

Veto sustain	Veto sustained
w/o Rec	Majority; without recommendation

Appendix D—Overview of the Legislative Process

Step	Explanation
Prefiled Bills	Members can prefile bills in the month before session begins. The House and Senate have different dates for prefiling bills. Prefiled bills will be officially introduced the first day of the session.
Introduction First Reading of Bills	<p>The first thing that happens to bills on the floor is introduction and first reading. Bills must have three readings in each house in order to pass the Legislature.</p> <p>Bills are referred to committee on first reading. Leadership determines which committee will hear which bills. This is usually influenced by the subject matter of a bill. Bills that require an appropriation or raise revenue usually go to a fiscal committee after they have been reviewed by a policy committee. When bills are introduced, a motion is made to refer the bills to the committees designated. The motion may be altered by the members on the floor.</p>
Committee Action	<p>The chair of each committee works with leadership and staff to schedule bills to be heard by the committee. Committees hold three kinds of meetings: (1) work sessions, where issues are determined and reviewed; (2) public hearings, where testimony from interested parties is taken; and (3) executive sessions, where the committee decides how it will report the bill to the whole house. Not all bills get scheduled for hearing, so many bills never get out of committee.</p> <p>Bills can be reported in several ways, the most usual being “do pass” (pass the bill just as it is), “do pass as amended” (pass the bill as amended by the committee), and “do pass substitute” (the committee offers a different version to take the place of the original bill). The members sign the majority report; those members who disagree with the majority may sign a minority report or they may just sign as “do not pass.” Most bills reported out of committee do not have minority reports.</p> <p>As a bill moves through the committee process, the staff prepares the bill report. The bill report includes a legislative history of the bill, the background of the issue, a summary of the legislation, the names of those who testified on the bill, and a summary of the testimony for and against the bill. The bill report is edited as the bill moves through the process. When the bill moves to the opposite house, that house also prepares a bill report. A bill that passes the Legislature will have a House Bill Report, Senate Bill Report, and a Final Bill Report.</p> <p>At the beginning of the session, both houses agree on dates by which bills have to be reported out of committee in order to be eligible for further consideration by the Legislature. There is a cut-off date for bills to be out of committee in the first house and one for bills to be out of committee in the second house.</p>
Committee Reports	After a bill is reported out of committee, it is brought to the floor to be read or reported on the floor, where it will be referred to Rules Committee

	or to another standing committee.
Rules Committee	<p>When a bill has been reported out of committee, the floor acts on the committee report and then passes the bill to the Rules Committee, or the bill may be referred to another standing committee.</p> <p>It is within the Rules Committee that leadership can exercise the most control over the process. The Rules Committee is made up of members from both parties in proportion to their strength in the chamber. Each member on the committee gets to select two or three bills that will move on to the next step in the process. The bills a member selects could be the result of a party caucus, or another member approaching that member, or a piece of legislation about which the member feels strongly.</p>
Rules Review Rules White	The first step in the Rules Committee process is called Rules Review in the House and Rules White in the Senate (the report that lists the bills in this step in the Senate is printed on white paper). Rules Committee members review the bills and decide whether or not to move them on to the next step.
Rules Consideration Rules Green	The next step is called Rules Consideration in the House and Rules Green in the Senate (the report is printed on green paper). It is another step where leadership can exercise control of the process. (Sometimes bills skip this step and are placed on the calendar for second reading directly from Rules Review or Rules White.)
Calendars Bill Report Books	<p>The Rules Committee decides when bills will be scheduled for second reading. The bills which will probably require some debate are placed on the regular calendar. The Rules Committee also decides whether a bill will be placed on the regular calendar or on the suspension/consent calendar. Bills that are probably not controversial are placed on the suspension calendar in the House, and on the consent calendar in the Senate.</p> <p>Each house prepares documents that list the bills scheduled to be heard on the floor. The House prepares bill report books (containing an order of contents and a bill report for each bill on the calendar) and floor calendars (a list of the bills, a short title for each, and the committee recommendation for each). The Senate prepares calendars (with a table of contents and the bill report for each bill) and flash calendars (the list with the brief descriptions and committee recommendations for each bill).</p>
Second Reading of Bills	<p>It is on second reading that the merits of legislation are discussed on the floor. It is here, too, where members can offer amendments to the bill or to amendments that were adopted in committee.</p> <p>If a bill has been amended in committee and those amendments are adopted on the floor, or if floor amendments have been adopted in the (first) house of origin, the bill is ordered engrossed. Engrossing a bill means incorporating the amendments into the body of the bill so that the second house gets one complete document.</p> <p>If a bill from the first house has been amended in the second house, it is returned to the first house with the amendments attached, so that the first house can decide whether or not it wishes to agree with the changes made by the second house.</p>
Third Reading of Bills Seventh Order of Business	It is on third reading that the roll call vote on final passage is taken. If the bill passes, it continues in the process. If the bill fails on final passage, it goes no further. In controversial matters, the house may decide to reconsider the vote that was taken. The house must vote on the motion to reconsider the vote by which the bill passed or failed to pass. If the motion to reconsider passes, the house has twenty-four hours in which to take another final passage vote.

