How a Bill becomes A Law

Presented by:
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Overview of the Legislative Process

Step 1: Author
Find an Author (Asm/Sen)
Only State Legislators can carry a bill through the legislative process.

Step 2: Bill Introduction
Bill gets introduced on the Asm/Sen Floor
The Author must provide a “reading” of the bill on the floor to initiate the process.

Step 3: Committees
Committees are key for public engagement!
Testimony is crucial as Cmtes have the autonomy to amend and kill Bills. FYI, most bills die in Policy or Fiscal Cmtes!

Step 4: Floor Votes
Every member of the Asm/Sen will have an opportunity to vote on your bill at this stage. Get those Vote Counts right!

Step 5: Repeat Steps 2-4 in 2nd House
Governor has 30 Days to sign/veto bill after enrolling.
Public engagement is key at this juncture! Calls, emails, media outreach, etc. can all play an influential role.

Step 6: Gov Action
Process continues into the 2nd House...
Your bill will now have to be Introduced, be assigned to Committees, and hopefully make it to a Floor Vote, again!
Important Tools for Advocates

Find your Legislator:
https://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/

Track Legislation (FREE!):
https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billStatusClient.xhtml

CA Assembly Website:
https://www.assembly.ca.gov/

CA Senate Website:
https://www.senate.ca.gov/

Letter Portal:
https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/

CARA’s Website:
https://californiaalliance.org/
Step 0: Start with an IDEA!
Step 1: Find an Author + submit a request to Leg. Counsel
Find and Author + Submit Bill idea to Leg Counsel

Who is an Author?
The Author of a Bill is a Senator or Assemblymember who is responsible for carrying the legislation throughout the process.

Example: **AB** 1947 (Ting) - **Assemblymember** Phil Ting of San Francisco was the author.

Example 2: **SJR** 11 (Skinner) - **Senator** Nancy Skinner of Oakland was the author.

There are 80 members of the CA Assembly and 40 members of the Senate.

Finding the right author is key!

- How influential is this author?
- Which committees are they assigned to?
- Leadership within the Party Caucus or Cmtes?
- What is the Author’s relationship to this policy?

What is the Office of Legislative Counsel?
Leg Counsel is the nonpartisan public agency tasked with drafting legislation in addition to other legal services for the Legislature.

Bills are formatted in a specific way that cite existing law (state codes), proposed statute changes, etc.

Only Legislators can submit your bill ideas/language to Leg Counsel for official drafting.

**Assembly Members** are limited to **50 bills per 2 year session**

**Senators** are limited to **40 Bills per 2 year session**
LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SJR No.
as introduced, Skinner.
General Subject: The Social Security 2100 Act: A Sacred Trust.

This measure would affirm the Legislature’s support for expanding Social Security and requests California Representatives in Congress to support expanding Social Security by voting in favor of the Social Security 2100 Act: A Sacred Trust. Fiscal committee: no.
AB 1947 (Ting), bill language...
Step 2: Bill Introduction

Bill gets introduced on the Asm/Sen Floor
The Author must provide a “reading” of the bill on the floor to initiate the process
Bill Introduction & Leg Deadlines

**Bill Introduction:**

To initiate the legislative process all bills must be read on the Floor by their Author.

Bills can only be introduced once they have been officially drafted by Leg Counsel.

Bills originating in the Assembly have the designation “AB.”

Bills originating in the Senate have the designation, “SB.”

Bills must PASS both Houses in order to be eligible for final passage from the Governor.

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**Important Legislative Deadlines:**

- Jan 1 - New Laws go into effect
- Jan 10 - Gov releases Budget (proposal)
- Jan 20 - last day to submit bills to Leg Counsel
- **Feb 17** - Last day to introduce bills
- May 14 - May Revise of CA Budget
- May 30-June 12 - Floor Sessions only
- **June 15** - Budget Bill Deadline
- June 30 - Final Budget Deadline
- July 14-Aug 13 - Summer Recess
- Sept 5-14 - Floor Sessions only
- **Sept 14** - Last Day for Each House to pass Bills
- **Oct 14** - Last Day for Gov to sign Bills
Step 3: Committee(s)

Committees are key for public engagement! Testimony is crucial as Cmtes have the autonomy to amend and kill Bills. FYI, most bills die in Policy or Fiscal Cmtes!

