

Traffic Safety Town Hall

Learning Objectives: Students will:

- Compare and contrast federal, state, and local law-making.
- Research and recommend local laws to improve traffic safety.
- Speak persuasively at a Town Hall Meeting.
- Identify important ways to participate in local government.
- Evaluate agents of influence and relevant stake-holders in policy-making decisions.

TEKS:

7th Grade Texas History (113.19): 7.13B, 14A, 15A, 16A-B, 17C, 23A-B

8th Grade U.S. History (113.20): 8.19D, 29A-C, 29E, 31A-B

10th Grade World History (113.42): 31A-B

11th Grade U.S. History (113.41): 23A-C, 32A-B

12th Grade U.S. Government (113.44): 2A, 7D, 8A, 8H, 9B, 14C, 15A, 15C, 20C, 22A-B

Materials Needed:

Student Handout – 1 per student

Research Results Handout – 1 per small group

Speaker Forms – 1 per student

Computers or Devices for Online Research

Accompanying Power Point Presentation (Optional)

Relevant Vocabulary:

Bicameral

City Council

City Ordinance

Civic Participation

Congress

Federalism

Law, Legislation, Statute, Ordinance

Local, State, and Federal Government

Popular Sovereignty

Representative Government

Town Hall Meeting

Teaching Strategy:

1. Ask students to briefly discuss the function of the legislative branch of government, then ask them to discuss/consider how the state and federal governments share law-making power (giving examples of each). Now ask students what they know about local governments and how they fit into this relationship. Do they know what a City Council does? What are some issues they might deal with? [zoning, local issues, etc] What are local laws called? [ordinances]
2. Tell students they'll be analyzing the role of local government and participating in the process through a Town Hall Meeting. Show students this humorous "Bad Example" of how NOT to conduct yourself in a Town Hall Meeting <https://youtu.be/In9oSjiltOs> [Parks & Rec]. Then show a portion of this "Good

Example” of how to speak at a Town Hall Meeting <https://youtu.be/gqn43gmeA3w> [Steve Jobs speaks at Cupertino Town Hall]. These sites are also hyperlinked in the power-point.

3. Pass out the STUDENT HANDOUT and read the fictional description of “Anytown, Texas” together as a class. Then go over the assignment tasks and instructions together as a class.
4. Divide students into small groups for research, and assign each group a different research topic. As student groups work on research (using computers), they should be recording their findings on the RESEARCH RESULTS Handout. Tell students how much time they have to complete the research (at teacher discretion).
5. As groups finish their research, collect their RESEARCH RESULTS forms and hang them up around the room. Assign each student a COMMUNITY-MEMBER ROLE to play in the Town Hall Meeting and give them a SPEAKER FORM. Roles can be assigned at the teacher’s discretion, by student choice, or at random. The idea is to have a wide range of views and perspectives represented at the Town Hall. Not all roles need to be assigned.
6. Allow students some time to do a short “Gallery Walk” around the room and glance over the different topics and research results. During this time, students should consider how their community-member would feel about each of the topics to be discussed at the Town Hall. Students should fill out the SPEAKER FORM to help them clarify their COMMUNITY-MEMBER’s opinions and focus on a topic to address at the Town Hall.
7. DAY OF THE TOWN HALL: Arrange the classroom with a row of desks for City Council Members at the front of the room and a designated desk or podium where speakers will stand when they are addressing the City Council. See diagram below.
8. Depending on class size, select 5-9 City Council Members from your class (randomly or at teacher discretion). Ask those students to sit at the front of the room and bring their SPEAKER FORM with them. Choose one of the Council Members to be the Chairperson. Write the list of Researched Topics on the board and explain that this will be the agenda of today’s Town Hall Meeting. Explain that as the Chairperson announces each topic, any Council Members who had chosen to discuss that topic on their SPEAKER FORM will address everyone first from their seated position at the front of the room. Then the Chairperson will “open the floor for comments.” Any community-members who wanted to address that topic will stand in a line at the podium. Each speaker gets 2 minutes. If any speaker needs more than 2 minutes, they will have to stop at the 2 minute timer and go to the end of the line and wait to speak again. Remind students to STAY IN CHARACTER and that everyone must participate! (Suggestion: collect SPEAKER FORMS after each topic as a way to gauge each student’s preparation.) After each of the students who have chosen that particular topic on their SPEAKER FORM have finished speaking, the City Council will vote on whether to:
 - a. Enact a City Ordinance regarding that safety concern
 - b. “Table the discussion” of that safety concern (to revisit it at a later date)
 - c. Opt NOT to enact any City Ordinances regarding that safety concern
9. After all “Agenda Items” have been discussed, debrief the exercise with the class. What did the City Council Members decide to do? Were certain topics “standing room only” at the podium (with LOTS of people interested in that topic)? Did the City Council Members enact many ordinances? How will those be enforced? How do they affect the citizens, the law enforcement officers, the businesses, the re-election of Council-Members, etc? What statements were most compelling?
10. Have students review the Infographic Handouts for Texas and U.S. Lawmaking and use the final board-game slides in the power-point to discuss and compare the process of passing state and federal laws.
11. Closure or extension activities: Have students visit <https://www.icivics.org/games/lawcraft> and try drafting and passing a federal law. This site is also hyperlinked in the power-point. Or use the “Gaming the System” Extension Activity in which students create a game around the lawmaking process (using the Infographics as game boards).

