



"How does a bill become a law?"

1. Bill Introduction

The first step in creating the laws we live by is for a representative or senator to write the bill. After the bill is drafted, it is then introduced by the author in either the House or the Senate. The author of the bill tries to get as many other representatives and senators as possible to support the bill in hopes of making it a law.

2. First Reading

The bill is presented to the House or the Senate and assigned to a committee.

3. Committee Reading

After a bill has been assigned to a committee, the committee will talk about what's good and bad about the bill. The public can attend a committee meeting and offer input on the proposal. After hearing public testimony and talking about the bill, the committee will decide if it's one that should become law. At this time, they can make any necessary changes to the bill. From there, the committee votes to pass the bill on to the full House or Senate for more study.

4. Second Reading

Once a bill has been approved by a committee, legislators receive a copy of it at least two days before second reading. The author or any legislator can try to amend, or change the bill. A majority (half plus one) is required to approve an amendment.

5. Third Reading

At this stage, the full House or Senate will vote to approve or defeat the bill. Again, a majority, which is 51 votes in the House and 26 votes in the Senate, is needed to approve a bill.

IF A BILL MAKES IT HERE, IT'S A LAW!

8. The Governor

The governor has several options when he receives a bill. He can sign the bill into law, veto (reject) it, or do nothing. If he does nothing, the bill will become law without his signature in seven days. Legislators can override vetoes with a majority vote.

7. Conference Committees

After the bill has been considered by the other chamber, three things can happen:

- (A) If no changes have been made, it's sent to the governor.
- (B) If the bill is amended in the second house, it must return to the house it began in so the changes can be approved or turned down. If the changes are agreed upon, the bill goes to the governor. However, if the majority of the original house disagrees, the bill is sent to a conference committee for more discussion. A conference committee is made up of two representatives and two senators. These four legislators study the bill and come up with an agreement which is then voted on by both houses. If both houses approve the amended bill, it's sent to the governor.
- (C) The bill can be killed.

6. The Other Chamber

If the bill is approved in the house of origin, it moves to the second house, or chamber, where it goes through the same process again. All approved House bills move to the Senate and all approved Senate bills move to the House. At this time, the bill may be approved, amended or defeated.

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