



How an idea  
becomes a  
law



# How it begins

- Laws begin as ideas.
- These ideas may come from a legislator or a citizen like one of us.
- Citizens who have ideas for laws can contact their representative to discuss their idea.
- If the legislator agrees, they can work together to research the idea and write it into a bill.
- The legislator may ask other legislators in either chamber to join as co-sponsors



# The Bill is Drafted



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- Once the legislator has co-sponsors the idea needs to be written in the proper form for a bill.
- There are different offices that help with writing the idea into the proper form and research help.
- The legislator will ask the following offices to help.
  - The Revisors Office
  - The Office Of Policy and Legal Analysis
  - The Office of Fiscal and Program Review

# Introduction of a Bill

- The Legislator gives the bill once it is written properly to either the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of State.
- The Bill is then numbered, to help keep track of it.
- A Committee Recommendation is made.
- The Bill is Printed.
- The Bill is then placed in the respective body's calendar.

109TH CONGRESS  
1st Session

## H. R. 1

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a voluntary program for prescription drug coverage under the Medicare Program, to modernize the Medicare Program, and for other purposes.

### IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 15, 2016

Mr. HASTERT (for himself, Mr. DELAH, Mr. BERRY, Mr. PENCE of Ohio, Mr. TROTT, Mr. TUBER, Mrs. JOHNSON of Connecticut, Mr. DELBONCO, Mr. PERROWE of Minnesota, Mr. CARTER, Mr. GREGG, EMMETT-WATTS of Florida, Mr. BROWNE of New Hampshire, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DAVIS, Mr. FARRINGTON, Mr. GRAY, Mr. GUTEN, Mr. McCREARY, Mr. NEASE, Mr. HENSON, and Mr. WILKINSON) introduced the following bill; which was referred jointly to the Committee on Energy and Commerce, and Ways and Means, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee named:

## A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for a voluntary program for prescription drug coverage under the Medicare Program, to modernize the Medicare Program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives*

2 *of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

# Committee Reference



- The Bill is referred to one of the Joint Standing or Joint Select Committees.
- This is the first vote on the floor taken on the bill. Most of the time approval of the suggested committee is approved. Occasionally it is debated, and it will be suggested that it go to a different committee.
- If the House and Senate cannot agree which committee will hear the bill, then the bill goes no further.

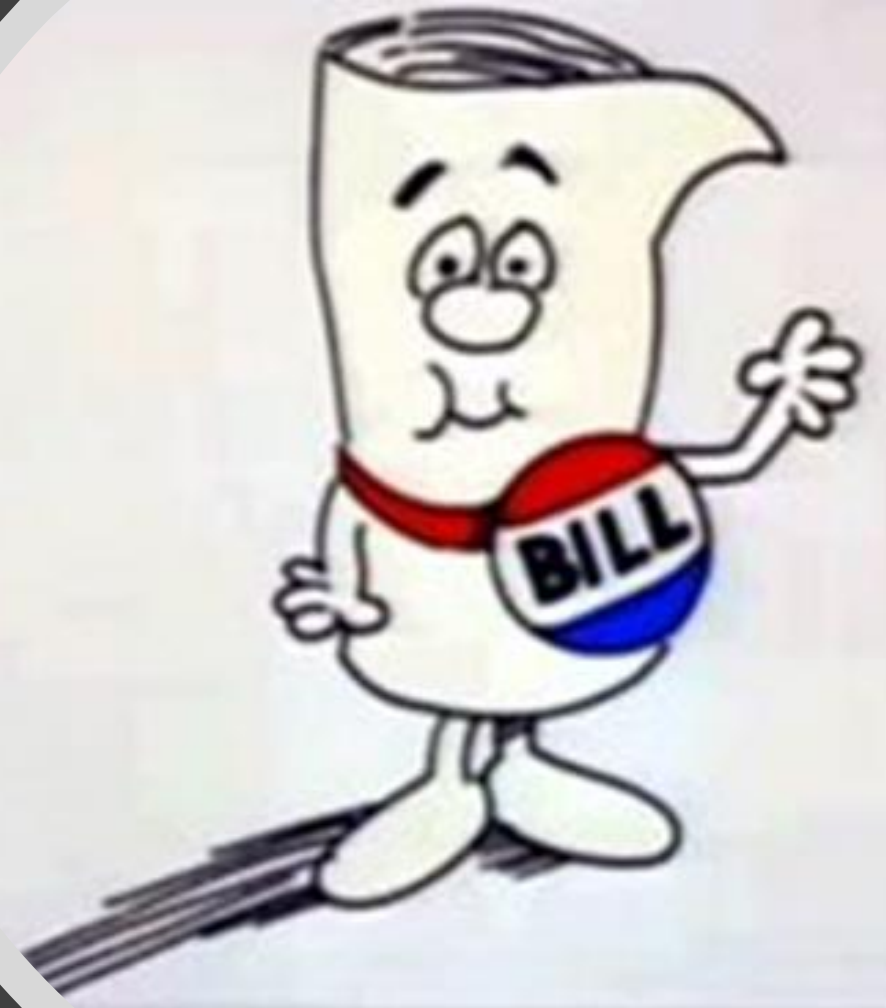
# Committee Action

- The chair of the committee will schedule a public hearing.
- This is when the committee will listen to testimony either opposing or supporting the bill, from anyone who wants to share their opinion.
- Notices of public hearings are posted weekly, on the committee website.
- There are steps in the Committee Action
  - Bill Distribution – where the bill is sent out to members of the legislature, all city and town clerks
  - Public Hearing – When people can share testimony either written or verbal.
  - Work Session – When the Committee discusses bill. They also vote on what the recommendation should be to the legislature.
  - Committee Report – A report is made based upon the committee's decision about the bill.



# General Order

- Bills must pass through at least four steps on the floor of both the House and Senate:
  - First Reading – The initial reading of the bill with any committee amendments.
  - Second Reading – The next legislative day the bill is read again, and floor amendments may be offered.
  - If it passes, then it is engrossed and sent to the other chamber for consideration.
  - Engrossment – Printing the Bill with all adopted Amendments together in a document for enactment.
  - Enactment – A simple majority in both the House and Senate.



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# The Governor

- After the final vote the bill is sent to the Governor.
- The Governor has 10 days to either sign or veto the bill.
- If the Governor does not sign the bill or veto the bill in 10 days, and the Legislature is still in session, the bill automatically becomes law.
- If the Legislature is not in session, then the bill would not become law. This is called a pocket veto.