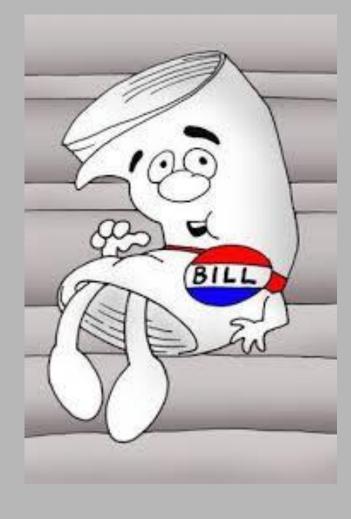




How a Bill Becomes Law

(Or Dies Trying)



Remember this guy?

He made everything sound so simple.



It is NOT actually that simple.



This guide will show you how the process really works.



Important Note

It is much easier to kill a bill than it is to pass one and that is a good thing.

As much as we may want our good bills to make it through, we don't want to have to spend all our time on defense against bad bills.





Bill Naming System

Chamber—All pieces of legislation begin with a "H" for House or an "S" for Senate.

Type—It is then followed by the notation for the type of legislation, "B" for bill, "R" for Resolution, "CR" for Concurrent Resolution, and "JR" for Joint Resolution.

Number—Each piece of legislation is assigned a number, typically in the order in which it was filed. The lower numbers, however, are usually reserved for the budget bill, omnibus bills, and other bills expected to be especially significant. Please note that each chamber has its own numbering system so, for example, there will be an SB 5 and an HB 5. Also, the numbers are recycled each session, including special sessions, so it is very important to know which session you are searching for a particular bill.

Examples:

Senate Bill 65 is SB 65.

House Joint Resolution 7 is HJR 7.



Filing a Bill



Bill filing can begin the first Monday after the general election preceding the regular legislative session or within 30 days prior to a special session.



Bills must be filed within 60 days of the start of session.



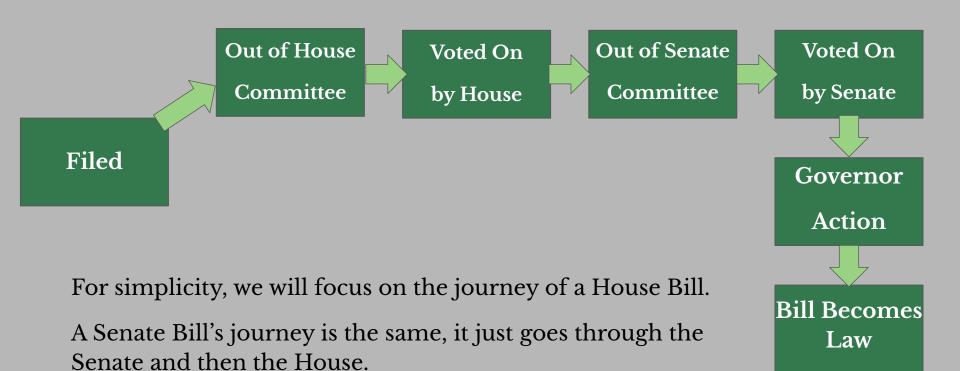
Authors—The legislator who files the bill is the official author. The person who actually wrote it, however, could be anyone. Often bills are written by subject matter experts or the staff of the Texas Legislative Council.

Coauthors—The legislators willing to add their names to the bill. The number of Coauthors can indicate the amount of support a bill has from other legislators and boost the bill, but this support does not guarantee the passage of the bill. Pay attention to the date the coauthor was added. Did the legislator get behind it early, jump on the bandwagon late in the session, or sign on after the bill was already dead?



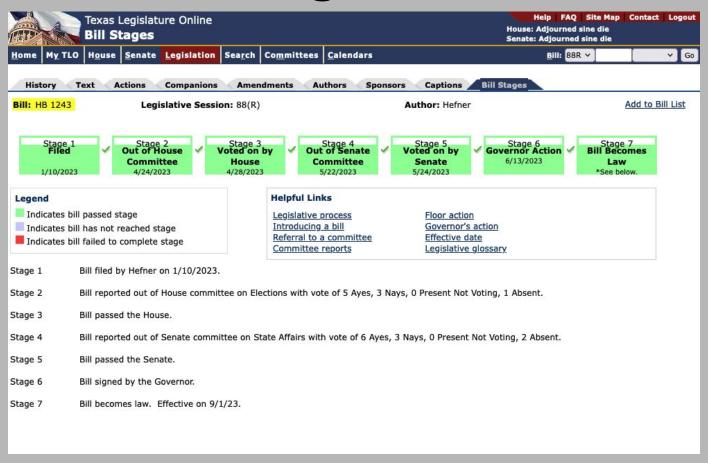


Bill Stages: On the Surface



"Bill Stages" in TLO





Actions: (descending date order)