Extension for Gifted/Talented:

Have students complete the “Gaming the System” Extension Activity, or have students write a formal letter to the Anytown City Council as themselves or as their Community-Member (character) expressing their personal opinion on the passing of laws to improve traffic safety. The letter should focus on one issue and should include the following: background information on the issue, background information on themselves, at least 2 supporting reasons to make legislation, 1 expert’s opinion, and their final recommendation for legislation on the issue.

STUDENT HANDOUT

Welcome to Anytown, TEXAS!!!

Anytown, Texas is a thriving community that is experiencing rapid growth. Builders and land developers are buying land and bringing new homes and businesses to the area. The local school district has nearly doubled in size just in the last 5 years. With the population growth and rapid development, Anytown is also experiencing an increase in traffic crashes and serious traffic safety concerns. While Anytown, Texas used to be a “one horse town” with one traffic light on Main Street, it is now a booming destination with shopping, restaurants, a metropolitan hospital, resort hotels, and a state-of-the-art minor league sports arena.

The Anytown City Council is holding an open Town-Hall Meeting for citizens to attend and voice their concerns regarding traffic-related safety measures to keep citizens safe. Anytown would like to enact one or more city ordinances very soon directed at preventing one of the following dangerous issues; but how will they choose where to focus their efforts? The City Council would like YOUR input as to which issue is most important so that they can take aim at preventing dangerous driving conditions in Anytown, Texas!

YOUR TASK AS A CONCERNED CITIZEN (Research, then Role-Play!):

Each group will be assigned a traffic safety issue to research. Once your group has submitted its research results, each person will be assigned a ROLE to play as a community-member. On the day of the Town Hall meeting, each community-member will speak before the City Council to persuade the Council which traffic safety issue they feel is most important for creating a City Ordinance. Remember that your ROLE may affect how you feel about the given issues, and you will want to stay in character!

ISSUES TO BE ASSIGNED FOR RESEARCH:

Drowsy Driving	Aggressive Driving
Driving While Intoxicated	School Zones & Construction Zones
Speeding	Helmet Use for Bicyclists and Motorcyclists
Distracted Driving	

SUGGESTED SITES FOR BEGINNING RESEARCH:

Texas Motor Vehicle Crash Statistics: <http://www.txdot.gov/government/enforcement/annual-summary.html>

National Center for Statistics and Analysis (NCSA) Motor Vehicle Traffic Crash Data: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/#/>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (Risky Driving): <https://www.nhtsa.gov/risky-driving>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (Road Safety): <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety>

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (Technology): <https://www.nhtsa.gov/technology-innovation>

Municipal Traffic Safety Initiative (MTSI) impaired driving facts page: <http://www.tmcec.com/mtsi/impaired-driving-facts-stats/>

COMMUNITY-MEMBER ROLES:

Anytown Police Department Patrol Officer

Local Athlete (Triathlons), semi-famous

President of Company hoping to build a Toll-Road that bypasses Anytown

Owner of local Taxi Company "Anywhere in Anytown"

Paramedic and part-time 911 Dispatch Operator

Graduate of Anytown High School, developing an App for cell-phones that sends Auto-Reply if driving car

Anytown High School Teacher of the Year

President of non-profit organization that operates a homeless shelter and delivers meals to the elderly

Construction Site Manager for Anytown Home Builders

Courier / Package delivery driver for national company that uses on-board computer for location accuracy

