

How a Bill Becomes a Law in Virginia

The following steps are the typical process by which bills become laws:

1

Beginning of a Bill ...

Billy Bill began as just a little idea in someone's brain ...

2

Introduce a Bill ...

Nice to meet you!

But only a member of the House of Delegates or Senate can introduce a bill.

3

Send to Committee ...

Knock! Knock!

HB 1

The bill is assigned a number, and then the bill is referred (sent) to the proper committee.

4

Committee Studies Bill ...

Hmmm ...

The committee studies the bill to see if it would make a good law. This is when the public may speak.

5

Bill is Reported ...

REPORT

Whew! I made it!

HB 1

If the committee agrees the bill would make a good law, the committee reports the results to the House of Delegates or the Senate.

6

Floor Actions ...

HB 1

The bill is returned to the chamber (House or Senate) it was introduced in and read or printed in the Calendar (agenda) three times.

7

Vote on the Bill ...

Time to Vote!!

HB 1

On the Third Reading the bill's title is read and put to a vote.

8

Refer to Senate ...

HB 1

If a bill passes in the House of Delegates, it goes through a similar process in the Senate.

9

Governor's Action ...

Governor or Bust!

If the bill passes both chambers, it goes to the Governor for approval. The Governor has four choices ...

10a

... Signs the Bill.

Hee Hee! That tickles!

HB 1

The Governor

If the bill passes in both chambers, and the Governor approves it, the bill becomes a law!

10b

... Changes the Bill.

Back to the drawing board!

HB 1

CHANGES

The Governor returns the bill with changes (amendments). If the House of Delegates and Senate approve changes, the bill becomes law.

10c

... Vetoes the Bill.

I still have a chance!

HB 1

VEToes

The Governor vetoes (does not approve) the bill. The House of Delegates and Senate may overrule the veto by a two-thirds vote of both chambers.

10d

... No Action.

I'm a law!

HB 1

The Governor does not sign the bill but does not veto it. The bill still becomes a law!