Viewing Votes: Most Recent House Vote | Most Recent Senate Vote

Viewing Votes: Most Recent House Vote Most Recent Senate Vote									
	Description	Comment	<u>Date</u> ▼	Time	Journal Page				
Е	Effective on 9/1/23		06/13/2023						
Е	Signed by the Governor		06/13/2023		6491				
E	Sent to the Governor		05/30/2023		6489				
S	Signed in the Senate		05/29/2023		3303				
Н	Signed in the House		05/29/2023		6485				
Н	Reported enrolled		05/28/2023	09:14 PM	6488				
Н	Senate adopts conf. comm. report-reported		05/28/2023		6425				
S	Record vote		05/28/2023		3233				
S	Senate adopts conference committee report		05/28/2023		3233				
S	House adopts conf. comm. report-reported		05/28/2023		3194				
Н	Statement(s) of vote recorded in Journal		05/28/2023		6169				
Н	Record vote	RV#2231	05/28/2023		6168				
Н	House adopts conference committee report		05/28/2023		6167				
Н	Conf. Comm. Report distributed		05/27/2023	07:01 PM					
S	Conference committee report filed		05/27/2023		3127				
Н	Senate appoints conferees-reported		05/26/2023		5896				
Н	Senate grants request for conf comm-reported		05/26/2023		5896				
S	Senate appoints conferees		05/26/2023		3041				
S	Senate grants request for conference comm.		05/26/2023		3041				
S	House appoints conferees-reported		05/26/2023		3006				
S	House requests conference committee-reported		05/26/2023		3006				
S	House refuses to concur-reported		05/26/2023		3006				
Н	House appoints conferees		05/26/2023		5659				
Н	House requests conference committee		05/26/2023		5659				
Н	House refuses to concur in Senate amendments		05/26/2023		5659				
Н	Senate Amendments Analysis distributed		05/25/2023	01:32 PM					
Н	Senate Amendments distributed		05/25/2023	01:31 PM					
Н	Senate passage as amended reported		05/25/2023		5290				
S	Record vote		05/24/2023		2713				
S	Passed		05/24/2023		2713				
S	Read 3rd time		05/24/2023		2713				
S	Record vote		05/24/2023		2713				
S	Rules suspended-Regular order of business		05/24/2023		2712				
S	Record vote		05/24/2023		2559				
S	Read 2nd time & passed to 3rd reading		05/24/2023		2559				
S	Record vote		05/24/2023		2559				
S	Rules suspended-Regular order of business		05/24/2023		2559				
S	Not again placed on intent calendar		05/24/2023						
S	Co-sponsor authorized		05/24/2023		2681				
s	Placed on intent calendar		05/23/2023						
S	Co-sponsor authorized		05/23/2023		2539				

The Actual Journey

s	Co-sponsor authorized		05/23/2023		2539
s	Committee report printed and distributed		05/22/2023	06:29 PM	
s	Reported favorably as substituted		05/22/2023		2429
s	Vote taken in committee		05/21/2023		
s	Considered in public hearing		05/21/2023		
s	Left pending in committee		05/15/2023		
s	Testimony taken in committee		05/15/2023		
S	Considered in public hearing		05/15/2023		
S	Scheduled for public hearing on		05/15/2023		
S	Referred to State Affairs		05/01/2023		1441
s	Read first time		05/01/2023		1441
S	Received from the House		05/01/2023		1413
н	Reported engrossed		04/28/2023	03:08 PM	2578
Н	Statement(s) of vote recorded in Journal		04/28/2023		2389
Н	Record vote	RV#685	04/28/2023		2389
Н	Passed		04/28/2023		2389
Н	Read 3rd time		04/28/2023		2388
1	Statement(s) of vote recorded in Journal		04/27/2023		2286
+	Record vote	RV#649	04/27/2023		2286
1	Passed to engrossment		04/27/2023		2286
1	Statement(s) of vote recorded in Journal		04/27/2023		2281
1	Record vote	RV#648	04/27/2023		2281
1	Amendment fails of adoption	2-Manuel	04/27/2023		2274
4	Statement(s) of vote recorded in Journal		04/27/2023		2274
+	Record vote	RV#647	04/27/2023		2274
4	Amendment fails of adoption	1-Bucy	04/27/2023		2272
1	Read 2nd time		04/27/2023		2269
1	Placed on Major State Calendar		04/27/2023		
1	Considered in Calendars		04/25/2023		
+	Committee report sent to Calendars		04/25/2023		
1	Committee report distributed		04/25/2023	08:09 AM	
1	Comte report filed with Committee Coordinator		04/24/2023		2048
1	Reported favorably w/o amendment(s)		04/20/2023		
1	Considered in public hearing		04/20/2023		
1	Left pending in committee		04/13/2023		
1	Testimony taken/registration(s) recorded in committee		04/13/2023		
	Considered in public hearing		04/13/2023		
	Scheduled for public hearing on		04/13/2023		
	Referred to Elections		03/03/2023	01:58 PM	437
Н	Read first time		03/03/2023		437
	Filed		01/10/2023		





Committee Process



Filed





Waiting for Hearing.