Owner of Custom Motorcycle Shop

Defense Attorney

Healthcare worker at Anytown Metropolitan Hospital

Principal of Anytown Elementary

Local Restaurant Owner, "Anytime Dining," open 24 hours

Owner of Anytown Cell & Cable Company, currently marketing High Speed FIOS and unlimited data packages

President of "Safest and Smartest Car on the Planet" Manufacturing Company

Professional YouTube Sensation

WWII Veteran who grew up in Anytown when it was tiny and has 17 great-grandchildren

Owner of Anytown Hotel, Resort, and Spa

Single Adult with 2 dogs who just moved to Anytown from New York City

Janitor who works full-time as the night shift clean-up crew at Anytown Arena (works after every game)

Corporate Executive who drives through 6 school zones on the way to work (due to increase in schools)

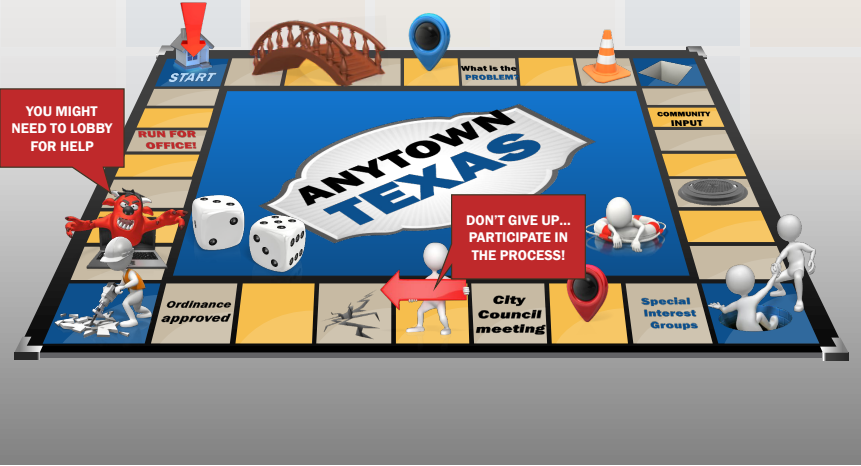
Anytown PTA President; has 2 kids who attend Anytown Middle School

Anytown Prosecutor

Prominent British Scientist who does free-lance research for large companies in Anytown and owns a motorcycle

Owner of Anytown Concrete and Steel Company

The Game of Law-Making



If the U.S. Congress makes U.S. Laws, and the State of Texas Legislature makes Texas Laws, then who makes Local Laws (and what do we call these laws)?



If the U.S. Congress makes U.S. Laws, and the State of Texas Congress makes Texas Laws, then who makes Local Laws (and what do we call these laws)? **City Council, Ordinances**



LET YOUR PARTICIPATION **BEGIN!**



LET YOUR PARTICIPATION BEGIN!



Step 2:
A GOOD example
of a Town Hall...
(Click the Stop)



START HERE

**Welcome to
Anytown, Texas!**
Read the scenario...

**Move 2 steps
Forward...**



RESEARCH

Complete your
Research
Results Page



**ALMOST THERE...
JUST A FEW MORE
MILES!**



ASSIGN COMMUNITY - MEMBER ROLES

Review the Research [Gallery Walk] & Complete Speaker Form



ALMOST THERE... JUST A FEW MORE MILES!

TIME FOR THE



ASSIGN The CITY COUNCIL



SET THE AGENDA



EVERYONE SPEAKS

RESEARCH RESULTS

ISSUE:

Group Members:

Background Information

Expert Opinions & Statistics

Relevant Examples (Real Life Applications)

How Other Towns, Cities, States, or Countries Have Responded to the Issue (Real World Applications)

Specific Suggestion for City Council Regarding This Issue

Community-Member SPEAKER FORM

Your NAME:

Your Community-Member Description (as assigned by your teacher):

Create a name for your Community-Member:

As you look at each of the groups' research during the Gallery Walk, what research, statistics, or information do you find most compelling or convincing?

What issue will your COMMUNITY-MEMBER want to address at the Town Hall Meeting?

What will you (in character, as your COMMUNITY-MEMBER) try to persuade the City Council to do (or not do)?

What are your BEST arguments in favor of your position?

What are some arguments AGAINST your position?

How can you refute these arguments?

