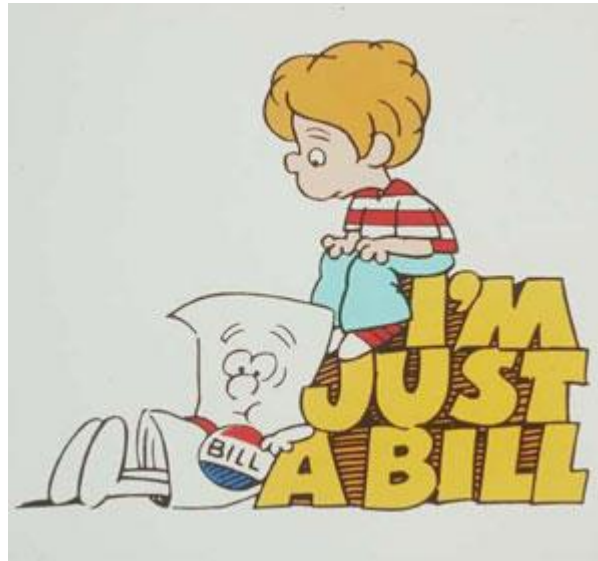


How A Bill Becomes A Law

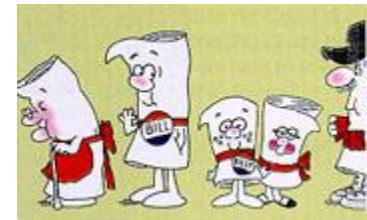


“Laws are like sausages. It is better not to see them being made.”

- Otto von Bismarck



- Legislative process officially begins with a proposal:
 - ❑ Bill: Originates in either the U.S. House of Representatives or U.S. Senate.
 - ✓ Public Bill: Affects the general public.
 - ✓ Private Bill: Affect a specific individual or group.
 - ❑ Joint Resolution: Similar to a bill.
 - ❑ Concurrent Resolution: Legislation addressing a matter affecting the operations of *both* the House and Senate.
 - ✓ Voted on by both Chambers of Congress but does not need POTUS signature.
 - ❑ Simple Resolution: Legislation addressing a matter affecting the operations of *either* the House *or* Senate.
- Bills regarding revenue always begin in the House.
- Two most common points of origin: Members and Constituents.



- House: Any Member, Delegate, or Resident Commissioner may introduce a bill anytime the House is in session.
 - ❑ Bill is *literally* placed in the hopper – a wooden box on the side of the Clerk’s desk.
 - ❑ Member introducing the bill is known as its “Primary Sponsor.” Unlimited number of Members may co-sponsor a bill.
 - ❑ Title of bill is entered in the House Journal and printed in the Congressional Record. Clerk assigns a legislative number.
 - ❑ Speaker of the House assigns the bill to the appropriate committee.

- Senate: Members must gain recognition of the presiding officer to announce introduction of a bill during the morning hour. If any senator objects, introduction is postponed until the next day.



- Chairman of the committee receives a copy of the bill.
- Clerk of the committee places the bill on the committee’s legislative calendar.
- While the bill is in committee, members will seek expert input, and hold “mark up” sessions to make further changes to the bill.
- Bill may be sent to a subcommittee for further analysis.
- When the committee is satisfied with the bill, it is sent back to the House for debate.
 - ❑ Bill may also die in committee.



➤ General Debate: House breaks into ‘Committee of the Whole.’”

- Bill is read aloud section-by-section.
- Members may offer amendments as each section is read.
- Members who support/oppose bill are given 5 minutes (the “5 minute rule”).
- Committee of the Whole then determines if the amendment will be accepted or rejected.



➤ Voting:

- Voice Vote
- Division
- Recorded

➤ Outcome:

- Passes: Sent to Senate.
- Fails but resent to committee.
- Fails: Bill dies.



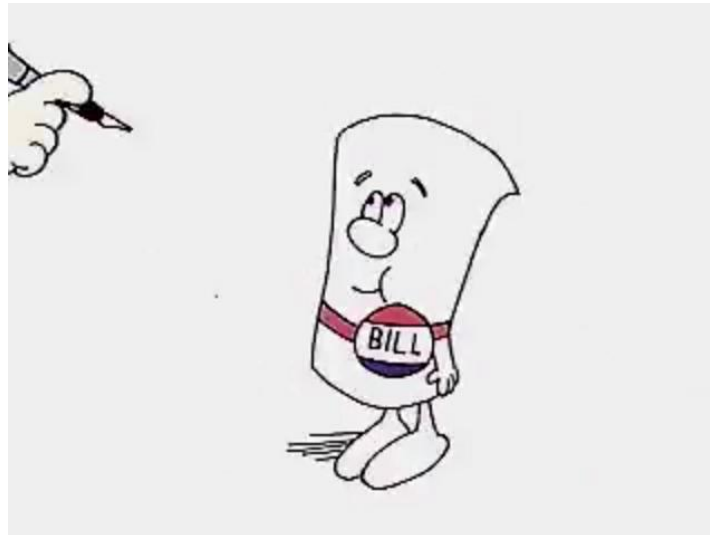
- Exact copy of House bill sent to Senate.
- Senate Committee reviews/discusses before proceeding to Senate floor for a vote.



- If bill passes the Senate, both the House and Senate bills are returned to the House with a note indicating changes.
- If the Senate has made amendments, the House must vote on the bill again (both House and Senate must agree to identical legislation).
- If Speaker of the House decides the Senate amendments require further research, the bill may be sent back to committee before the House votes again.



- Once both chambers have passed identical legislation, the enrolling clerk prepares the final document for presentation to the POTUS.
- Enrolled bill is printed on parchment paper, certified, and reviewed by the Clerk of the House.
- Speaker passes bill to POTUS.



- Once leaders of both chambers have signed off, Clerk of the House delivers bill to a clerk at the White House (gets a receipt). POTUS has 3 options:
 - ❑ Pass: POTUS signs.
 - ❑ Veto: Bill is returned to the chamber of origin with his objections within 10 days.
 - ❑ Pocket Veto: If POTUS receives the bill and does not sign or return to Congress with objections within 10 days it becomes law as long as Congress remains in session.
 - ✓ If Congress recesses before the 10 days have passed, the bill dies.



➤ If POTUS vetoes the bill, it is sent back to the House. Speaker has following options:

Not to pursue the bill.

Send it back to committee for further consideration.

Return the bill to the House floor for a vote – 2/3 majority in both chambers required to override POTUS veto.