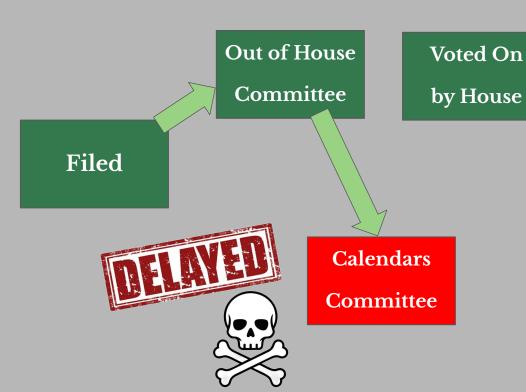
Most bills die here.







Hidden Cause of Death



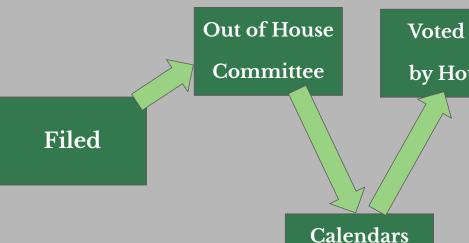
The Calendars Committee is arguably the most powerful committee in the legislature.

They have the power to "protect" legislators from "difficult" votes.

The Poison Pill

Committee





Voted On
by House

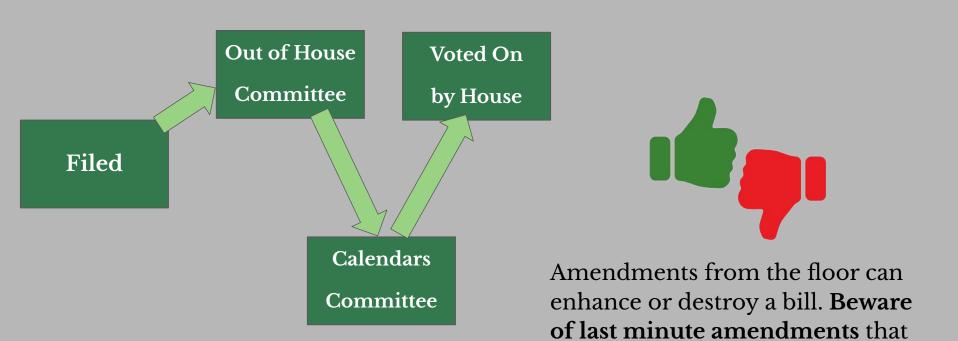




This is usually some small technicality that can send a bill back to committee delaying, or more likely killing, a bill.



Amendments



can completely gut a bill.





Watch for Text Changes



Rinse and Repeat



Filed

If the bill survives the first chamber, it has to face all the same potential delays and deaths in the second chamber.

The bill will need a Sponsor in the other chamber to carry the bill and Cosponsors may also be added.





Note: Companion documents are designated at the time of introduction. These are to be used as an documents rests with the presiding officers of the house and senate.

SB 166 Degree of Association: Very Similar

Author: Hughes

Last Action: 02/15/2023 S Referred to State Affairs

Relating to the punishment for illegal voting; increasing criminal penalties.

HB 52 Degree of Association: Duplicate

Author: Spiller

Last Action: 02/23/2023 H Referred to Elections

Relating to the penalty for the offense of illegal voting; increasing a criminal penalty.

HB 1735 Degree of Association: Duplicate

Author: Leach

Last Action: 03/07/2023 H Referred to Elections

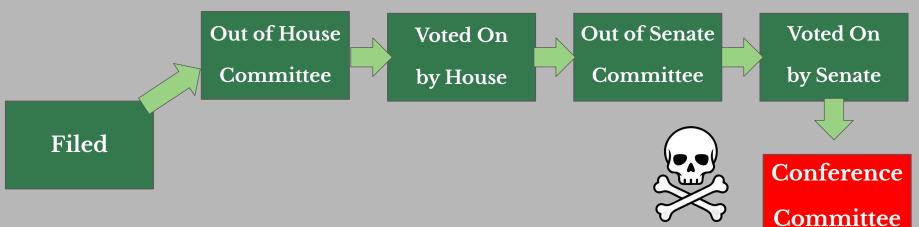
Relating to the penalty for the offense of illegal voting; increasing a criminal penalty.

Companions

If a bill has a companion in the other chamber, it can move more quickly through a substitution.



Conference Committee

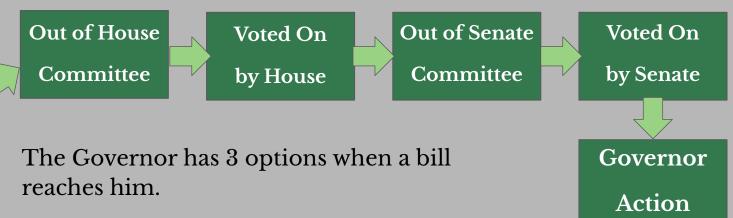


If the House does not accept the version produced by the Senate, they can send the bill to a Conference Committee made up of members of both chambers. They do not have to be the original committee members. This process can improve the bill, but often results in compromise. It can also result in the death of the bill.

Governor Action







1. Sign the bill.

Filed

- 2. Veto the bill.
- 3. Do nothing and it will automatically become law.



The Bill Finally Becomes Law

