

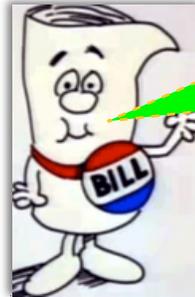
How accurate was School House Rock in describing how a bill becomes a law?



abcde

### Step 3: Committee

The bill is sent to committee. The committee may send it to a sub committee for further study, hold hearings themselves, or send it to the entire chamber for a vote "as-is"



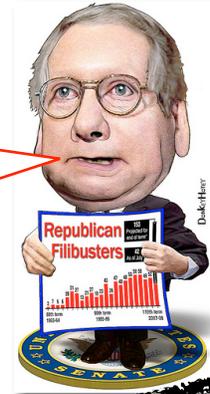
A committee can "mark up" a bill by adding any amendments they wish by a simple majority of votes. For instance, if a bill to restrict handgun access is sent to Representative Tierney's committee, he could offer an amendment that reads "\$6 million will be spent on flood mitigation in the City of Peabody, Massachusetts." If the majority of the committee votes in favor, it becomes part of the handgun bill. This process is generally referred to as "pork."

### Step 1: An Idea

Anyone can have an idea for a bill - a Representative or Senator, the President, or an ordinary citizen

### During

debate, any Representative or Senator can come to the podium to give a speech, introduce facts about the bill, or even propose an amendment (depending on the rules). In the Senate, the opposition party can debate forever to prevent a bill from being voted on. This is known as a filibuster.



### Step 4: Debate and Amendments

If the bill gets out of committee, it goes to the entire chamber "floor" for a debate.

### Step 2: Introduction

A bill can only be introduced by a Senator or Representative

### Step 5: Floor Vote

A vote is taken in the chamber in which the bill began. If it passes, it is sent to the other chamber for the same debate & amendment process.

A floor vote can be conducted in different ways. The most common are the Roll Call where each member votes and a running tally is displayed on a scoreboard or a Voice Vote where all members shout "yea" or "nay."

The President CANNOT introduce a bill



ON MOTION TO CONCUR IN THE SENATE AMENDMENTS

H R	YEA	NAY	PRES
REPUBLICAN	85	151	
DEMOCRATIC	172	16	
INDEPENDENT			
TOTALS	257	167	
TIME REMAINING		0:00	

## Step 6: Conference Committee

This committee works out the differences in the bill if it is not identical to the bill that came out of the other chamber. Even if as little as one word is different, it must be compromised and rewritten

The Conference Committee is typically composed of equal number of the most senior Republicans and Democrats from the committee where the bill was first sent

## Step 7: Floor Vote

The Conference bill is sent back to both chambers for a vote. If it passes BOTH chambers, it is sent to the President

The Senate can filibuster the Conference bill. However, a Budget bill cannot be filibustered because debate for budget bills are limited to only 10 hours



## Step 8: Presidential Action

The President can:

- sign it into law
- veto the bill
- "pocket" veto the bill



The President has 10 days to make a decision. If he takes no action and Congress adjourns before the ten days expires, it becomes a "pocket" veto.

**President Obama has vetoed 2 bills**

**President Bush vetoed 12 bills.**

**President Clinton vetoed 37 bills.**

**Overall, there have been 2,564 vetoes!**

## Step 9: Final Congressional Action

The Congress can override the President's veto with a 2/3 majority in each chamber

CONGRESS HAS OVERRIDDEN A PRESIDENTIAL VETO ONLY 110 TIMES!