“Gaming the System” Competition

Your group must create a board game to help other students understand how our legislature enacts laws. You must use the “How Our Laws Are Made” poster (link below) as part of the game or as a game board. Complete the handout with your group with all of the game details, and be sure to explain the rules and HOW to PLAY in a manner that others can easily understand. Your classmates will actually play your game, and you will play theirs!

Materials Needed:

Poster/Gameboard - poster to use for board-game can be found at:

[U.S. Version]

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Visualization-of-How-a-Bill-Becomes-a-Law_Mike-WIRTH.jpg

[Texas Version]

<http://sbisdlegislative.blogspot.com/2013/04/infographic-how-bill-becomes-law.html>

Optional: Game Pieces, Dice or Spinner (Remember, spend your time creating the rules of the game, **not** elaborate game pieces. Keep it as simple as possible because getting a law passed is hard enough!)

“Gaming the System” Competition

Your Game Details

Group members (We need to know who created this game in case we have questions when we play it.):

Object of the Game:

How many people can play?

How to Play (be specific):

Other Rules:

Hints, tips, tricks, or other things we need to know:

HOW TEXAS LAWS ARE MADE



First Reading and Referral to Committee

Introduce Legislation
beginning 60 days prior to session

Committee Work

+
The House has 150 members. The Senate has 31 members. Sessions held biennially for 140 days. Bills can originate in either chamber.

LEGEND

House ■ Senate ■ Governor

Chance for bill failure Extra info

Design by: MikeWirthArt.com

A senator may call for written notice of a hearing 48 hours in advance, a tactic used to slow down or defeat a bill.

First Reading and Referral to Committee

Approved House bill and amendments printed and sent to Senate for consideration.



Tagging

Committee Work

House bill on Senate floor

+
House bill sent to Senate

Public Hearings

Debate and Amend

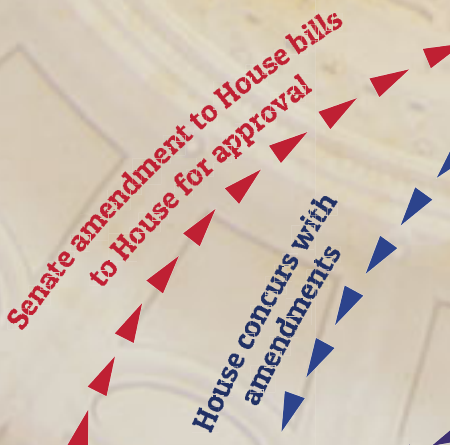
Majority vote of committee membership required.

Committee Report



A senator may filibuster and hold the floor for an unlimited debate.

Placed on regular order of business



A 2/3 vote required to bring bill to Senate floor.

