



The Bill Process

National Model U.S. Congress

How An Idea Becomes A Law

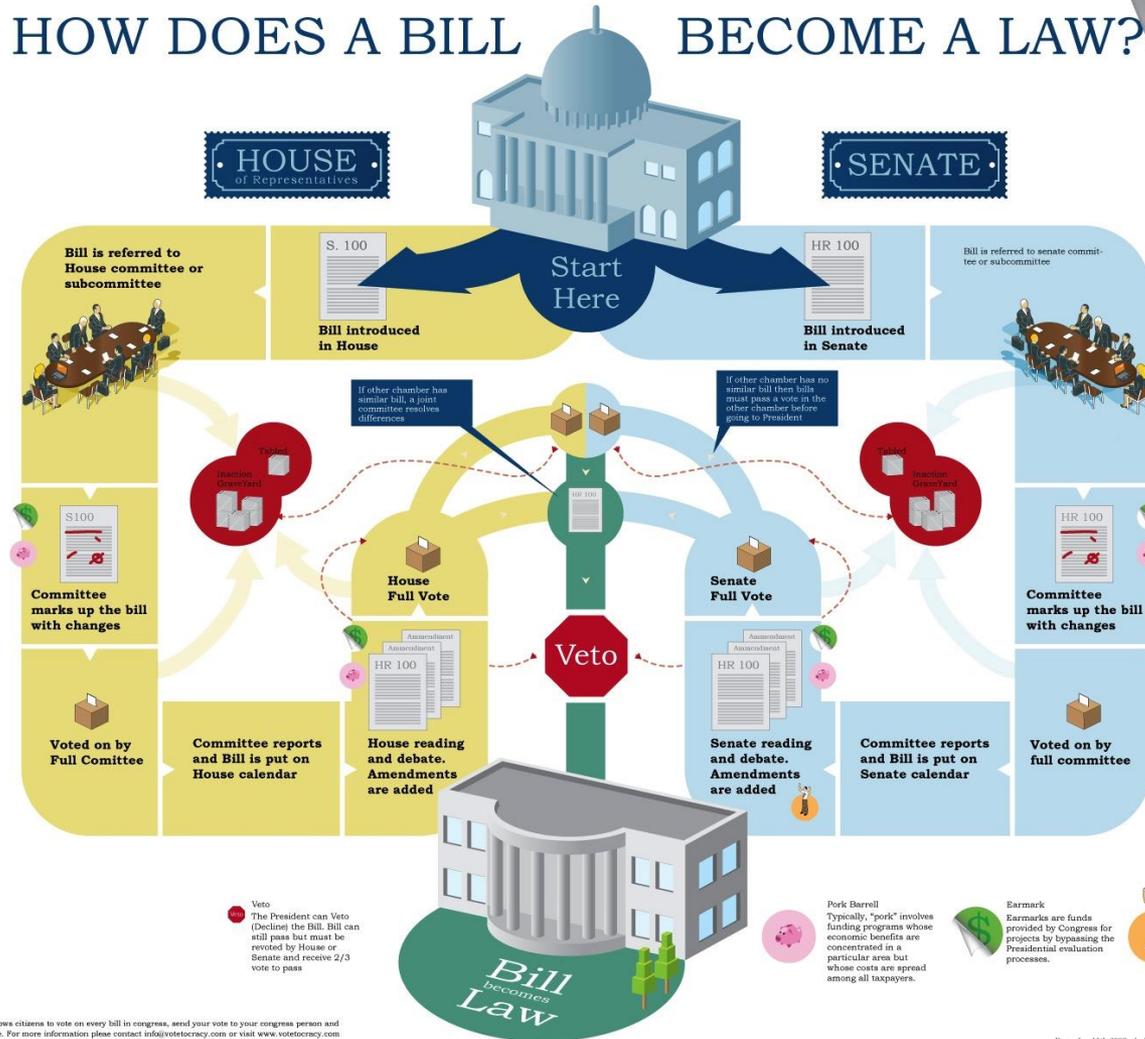
HOW DOES A BILL BECOME A LAW?

