How Legislation Is Passed in the Senate

Of the bills introduced in the Senate each session, only a fraction are taken up in committee and only some of those make it to the floor for a vote. Only the Senate can confirm presidential nominations and approve treaties. Individual senators also hold more legislative power than their House colleagues, especially once a bill makes it to the floor. Here we outline the common stages of a public bill as it makes its way through the Senate, though the legislative process is unpredictable and often varies significantly from bill to bill.

1. INTRODUCING LEGISLATION

Any senator may introduce a bill by sub- submitting it to the clerks or on the Senate floor. This senator also introduces the bill and formally nominates the bill. If a senator is in favor of the bill, the bill is considered to be under his name.

2. COMMITTEE WORK

The committee then takes up the bill. Most committees will determine the bill’s subject matter, allow senators to speak on the bill, and table amendments to the bill. Senators may also introduce the bill more formally from the floor, usually delivering a short speech about the legislation. If a senator objects in favor, the bill is considered to be under his name.

3. Markup Session

A markup is a meeting of the committee subcommittee to deliberate and amend the legislation. The committee determines whether the measure pending before a committee should be recommended to the full Senate on a final vote. Amendments may be made in any substantive way.

4. Markup Vote

Prior to forwarding the bill to the full committee, the subcommittee will vote on whether the bill is ready to report the bill to the Senate, whether the bill is ready to report the Senate, or whether the bill is ready to report the Senate. The committee will vote to report the bill to the Senate, the Senate, or both.

5. Final Markup

At this stage, the committee may amend the bill. If substantial amendments were made, the committee may introduce an entirely new bill, which incorporates all of the committee’s changes. If not, the committee may simply report the bill without amendments.

6. Committee Action To Report A Bill

The full committee then votes on whether the bill is ready to report the bill to the Senate. If yes, a committee report is written. The report describes the purpose and scope of the measure, the Senate report numbers and reports on the measure, and any finding in the measure.

7. Placed On Calendar

If the report is favorable, the bill is placed on the Senate Calendar. If the report is unfavorable, the bill is not placed on the Senate Calendar. The floor is open for debate and amendments are approved on a recorded vote. The floor is open for debate and amendments are approved on a recorded vote. The floor is open for debate and amendments are approved on a recorded vote. The floor is open for debate and amendments are approved on a recorded vote.

8. Lay The Bill Before The Senate

A bill is brought to the floor as two methods. Most often, the majority leader asks for unanimous consent to bring the bill to the floor. If the bill is a complex measure, the majority leader may be able to defer the vote on the bill. The majority leader may be able to defer the vote on the bill.

9. Unlimited Debate

The floor is open for debate and amendments are approved on a recorded vote. Members may speak as long as they want and amendments are made on a recorded vote. Members may speak as long as they want and amendments are made on a recorded vote.

10. Amending Process

The first amendment usually considered is the amendment by the majority leader. After these are adopted, senators can offer amendments to any of the measures pending. The Senate votes on each amendment. Amendments that are adopted are debated.

11. Roll Call

The final amendment usually considered is the amendment by the majority leader. After these are adopted, senators can offer amendments to any of the measures pending. The Senate votes on each amendment. Amendments that are adopted are debated.