

How a Bill becomes a Law in Michigan

Adapted from the Michigan Legislative Service Bureau publication of the same name.

Step 1: Bills are Introduced

- ✓ Someone comes up with an idea (usually in the form of a complaint or suggestion from a constituent).
- ✓ A legislator works with staff to craft a bill that changes current law to address the complaint or suggestion.
- ✓ Bills get a number – House Bills start at #4001; Senate Bills at #1.
- ✓ MANY bills are introduced, as many as 5,000 in a two-year legislative session.

Step 2: Bills are Referred to a Committee

- ✓ All bills are referred to either a standing committee, or the appropriations committee.
- ✓ Very few bills are actually discussed by a committee – the committee chair decides which bills are discussed, and which aren't. Many go through the entire two-year legislative session without ever being discussed at all.

Step 3: Bills are Discussed by a Committee

- ✓ Committee members discuss and debate the bill.
- ✓ The committee may also hold public hearings on the bill – opportunity for public input.

Step 4: Committee Action

- ✓ Committees will vote the bill out of committee – a majority of committee members decides to recommend if they think the bill should be passed, or they can make changes to the bill, or they can suggest that another committee look at the bill.
- ✓ Amendments result in substitute bills.

Step 5: Floor Action

- ✓ A majority of the full House or Senate decides to pass the bill.
- ✓ Legislators can vote to return the bill to a committee for further discussion.
- ✓ Some bills are postponed for consideration, and some are tabled and are not considered again.

Step 6: Step 2-5 All Over Again

- ✓ Bills need to pass both the House and Senate.
- ✓ Bills passed in both chambers need to be identical.

Step 7: The Governor Decides

- ✓ The Governor can veto any bill, or part of any appropriations bill.
- ✓ Needs a 2/3 majority in the House and Senate to override a veto.