435
Representatives

Each state receives representation in the House in proportion to its population but is entitled to at least one Representative. Each representative serves for a two-year term. The House was granted its own exclusive powers: the power to initiate revenue bills, impeach officials, and elect the president in electoral college deadlocks.

100
Senators

Each U.S. state is represented by two senators, regardless of population. This ensures equal representation of each state in the Senate. Senators serve staggered six-year terms.



VOTETOCRACY.COM

Votetrocracy.com is a website that allows citizens to vote on every bill in congress, send your vote to your congress person and see if citizens agree with the outcome. For more information please contact info@votetrocracy.com or visit www.votetrocracy.com

Veto
The President can Veto (Decline) the Bill. Bill can still pass but must be re-voted by House or Senate and receive 2/3 vote to pass

Pork Barrel
Typically, "pork" involves funding programs whose economic benefits are concentrated in a particular area but whose costs are spread among all taxpayers.

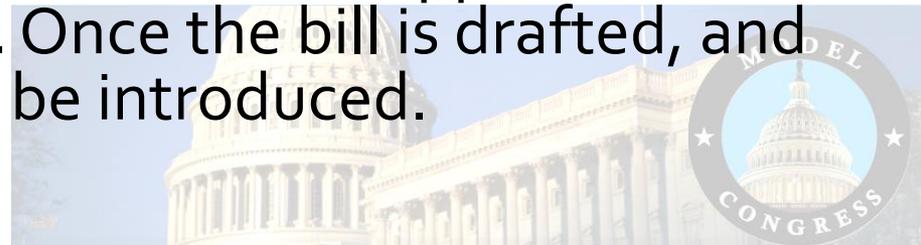
Earmark
Earmarks are funds provided by Congress for projects by bypassing the Presidential evaluation processes.

Filibuster
AKA - "killing a bill to death." An informal term for extended debate or other procedures used to prevent a vote on a bill in the Senate.



A Bill – The Beginning Stages

- The Bill Begins
 - Laws begin as ideas. These ideas may come from a member of Congress, citizens, the Executive Branch, and more .
 - Citizens who have ideas for laws can contact their Representative or Senator to discuss their ideas. If the Representative or Senator agrees, they research the ideas and write them into bills.
- The Bill is Proposed (Bill Drafted)
 - The legislator drafts the bill and finds support from other chamber members. Once the bill is drafted, and has support, it is ready to be introduced.



A Bill – The Beginning Stages

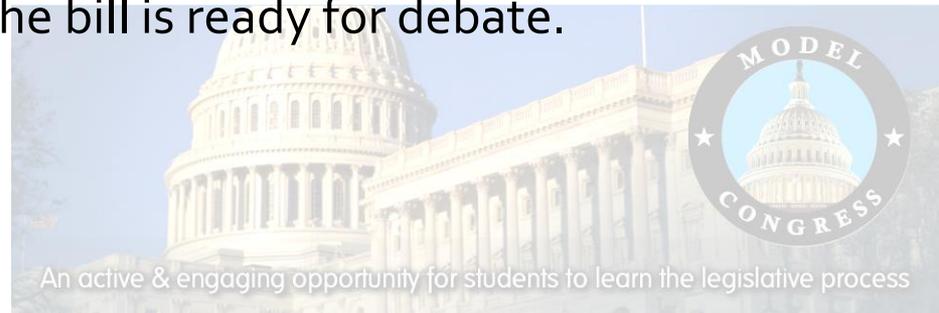
- The Bill is Introduced
 - Once the bill is drafted, it is submitted to the house clerk or in the “hopper” (in the house) and in the Senate, members gain recognition of the presiding officer to announce the introduction of the bill during the “morning hour”. If any senator objects, the introduction is postponed until the next day.

NOTE: Bills filed in one chamber often have a “companion bill” filed in the other chamber. These companion bills are either identical, similar, or comparable to one another. Bills must be identical for final passage.



