

How a bill becomes a law essay sample



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Many bills every year go through the process of becoming a law, and not all of them make it. This process can be quick, or take a very long time. Looking at the process can be a fun and exciting journey that can help us better understand how bills work, and how they become laws. Come with me on this fun and exciting journey of how a bill becomes a law.

After the bill is written, it needs to be introduced. There are two ways this can happen, through senate or through congress. When going through congress any member can introduce a bill by handing it to a clerk who will put it in a box. In the senate, you need to be recognized by the presiding officer then announcing the bill's introduction recognizes it. From there, either way, the bill will be numbered and printed. If the bill is not passed within one session of congress then it will have to go through the introduction process again. This is only the first step in becoming a law, there is still more to go.

The bill is then referred to a committee for consideration. This is done one of two ways the speaker of the house or the Senate's presiding officer, depending on if it was brought to congress or to the senate. This is the part where most bills will die, and they cannot go any further. The bill will go through committee and subcommittee hearings depending on the topic of the bill. If these committees choose to go on after this they will revise and make additions to the bill. These revisions and additions then need to be approved by the entire house. Then if the majority votes favorably the bill can go forward. Once voted on to move forward it will need an explanation of why the committee favors it, and if any changes are wanted, why they

wanted those changes. Along with this, if any committee members oppose the bill they can include why they disagree with the majority.

This bill is now about half way through the process of becoming a law, but the next step can be a long process. Once the bill passes the committees then it needs to be put on the calendar for a floor action. Even though it is put on the calendar, in the House, they have rules that determine when it will be considered, and sometimes it will not be considered at all. The Senate has no such rules for bills, they will be considered at any time, in any order when the majority chooses. Now that the bill has finally made it on the floor this bill can be debated. In the house bills are discussed by the “ Committee of the Whole” this means whatever committee members are on the floor at that time as long as there are at least 100 of them. To pass the bill a quorum, which is half of the membership, must be present. At the Senate there is not the same rules for discussion or passing the bill. The problem with this is that there can be filibusters and/or irrelevant amendments. These can be broken with a 3/5 vote of all of the senators.

Once the floor action is approved the bill is almost a law. Now the bill will go to the President of the United States to either approve or veto the bill. If the bill is vetoed it will return to the house it originally came from and there they can try to override the veto with a 2/3 vote to override the veto. If this happens then the bill will become a law even without the president’s approval. On the other hand if the president approves the bill, then it is officially a law.

What a long and amazing journey this bill took. Starting out as a bill and going through introduction, committees, revisions, floor actions, meeting the President of the United States, and all of the other steps in-between. For a bill to become a law takes hard work and dedication. I hope you enjoyed the trip through the life cycle of a bill as much as I did.