authorizations, and report language.

How Does the QFR Process Work?

After a hearing, the QFR process follows a set of steps that typically includes:

- **Submission.** After a hearing, committee staff circulate a deadline for Members to submit QFRs, often within a few days. Questions commonly seek clarification of testimony or data cited during the hearing; updates on programs, funding, or implementation; justification for budget requests or policy decisions; or commitments to provide additional materials or follow-up briefings.
- **Transmission to witnesses.** The committee compiles and sends QFRs to witnesses, typically with a response deadline of two to four weeks.
- **Agency or witness response.** Executive branch agencies coordinate internally to draft and clear responses.
- **Committee review and publication.** Responses are submitted to the committee and included in the official hearing record.



QFRs and Advocacy

Advocates can play a meaningful role in shaping both hearing questions and QFRs. Congressional offices often rely on stakeholders to flag information gaps, emerging issues, or areas where additional clarity would be helpful.

Following the hearing, stakeholders may suggest potential QFRs, particularly on topics that were not fully explored during the live exchange. They may also provide background materials or suggested questions in advance to help inform Member engagement. Being timely, specific, and aligned with a Member's priorities increases the likelihood that an issue is raised, either during the hearing or through the QFR process.