Committee Referral

- The Bill Goes to Committee
 - After introduction, bills are referred to standing committees in the House or Senate according to the rules of procedure. This practice is performed by the presiding officer and the parliamentarian.
 - The committee can review the bill as a whole or refer the bill to one or more subcommittees under its jurisdiction.
 - Committee Referral by the presiding officer.
 - A committee studies the bill and often holds public input hearings to obtain information about the subject that the bill addresses. The bill may be referred to a subcommittee for a closer look by subject experts. Subcommittees cannot report a measure to the full body.
 - The committee reports the bill action as reported with or without amendments or tabled.
- The Bill Is Reported
 - After bills are heard at all committees of reference, they are reported to the full body. Once reported, the bill is ready for debate.



On the Floor

- The Bill Is Debated
 - After committee reporting, the bill is placed on the legislative calendar of the House or Senate and scheduled for floor action or debate before the full membership.
 - Each chamber has one or several legislative calendars. The Chamber/Party Leadership determine the debate order of bills.
 - Debate on bills proceed according to the rules of consideration and debate.
 - Discussion is on why members agree or disagree with the bill and recommend changes (amendments), if necessary
- The Bill Is Voted On
 - Once debate has ended and any amendments have been approved, the full membership votes on the bill.

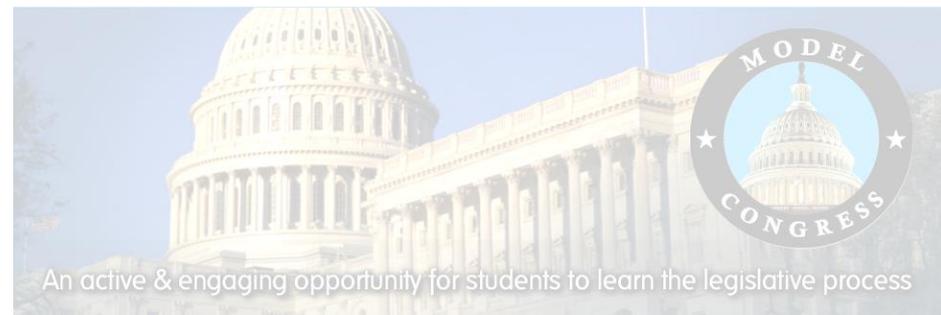


On the Floor

- The Bill Is Referred to the Opposite Chamber (House)
 - Upon passage by the originating chamber, bills are transmitted to the other chamber with a message to be heard with the respective chamber's companion bill.
 - If there is no companion bill, the bill must be voted or debated on and/or amended in the form from the original house.
 - The bill may be accepted as is or amended on the floor, referred to committee, or defeated on the floor.

Considerations

- If the bill is amended it is sent back to the opposite chamber for further consideration. This process can go back and forth at an attempt to make a “perfect bill.” If no compromise is made, the bill “dies.”
 - If both chambers are passionate enough about the bill it can be referred to a special joint conference committee where both chambers work out the details



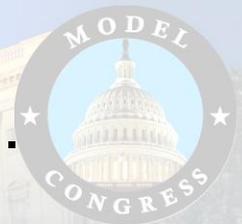
Final Passage

- The Bill Is Sent to the President
 - After a measure has been passed in identical form by both the House and Senate, it is considered an “act” and is “enrolled”. It is then sent to the President for consideration.
 - The President has:
 - 10 days to consider the bill while Congress remains in session:
 - If Congress adjourns before the 10 days and the President has not signed the bill then it does not become law (“Pocket Veto.”)
 - If Congress has not adjourned and the President still hasn’t signed the bill, it becomes law



Final Passage

- Upon consideration, the President may:
 - Sign the bill into law
 - Let it become law without signature
 - Veto the bill and return it to Congress
 - If the President vetoes the bill it is sent back to Congress with a note listing his/her reasons for objection. The chamber that originated the legislation can attempt to override the veto by a vote of two-thirds of those present. If the veto of the bill is overridden in both chambers then it becomes law.
- The Bill Is a Law
 - If the bill passes both Houses of Congress and approved by the President (or a veto has been overridden), the bill becomes law and is enforced.



Questions and answers

- Thank You!
- Roderick Bennett
 - Former:
 - Senate President Pro Tempore, 1st National Model U.S. Congress
 - President, 2nd National Model U.S. Congress
 - Governor, 6th and 7th Florida Model Legislature
 - Program Director
- Roderick@dougrynanconsulting.com