Second Reading

Debate and Amend

Third Reading

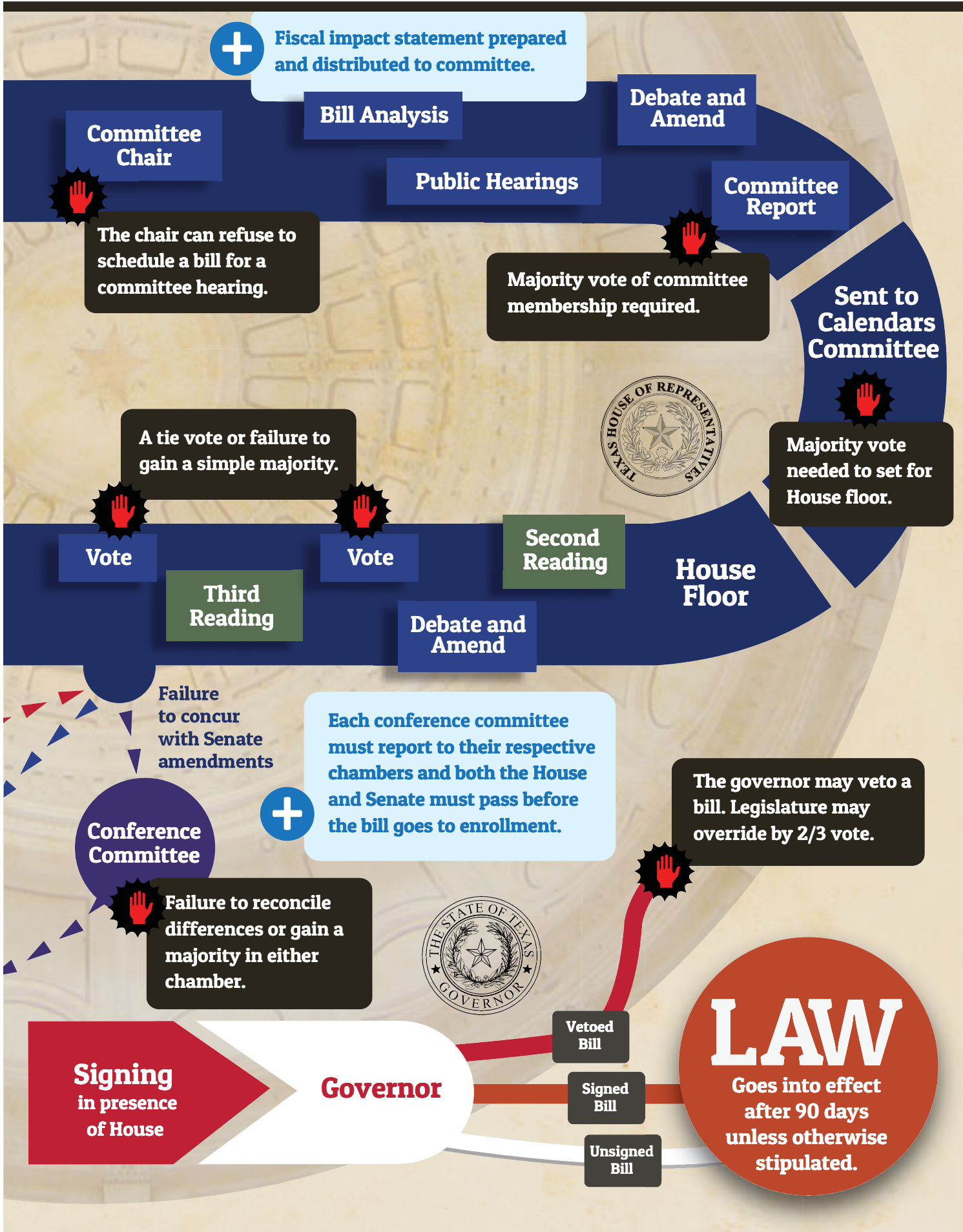
Vote

Vote

Enrollment

A tie vote or failure to gain a simple majority.

DESIGN: MIKEWIRTHART.COM & SUZANNE COOPER-GUASCO, PH.D.



HOW OUR LAWS ARE MADE

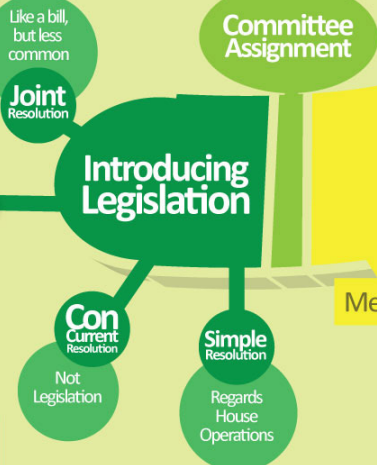


Lobbyist
 A **Lobbyist** is an activist paid by an interest group to promote their position in the legislature. He/She can also work to change public opinion through advertising and other media outlets.

- Representative
- A State Legislature
- The People
- Executive Branch

Bill

Introducing Legislation



+ All legislation involving appropriations must originate in HOR.

+ The code of a bill
H. R. 301 [110]
 House Of Representatives # in which bill was received Congressional Session

+ **CBO** or Congressional Budget office is a non-partisan office charged with checking and creating budget estimates.

CBO must confirm the bill adheres to spending and revenue constraints in most recent budget.

HOR Act
Intro Legis

Budget & Engrossment

Reconciliation

House Vote
 A simple majority is required to pass a bill.
 could fail to pass.

House Action
 Vote on each amendment individually.
 could send back to committee

Committee Rises
 Debate closes

Debate & Amend

Second Reading
 Bill read section by section only germane amendments proposed and must include a list of "earmarks".

Committee of the Whole
 Quorum of one hundred required to open debate. Chair determines length of debate.

Put on Calendar

Report

Includes position for changes estimate for

Final Reading & Vote
 Vote on final and proposed

Mark Up
 Edit and revise to reflect hearings.

Meetings

Public Hearings
 Collect information and testimony from opponents and supporters.

+ HOR has 435 members and 20 standing committees.

+ Extra Information

