

Thursday 11/14

- Review Quizzes—Ch 10 and Powers of Congress
- Warm-Up – Committees in Congress
- EQ #15- How does a Bill become a Law?

Warm-Up- Name the Committee

1. Powerful committee led by the Speaker. Can stop bills before they even start. There is no equivalent committee in the Senate.
2. A type of joint committee used at the end of the legislative process to write the final wording of bills that pass the House & Senate but aren't identical in language.
3. The most important type of committee in the legislative process where most of the work to get a bill passed takes place. Permanent and based on subject matter.
4. Temporary committee set up to investigate, usually.
5. Any committee that has members of both the House and Senate.

EQ #15 How does a bill become Law?

- Describe the steps in the process of Bill to Law

<https://www.congress.gov/legislative-process>

SECTION 3

How a Bill Becomes a Law

- What key steps are needed to get an idea made into a law in Congress?
- What leaders and steps are involved in the Legislative Process?

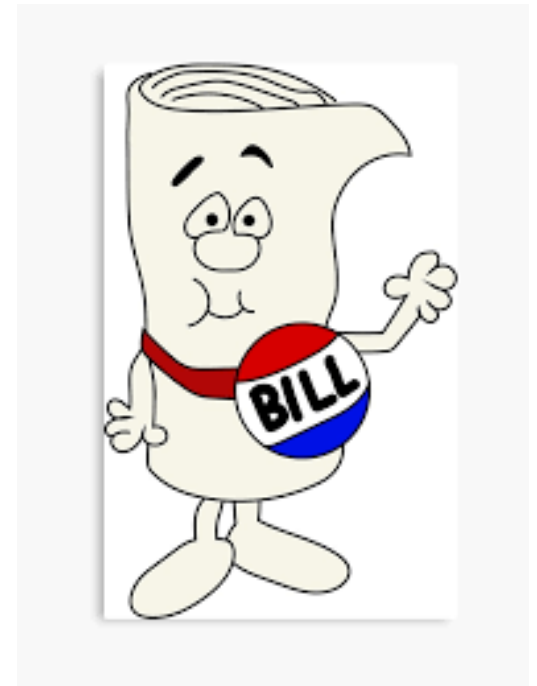


Schoolhouse Rock- I'm just a Bill

- What are the key steps?
 - 1 Idea & Introduction
 - 2 Committee
 - 3 Floor Debate & Vote
 - 4 Other House (Repeats
 - 5 Conference Committee
 - 6 Presidential Action

What is a bill?

- A **bill** is a proposed law presented to the House or Senate for consideration.
- A bill usually deals with a single matter, but sometimes a **rider** dealing with an unrelated issue is included (Senate ONLY).



Step One- Introducing a Bill- Who

Step 1 Introduction- Can?

- Anyone can come up with an idea for a law (citizens, the President, interest groups), but it MUST be formally introduced by a member of Congress
- Thousands of (usually over 10,000) bills are introduced each term but very few make it into law
- Most bills can start in either the House or Senate UNLESS it is a tax-spending bill—then it must start in the House (closest to the people...)

Types of Bills and Resolutions

Types of Bills and Resolutions	
BILL	A proposed law or draft of a law; public bill applies to the entire nation; private bill applies only to certain people or places
JOINT RESOLUTION	A proposal for action that has the force of law when passed; usually deals with special circumstances or temporary matters
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION	A statement of position on an issue used by the House and Senate acting jointly; does not have the force of law; does not require the President's signature
RESOLUTION	A measure relating to the business of either house or expressing an opinion on a matter; does not have the force of law; does not require the President's signature



Step 2 – Committee

What do committees do?

- Most work and time spent on a bill happens in the standing committee.
- Most bills die in committee, or are **pigeonholed**, (put away, never to be acted upon again).
- Committees often work through subcommittees—divisions of existing committees for specific tasks.
- Committees and subcommittees research and hold public meetings to gather information.



2. Committee - Actions

- It takes a simple majority vote (more yes than no vote) among committee members for a bill to move past committee and on to next step.



