

How a Bill Becomes a Law in Utah

BILLS MAY ORIGINATE IN EITHER THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OR THE SENATE. THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLE ILLUSTRATES HOW A BILL ORIGINATING IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES BECOMES LAW.

- A constituent contacts a Representative and requests legislation.
- The Representative submits a request for legislation to the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel. The appropriate attorney reviews existing law, researches the issues, drafts the legislation, and reviews the legislation for statutory or constitutional concerns.
- A copy of the legislation is given to the Representative. The Representative approves the legislation for introduction during the session.
- The legislation is numbered and copies are delivered to the docket clerk in the House of Representatives, Legislative Billroom, Office of the Fiscal Analyst, the Sponsor, and the Internet.
- The bill is introduced by title and read the first time then referred to the Rules Committee where the bill is examined for proper form and fiscal impact.
- The Rules Committee reports back to the House, orders that the bill be printed with the fiscal note for distribution, and recommends to the Speaker of the House the standing committee to which the speaker should send the bill.
- The assigned standing committee in an open meeting reviews the bill. The committee may amend, hold, table, substitute, or make a favorable recommendation on the bill.
- The committee report is read to the House of Representatives and adopted by motion. In the House this is considered the second reading of three constitutionally required readings. The bill is then placed on the calendar for the third reading.
- The bill is read by title to the House. This is the third reading of the bill. The Representative sponsoring the bill explains the bill and answers any questions posed. Other Representatives may speak and propose amendments to the bill.
- A motion for the "previous question" closes debate and stops further amendments to the bill. In order for the bill to pass, the bill must receive a minimum of 38 affirmative votes which is a majority of the 75 Representatives.
- If passed in the House, the bill and any House amendments are sent to the Senate with a communication informing the Senate that the bill has passed the House and requesting further action by the Senate.
- The bill is read by title a first time and referred to the Rules Committee where the bill is recommended for assignment to a standing committee. The standing committee may amend, hold, table, substitute, or make a favorable recommendation on the bill. In the Senate, a motion for "previous question" requires a majority vote in committee. This motion is not allowed on the Senate floor.
- The committee report is read to the Senate and adopted. Then the bill is placed on the Second Reading Calendar.
- The bill is read a second time and debated. It is voted upon and must pass by a minimum of 15 affirmative votes in order to advance to third reading.
- The bill is then read a third time and debated. To pass, the bill must receive a minimum of 15 affirmative votes which is a majority of the 29 Senators.
- After the bill has passed both houses, it is signed by both presiding officers and examined by the Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel in a process called enrolling. The office prepares the bill in final form with all amendments included and returns it to the House of Representatives. This enrolled bill is an exact, accurate, and official copy of the enacted bill.
- The enrolled bill is printed and sent by the House to the governor for his signature. If the governor fails to sign the bill, the bill automatically becomes law without his signature. The governor has the power to veto the bill and send his objections to the presiding officers of the House and Senate.
- A bill enacted at a legislative session is effective 60 days following adjournment, unless another date is specified within the bill.

