

GLOSSARY AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

How Are Laws Made?

Laws begin as ideas. First, a representative sponsors a bill. The bill is then assigned to a committee for study. If released by the committee, the bill is put on a calendar to be voted on, debated or amended. If the bill passes by simple majority, the bill moves to the Senate. In the Senate, the bill is assigned to another committee and, if released, debated and voted on. Again, a simple majority passes the bill. Finally, a conference committee made of House and Senate members works out any differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill. The resulting bill returns to the House and Senate for final approval. The bill is then transmitted to the Governor who will sign or veto the bill.

For detailed information on the process visit: <http://www.azleg.gov>

Glossary of Legislative Terms

Adjournment: To end the day's proceedings. Regular adjournment sets the date for the next meeting. Adjournment "sine die" is Latin for "without a day" and marks the end of the legislative session because it does not set a time for reconvening. It terminates all unfinished business.

Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.): The laws of Arizona.

Bill: A proposed law introduced in either the House of Representatives or the Senate. Senate bills are numbered starting with 1001 and designated "S.B.____" Bills introduced in the House of Representatives are numbered starting with 2001 and designated "H.B.____."

Bipartisan: Cooperation between members of both political parties.

Caucus: "Caucus" is both a noun and a verb. The noun caucus means a group of people who share something in common (for example, they are members of the same political party). The verb caucus describes when these people meet to address their group's issues.

Chair: The person who presides over a committee.

COW, Committee of the Whole: The entire House of Representatives or Senate debating legislation and adopting amendments to legislation.

Consensus: Broad agreement that the majority of participants can “live” with the issue as stated.

Convene: To officially begin a meeting.

Cosponsor: A legislator who has helped sponsor a bill, but is not the prime sponsor.

District: A geographical area represented by one Senator and two Representatives.

Do Pass: The recommendation by a committee for passage of a measure.

Effective Date: When a bill goes in to effect usually 91 days after the Legislature adjourns sine die.

Emergency Bill: A bill that must take effect before 91 days after the Legislature adjourns sine die in order to preserve the public peace, health, or safety.

Engrossed Bill: Official copy of a bill as passed by either the House of Representatives or the Senate.

First Reading: The initial formal introduction of the bill in either the Senate or the House of Representatives. The Arizona Constitution requires three formal readings. In the House of Representatives, the bill is assigned to a committee(s) after the first reading.

Hearing: A formal committee meeting where business is conducted or information is received.

Regular Session: Each year the legislature convenes on the second Monday in January. There is no set date for adjournment sine die.

Second Reading: The second of three formal readings. In the Senate, the measure is assigned to one or more committees at the second reading.

Sine Die: Sine die” is Latin for “without a day” and marks the end of the legislative session because it does not set a time for reconvening. It terminates all unfinished business.

Sponsor: The legislator that introduces a bill.

Standing Committee: A permanent committee established by the Senate or the House of Representatives where bills are assigned for consideration.

Strike Everything Amendment (Striker): An amendment to a bill that replaces the contents of previously introduced or adopted bill. It may or may not have anything to do with the bill it replaces.

Subcommittee: Part of the full committee designed to focus on a single bill and make recommendations to the full committee.

Sunset: Automatic termination of an agency or program on a specific date.

TBD: To be determined.

Third Reading: The third of three formal readings of a bill on the floor of the Senate or House of Representatives. All committee work is finished and all adopted amendments included. On the third reading the entire House or Senate votes on the bill by roll call. If passed, the bill is transmitted to the other house for action.