2 COMMITTEES

a committee may approve, rewrite or kill the bill



Step 3-The Bill on the Floor

- If it makes it out of committee, a bill goes to the FLOOR to be considered by the whole House for a vote.
- The Rules Committee can kill it here; they establish rules for the bill to move on.
- Bills can be changed (amended) by members of the House at this point.
- Before a vote is taken, the bill is debated.

House Debate

- Severe limits are placed on floor debate due to the House's large size.
- Members get no more than FIVE (5) minutes to debate their point.



Floor Debate- Senate

Rules for Debate **LESS** formal in Senate

- The major differences between House and Senate are the rules of debate on bills.
- NO strict limits on debate in Senate
- **Because they are fewer in number and have more prestige.**
- This freedom of debate allows for the fullest possible discussion of matters on the floor.

Senate Debate- What is a

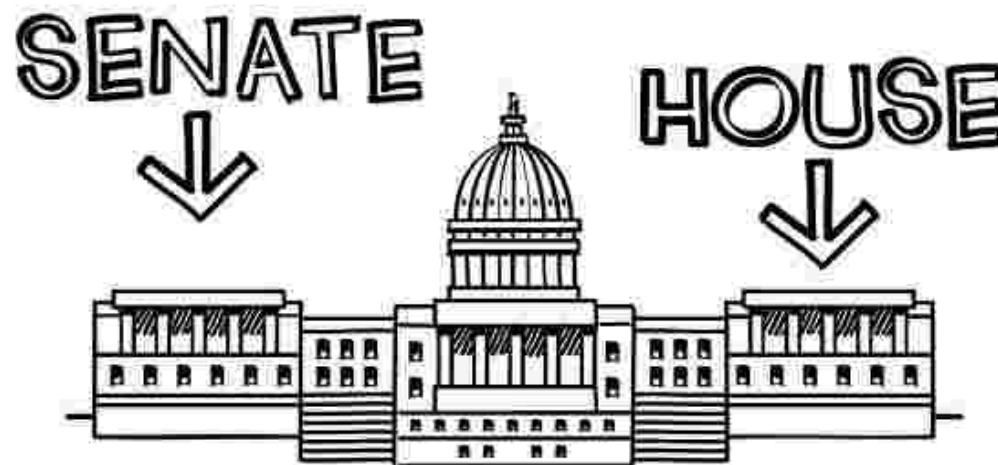
Filibuster? The Cloture Rule

- Is a strategy used in the Senate by the minority party to STOP a bill from passing.
- A senator may hold the floor as long as s/he wants, and talk until a measure is dropped.
- TALK A BILL TO DEATH...
- Cloture- is a way to stop a filibuster.
- Requires at least 60 senators to vote for cloture and stop the filibuster
- Rarely enough votes.



Floor Debate & Vote on a Bill

- If a simple majority of members approve the bill, it passes.



Step 4- Other House

If it starts in the House, the Bill would now get Introduced in the Senate

Bills are introduced by senators; the process, similar to the House, basically repeats

Overall, the Senate process is similar but much less formal than the House.



Warm-Up – Bill to Law Process


- (So Far)
1. Who can write a bill? Who introduces to Congress? Do most bills become laws? Explain.
 2. ALL bills MUST start in the House- **True OR False?** Explain.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJQoZtn9C3w>
 3. Where do bills spend MOST of their time?
 4. How many votes are needed to move the bill past the FLOOR?

Floor vote

- After Debate- the bill is finally voted on.
- If the bill gets a simple majority of members who support it (vote yes), it passes.



Step 5- Conference Committees

- All laws from Congress *must* have been passed by both the House AND Senate in identical form..but this almost never happens;
- Because the versions are different, a **Conference Committee** is formed to iron out the differences so the language is the **SAME**.
- Once a conference committee completes work on a bill, the bill is returned to both houses for final approval. Needs simple majority. It must be accepted or rejected without a  t.

Step 6- Presidential Action

The Constitution provides four options for the President when he receives a bill:

1. The President may sign the bill, and it then becomes law.

2. **Veto**-The P may reject the bill with a veto. A veto can be overridden by a two-thirds vote in the House and Senate (not easy to get this).

3. The President may do nothing/ignore the bill- within 10 days, it becomes law.

4. A **pocket veto** occurs if Congress adjourns within 10 days of submitting a bill and the President does not sign it. The **bill then dies**.