Step 3: Committees
Types of Committees, Roles and Structure

Committees serve an integral function in the Legislative Process. They are organized by policy genre to review, amend, **PASS or FAIL** legislation via public hearings.

- After a Bill is Introduced, it is assigned to the Rules Committee, where it be reassigned to the appropriate policy and fiscal committees.
- Policy Committees are vital for public engagement! Testimony by CARA members have been influential in these settings.
- Any Legislation carrying a **fiscal impact to the state will be assigned to the Appropriations Committee**
- Hundreds of bills die each year in Committee!

Committees’ Structure

- Chair (Determined by Asm Speaker or Sen Pro-Tem)
- Vice Chair
- Odd # of members
- Members can vote “Aye,” “No,” or abstain (NVR) [No Vote Recorded]

Public Engagement

- Submit a Letter to the Cmte!
- Call or attend hearing in person to provide a “me too.”
- Call and or email Cmte staff and Legislators
- Set meetings with Cmte Chair and members to advocate for your bill
- Lobby in-district if necessary!
Step 4: Floor Vote

Every member of the Asm/Sen will have an opportunity to vote on your bill at this stage. Get those Vote Counts right!
Floor votes provide an opportunity for the entire House (Asm/Sen) to vote on a bill.

Most bills require a simple majority vote (50+1)

- Asm 80 Members
  - (50+1) = 41 Votes
  - \( \left( \frac{2}{3} \right) \) = 53 Votes

- Sen 40 Members
  - (50+1) = 21 votes
  - \( \left( \frac{2}{3} \right) \) = 27 votes

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<td><strong>NVR</strong></td>
<td>Bigelow, Chen, Choi, Megan Dahle, Davies, Flora, Fong, Gallagher, Gray, Haney, Kiley, Lackey, Mathis, Nguyen, Patterson, Seyarto, Smith, Valladares, Voepel, Waldron</td>
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**SJR 11 Assembly Floor Vote Results**
Questions?
Step 5: Repeat Process in 2nd House
[Introduction - Committees - Floor Vote]
AB-1947 Hate crimes: law enforcement policies. (2021-2022)

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AB 1947 Sen Appr Vote
Step 6: Governor (Executive) Action

Governor has 30 Days to sign/veto bill after enrolling.
Public engagement is key at this juncture!
Calls, emails, media outreach, etc. can all play an influential role.
Powers of the Executive Office + Deadlines

After a bill passes BOTH houses and any concurrence votes (amendments sustained in the 2nd house that have to be approved by the first house), the bill will move to engrossing and enrolling at the Governor's Office.

The Governor has 30 days to sign or veto a bill after it processes through enrolling

**Public engagement is critical at this phase:**

- Calls, Emails (Letters), Media outreach, Actions at the Capitol, etc., are influential at this stage.

After the Governor signs a bill, it goes into effect Jan 1 of the following year unless it has an emergency provision or a delayed implementation date.

**Governor Deadlines:**

**Budget:**

1. **Jan 10** - Gov releases Budget
2. **May 14** - Gov releases May Revise
3. **June 15** - Deadline for Legislature to Submit Budget Bill to Gov
4. **June 30** - Deadline to finalize Budget
5. **July 1** - Beginning of New Fiscal Year

**Legislative:**

- **Oct 14** - Last Day for Gov to sign/veto Bills
CARA’s 2022 Legislative Scorecard provides a comprehensive analysis of the Legislature’s voting record on our priority bills in 2022.

Take a look to see how your representatives scored on Senior issues!

Available Now on CARA’s website!

Link: Click HERE
CARA’s 2023 “Silver Papers,” lays out the policy framework for which we advocate for transformative, institutional reforms to support aging for all Californians.

Recording to CARA’s 2023 Legislator Briefing Available on our website!

Click [HERE](#) to watch!

CARA’s “Silver Papers” are also Available Now on our website!

Click [HERE](#) to view!
Thank you!

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