



# Louisiana Legislature Primer

## Louisiana Legislature's Standing Committees

### House of Representatives

- Administration of Criminal Justice
- Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural
- Appropriations
- Civil Law and Procedure
- Commerce
- Education
- Health and Welfare
- House and Governmental Affairs
- Insurance
- Judiciary
- Labor and Industrial Relations
- Municipal, Parochial, and Cultural Affairs
- Natural Resources and Environment
- Retirement
- Transportation, Highways, and Public Works
- Ways and Means

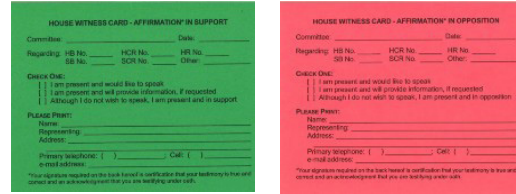
### Senate

- Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural
- Commerce, Consumer Protection and International Affairs
- Education
- Environmental Quality
- Finance
- Health and Welfare
- Insurance
- Judiciary A
- Judiciary B
- Judiciary C
- Labor and Industrial Relations
- Local and Municipal Affairs
- Natural Resources
- Retirement
- Revenue and Fiscal Affairs
- Senate and Governmental Affairs
- Transportation, Highways, and Public Works

## Attending Committee Meetings

- ➔ **Senate Committee Rooms A-B,C,E, and F** are located on the ground floor in Duval Hall. Access to the John Hainkel Room is down a set of steps at the end of Duval Hall. An elevator is available.
- ➔ **Can't clap, snap, or cheer** in chamber or committee rooms.
- ➔ **Before testifying you should be prepped** (*Find a PCEJ staff member for help with testimony prep*)
- ➔ In committee meetings bills will either be: voluntarily deferred, involuntarily deferred, voted favorably, or unfavorably.
- ➔ **You may not approach the desk** to speak to committee members.
- ➔ The committee hearing is an opportunity to inform legislators of your position regarding pending legislation or just to observe the legislative process. However, the length of the meeting agenda and the number of people who wish to testify may require the imposition of time limitations. If you are with a group, it is advisable to appoint a spokesperson.
- ➔ Please place ALL cell phones and other electronic devices on vibrate mode. You may take phone calls in the hallway only, not in committee rooms.
- ➔ Food and drinks are prohibited in committee hallways and committee rooms.

## What are Green Cards and Red Cards?



**HOUSE WITNESS CARD - AFFIRMATION IN SUPPORT**

Committee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Regarding: HB No. \_\_\_\_\_ HCR No. \_\_\_\_\_ HR No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 SB No. \_\_\_\_\_ SCR No. \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check One:**  
 I am present and would like to speak  
 I am present and will provide information, if requested  
 Although I do not wish to speak, I am present and in support

**Please Print:**  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Representing: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Primary telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature required on the back needs a certification that your testimony is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

**HOUSE WITNESS CARD - AFFIRMATION IN OPPOSITION**

Committee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Regarding: HB No. \_\_\_\_\_ HCR No. \_\_\_\_\_ HR No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 SB No. \_\_\_\_\_ SCR No. \_\_\_\_\_ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Check One:**  
 I am present and would like to speak  
 I am present and will provide information, if requested  
 Although I do not wish to speak, I am present and in opposition

**Please Print:**  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Representing: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Primary telephone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_  
 e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Your signature required on the back needs a certification that your testimony is true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

- ➔ A **GREEN CARD** is submitted to show your support for a bill.
- ➔ A **RED CARD** is submitted to share your opposition to a bill.
- ➔ If you submit a card, you have the option to speak but do not have to speak.
- ➔ These Witness Cards are available in the committee room and overflow rooms on the witness tables. Carefully read, fill out, and sign the back of the witness card. Your signature is an oath that you will tell the truth. **If you wish to speak, please check the appropriate box on the card.** Please return completed cards to the designated staff member or sergeant-at-arms.
- ➔ **Important Note:** You must fill out a separate card for each bill you are supporting or opposing.
- ➔ **Your oral and written comments and positions stated on the cards are important and become part of the permanent public record.**



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## Sample Committee Analysis

### **SENATE COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND REAPPORTIONMENT**

SUSAN SMITH, CHAIR

**SUBJECT:** Student poll workers

**EXISTING LAW:**

Existing law requires members of precinct boards (poll workers) to be registered to vote in the precinct in which he or she is assigned or in a precinct in the same general area.

**PROPOSED LAW:**

This bill would allow students to serve as members of precinct boards whether or not they are registered voters. Student poll workers must be at least 16 years of age and be a student in good standing attending a public or private secondary or post-secondary educational institution. No more than two students may serve at the same precinct. Students must also receive approval from their school board to participate.

**COMMENTS:**

1. According to the author, this bill is intended to address the problems of low voter turnout among 18-21 year olds and counties' difficulties staffing polling places on election day.

**POSITIONS:**

Sponsor: Author

**Support:**

Secretary of State Louisiana  
School Boards Association

Opposition: Unknown HEARING DATE: May 5, 2022

# How a Bill Becomes a Law in Louisiana



**IDEA** All legislation begins as an idea. Ideas can come from anyone. The process begins when someone persuades a Senator or Representative to author a bill.



**AUTHOR** A legislator sends the idea and sometimes the language for the bill to the Legislative staff where it is drafted into the actual bill. The drafted bill is returned to the legislator for introduction.

**FIRST READING** A bill's first reading is when the Clerk reads the bill number, the name of the author, and the descriptive title of the bill in the chamber while the legislators are on the floor. The bill then remains on the docket until the second reading.

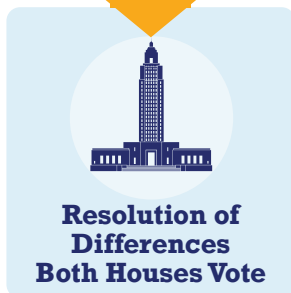


**COMMITTEE HEARINGS** The bill then goes to the Senate or House Rules Committee where it is assigned to the appropriate standing committee for its first hearing. Bills are assigned according to subject area. During the hearing, the author presents the bill, people testify in support or opposition of the bill, and the committee acts on the bill. The committee can pass the bill, pass the bill as amended, or defeat the bill. It takes a majority vote of the membership of the committee to pass a bill. Bills which require money must also be heard in the Senate Finance committee, or House Appropriation Committee.

**SECOND AND THIRD READING** Bills passed by committees are read a second time in the house of origin and then placed in the Daily Digest on Third Reading. When a bill is read the third time it is explained by the author, discussed by the Members and voted on by a roll call vote. Bills generally require a majority vote of the body to be passed out of the chamber.



**REPEAT PROCESS IN OTHER HOUSE** Once the bill has been approved by the house of origin it proceeds to the other house where the procedure is repeated.



**RESOLUTION OF DIFFERENCES** If a bill is amended in the second house, it must go back to the house of origin for concurrence, which is agreement on the amendments. If agreement cannot be reached, the bill moves to a two house conference committee consisting of two Senators and two Representatives to resolve differences. If a compromise is reached, the conference report is voted upon in both houses.



**GOVERNOR** The bill then goes to the Governor. The Governor has three choices. He or she can sign the bill into law, veto the bill, or allow it to become law without his or her signature. A governor's veto can be overridden by a two-thirds vote in both houses. Most bills go into effect on August 1 of the next year. Urgency measures take effect immediately upon being signed by the Governor and chaptered by the Secretary of State.