

# Virginia General Assembly 101



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SAFE, INC.

RALLY DAY 2017

# Where Laws Are Made



**BICAMERAL LEGISLATURE (2 SIDES)  
PART-TIME LEGISLATORS**

**HOUSE OF DELEGATES – 100 (2 YEARS)  
SENATE – 40 (4 YEARS)**

**ODD YEARS – SHORT SESSION OF 45 DAYS  
EVEN YEARS – LONG SESSION OF 60 DAYS**

# Committees



## House (14)

- [Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources](#)
- [Appropriations](#)
- [Commerce and Labor](#)
- [Counties, Cities and Towns](#)
- [Courts of Justice](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Finance](#)
- [General Laws](#)
- [Health, Welfare and Institutions](#)
- [Militia, Police and Public Safety](#)
- [Privileges and Elections](#)
- [Rules](#)
- [Science and Technology](#)
- [Transportation](#)

## Senate (11)

- [Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources](#)
- [Commerce and Labor](#)
- [Courts of Justice](#)
- [Education and Health](#)
- [Finance](#)
- [General Laws and Technology](#)
- [Local Government](#)
- [Privileges and Elections](#)
- [Rehabilitation and Social Services](#)
- [Rules](#)
- [Transportation](#)



## How does a bill become a law?

- ❑ Bill
- ❑ Patron/Sponsor
- ❑ Refer
- ❑ (Sub) Committees
- ❑ Testify

- Bills are drafted to create, change or remove a law
- Bills must be introduced by a legislator (patron/sponsor), but anyone can share an idea for a bill
- Once drafted, the bill is submitted, given a number and referred to the appropriate committee (and maybe sub committee)
- Bills are discussed in committee, including public comment



## How does a bill become a law?

- ❑ Report
- ❑ Floor – read, amend, vote (x3)

- If the committee votes in favor of the bill, it is reported to the floor
- Bills must be printed on the agenda 3x – first day it is read, second it is amended and third it is voted on
- If the bill is voted for by a simple majority, it goes to the other side (House to Senate; Senate to House)



## How does a bill become a law?

- ❑ Cross over
- ❑ Gov'r – sign, amend, veto
- ❑ Enacted – July 1st

- Process repeats in the other side, if there are amendments, then sent back to first side
- Half way thru session is **CROSS OVER** – ALL bills must be voted on at this time and sent to other side, otherwise they are dead
- Bills that pass both sides are sent to the Governor to sign, amend or veto
- If signed or no action, then the bill is law on July 1<sup>st</sup>
- If amended, then sent back to GA to review in April

# Also, The Budget (Bill)



**GOVERNOR SERVES A 4 YEAR TERM**

**HALFWAY THROUGH, GOVERNOR PROPOSES  
A 2 YEAR BUDGET**

**(1<sup>ST</sup> 2 YEARS OPERATES ON PREVIOUS  
GOVR'S BUDGET)**

**ALL STATE INCOME & EXPENSES**

**SHOWS POLITICAL PRIORITIES & LEGACY**

**HOUSE & SENATE MUST BOTH VOTE FOR  
SAME BUDGET (SIMILAR TO BILLS)**

# So where does Advocacy fit in?



- Find out committee appointments, especially the money committees – that's where the power is
- Stay informed! – YOU inform your legislators!
- Meet with legislators – you're their constituent and connection to the people!
- Before, during & after session – best to meet before, less busy
- Use personal stories – biggest appeal



# Questions?



[VPAP.org](http://VPAP.org) – daily news updates

[lis.virginia.gov](http://lis.virginia.gov) – bill tracking

[richmondsunlight.com](http://richmondsunlight.com) – bill tracking

[viriniageneralassembly.gov](http://viriniageneralassembly.gov) – basic info, live streams of session

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