	<p>At the beginning of the session, both houses agree to several dates by which bills have to be passed out of the houses of origin and finally passed out of the second (opposite) houses. These dates are called cutoff dates.</p>
<p>Concurrence Calendar Bills in Dispute Conference Committees</p>	<p>If the bill has been amended by the second house, the first house has to decide whether or not it will concur in the amendments. Leadership decides which bills that were returned from the second house will be discussed and places those bills on the concurrence calendar (House) or concurring calendar (Senate). If the first house concurs in the amendments, a final passage vote on the bill as amended by the other house is taken. The bill has then passed the Legislature.</p> <p>If the first house disagrees with the second house (bills in dispute), it can ask the second house to recede from its amendments. If the second house recedes, it will take a vote without the amendments; the bill has then passed the Legislature. A bill may go back and forth between houses several times.</p> <p>If the two houses cannot resolve their differences, one of them can ask for a conference on the bill. If both houses agree to a conference, each house appoints members to be on the conference committee and they will try to resolve the differences. If they agree on a solution, the conference committee writes a report relating to the compromise. If both houses adopt the conference committee report, a vote is taken in both houses on final passage as recommended by the conference committee or as amended by the conference committee. If both houses adopt the conference committee report, a final passage vote is taken. If one house does not adopt the conference committee report (whether by vote or by inaction), the bill has not passed.</p>
<p>Enrolling a Bill</p>	<p>Once a bill has passed the Legislature, it is enrolled. A Certificate of Enrollment is attached that indicates the votes on and dates of final passage. A signature block is added to the bill and, if necessary, amendments from the second house or the conference committee are incorporated into the body of the bill. The bill is signed by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. The bill is then taken to the Governor for his or her action.</p>
<p>Governor's actions</p>	<p>After reviewing a bill, the Governor has a given number of days to act on it, and may decide to sign it, veto part of it, or veto all of it. If the Governor vetoes part or all of it, the Legislature may later vote to override the veto. (Bills that contain vetoes are returned with the Governor's message to the house of origin.) For bills that pass the Legislature within the last five days of a session, the Governor has until 20 days after adjournment, excluding Sundays, to act on them, or they automatically become law. From the Governor's desk, the bills that will be law go to the Secretary of State, who assigns a chapter number.</p> <p>Resolutions and Memorials do not go to the Governor. They are delivered directly to the Secretary of State. These documents cannot be vetoed. The Secretary of State carries out the provisions in the documents.</p>
<p>Carryover legislation</p>	<p>The Legislature works within a two-year (biennial) cycle. For instance, the biennium of the 54th Session of the Legislature included the 1995 and 1996 Sessions. There were two regular sessions, a 105-day (long) session in 1995, and a 60-day (short) session in 1996. There could also have been any number of special sessions, each of which could last no longer than 30 days.</p> <p>Therefore, just because a bill did not make it all the way through during the regular session in the odd-numbered year (e.g., 1995) does not mean it is</p>

dead. At the end of the first annual session within a biennium, all bills from the opposite house are returned to the house of origin; so, if a House bill was in committee in the Senate when session ended, it was returned to the House. At the start of the next session, whether a special session or a regular session, bills from the previous session (of the same biennium) are reintroduced and retained in their present status.

The carryover bills can be taken up again in subsequent sessions during the biennium. The first house can place a carryover bill on the calendar for third reading, pass it, and send it right back to the second house. The first house may also refer a carryover bill to a standing committee, thereby beginning its progression through the process again.

In the even-numbered year of a biennial session, new bills and carryover bills must be considered. If a bill does not make it through the process by the end of the two-year cycle, it *is* dead.

Appendix E—Finding and Using Documents and Reports

When to Use Specific Documents and Reports

The first table is most helpful if you know a bill is at a particular stage in the legislative process. It details which documents and reports are most useful at the time of session indicated in the first column.

You will find documents by clicking Text of a Legislative Document and typing the document names as shown in the table below. Choose reports from the Detailed Legislative Reports menu.

When to Use Documents and Reports (“nnnn” indicates the bill number. “*” indicates a wildcard in the document name.)	
Time of Session	Documents and Reports to Use
Prefiling	Document: PREFILED mm/dd/yy
Introduction	Document: STATUS INTRO dd/yy (House) (dd indicates the legislative day. Preceding zeros are required.) INTRODUCTIONS mm/dd/yy (Senate) SHORT TITLES mm/dd/yy (Senate) nnnn.DIG (bill digest)
Bills in committee in first house	Document: DAILY SCHED mm/dd/yy WEEKLY SCHED mm/dd/yy AGH* (individual House agendas) AGS* (individual Senate agendas) COM dd (House) STANDING mm/dd/yy (Senate 1999 and earlier) STANDING mm/dd/yyyy (Senate 2000 and later) nnnn.HBR (House Bill Report) nnnn.SBR (Senate Bill Report) Report: Bills In/Out of Committee