



The Legislative Process

National Model U.S. Congress



A Brief Overview

Committee Proceedings

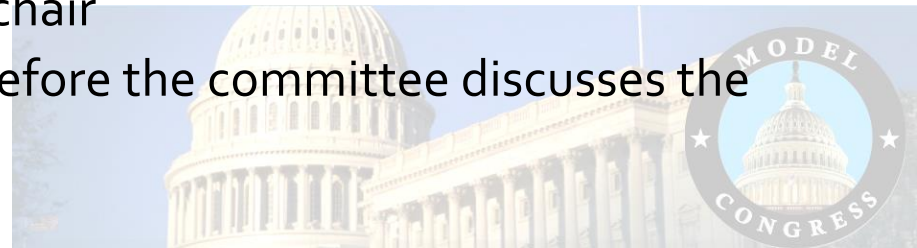
Committee Purpose

- Bills begin and end their lives in committees, whether they are passed into law or not. Hearings from interest groups and agency bureaucrats are held at the committee and subcommittee level, and committee members play key roles in floor debate about the bills that they foster.
- Committees help to organize the most important work of Congress — considering, shaping, and passing laws to govern the nation. 8,000 or so bills go to committee annually. Fewer than 10% of those bills make it out for consideration on the floor.



Committee Procedures

- Quorum and Consent Calendar
 - Established after the meeting is called to order (roll call)
 - A quorum must be present for the transaction of any business.
 - Consent calendar is established prior to the opening of the Model Congress and is the order in which legislation will be discussed.
- Public and Private Input/Witness Testimony
 - Public and Private Input (committee hearings)
 - Taken at the discretion of the chair
 - May be taken all at one time before the committee discusses the measure



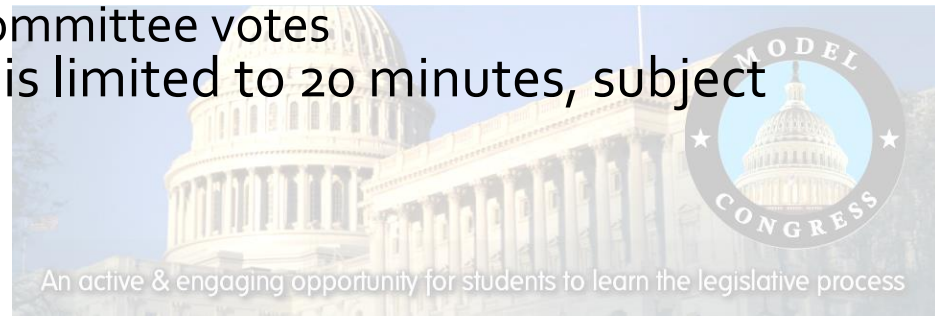
Committee Procedures

- Witness Testimony
 - Give input and answer questions regarding a bill
 - Must be recognized by the chair for the purpose of witness testimony
 - Each member may question the witness for up to one minute
 - Questions must be germane to the bill under consideration
 - Witness may use up to 1 minute to provide an intro statement
 - Questioning continues until each member has had the chance to question the witness or the chair deems the questioning period has ended
 - Questioning is limited to 4 minutes.



Committee Procedures

- Debate, Amendments, and Favorable/Unfavorable
 - Debate:
 - Follows the order:
 - Sponsor of the bill (5 minutes)
 - Questions of the sponsor
 - Speaker against the bill
 - Pro/Con debate (and public/private input or witness testimony)
 - Amendments:
 - May be offered at anytime
 - Must be in writing
 - Seeks to change something in the bill
 - Follows the order:
 - Sponsor of the amendment (2 minutes)
 - Opposition speakers (2 minutes)
 - Vote
 - Sponsor closes the bill and the committee votes
- Debate in committee on any bill is limited to 20 minutes, subject to one 5 minute extension.



Committee Procedures

- Final Consent Calendar
 - Created after all bills have been debated and passed/fail
 - Committee ranks bills in order of debate preference
 - Forwarded to the rules committee



Questions and answers

- Thank You!
- National Model U.S. Congress
- Roderick@dougryanconsulting.com



An active & engaging opportunity for students to learn the legislative process