How a Bill Becomes a Law

About 10,000 bills are introduced per year. Each is given a number and assigned to a committee. There are 22 committees in the House of Representatives and 15 committees in the Senate.

BILL IS DRAFTED
Members of Congress, the Executive Branch, and even outside groups can draft (write or draw up) bills.

HOUSE
Bill is introduced and assigned to a Committee which refers to a Subcommittee. Only members can introduce bills.

SENATE
Bill is introduced and assigned to a Committee which refers to a Subcommittee.

SUBCOMMITTEE
Members study the bill, hold hearings, and debate provisions. Marks up the bill. If it passes goes to Committee.

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COMMITTEE
Full Committee considers the bill. If it approves the bill in some form, the bill goes to the Rules Committee.

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RULES COMMITTEE
It issues a rule to govern debate on the floor. Sends it to the Full House.

FULL SENATE
Debates the bill and may amend it. If it is different from the House version, it must go to a Conference Committee.

FULL HOUSE
Debates the bill and may amend it. If it is different from the Senate version, it must go to a Conference Committee.

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE
Senators and Representatives meet to reconcile differences between bills. When agreement is reached, a compromise bill is sent to Full Senate.

FULL HOUSE
Votes on bill, if it passes it goes to the President.

FULL SENATE
Votes on bill, if passes it goes to the President.

PRESIDENT
Can sign or veto the bill. Congress can override it by 2/3 majority vote in the House and Senate. President can sign the bill, veto it or do nothing.
How a Bill Becomes a Law Flowchart

BILL IS ____________
Who can draft or write a bill?

HOUSE

SENATE

SUBCOMMITTEE

SUBCOMMITTEE

COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE

RULES COMMITTEE

FULL SENATE

FULL HOUSE

CONFERENCE COMMITTEE

FULL SENATE

FULL HOUSE

PRESIDENT

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