



How a Bill Becomes a Law Flowchart

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.

SUBCOMMITTEE

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

COMMITTEE

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

RULES COMMITTEE

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

FULL HOUSE

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

FULL HOUSE

Votes on bill, if it 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.

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.

COMMITTEE

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

FULL SENATE

Debates the bill and may amend it. If it is different from the House 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 SENATE

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

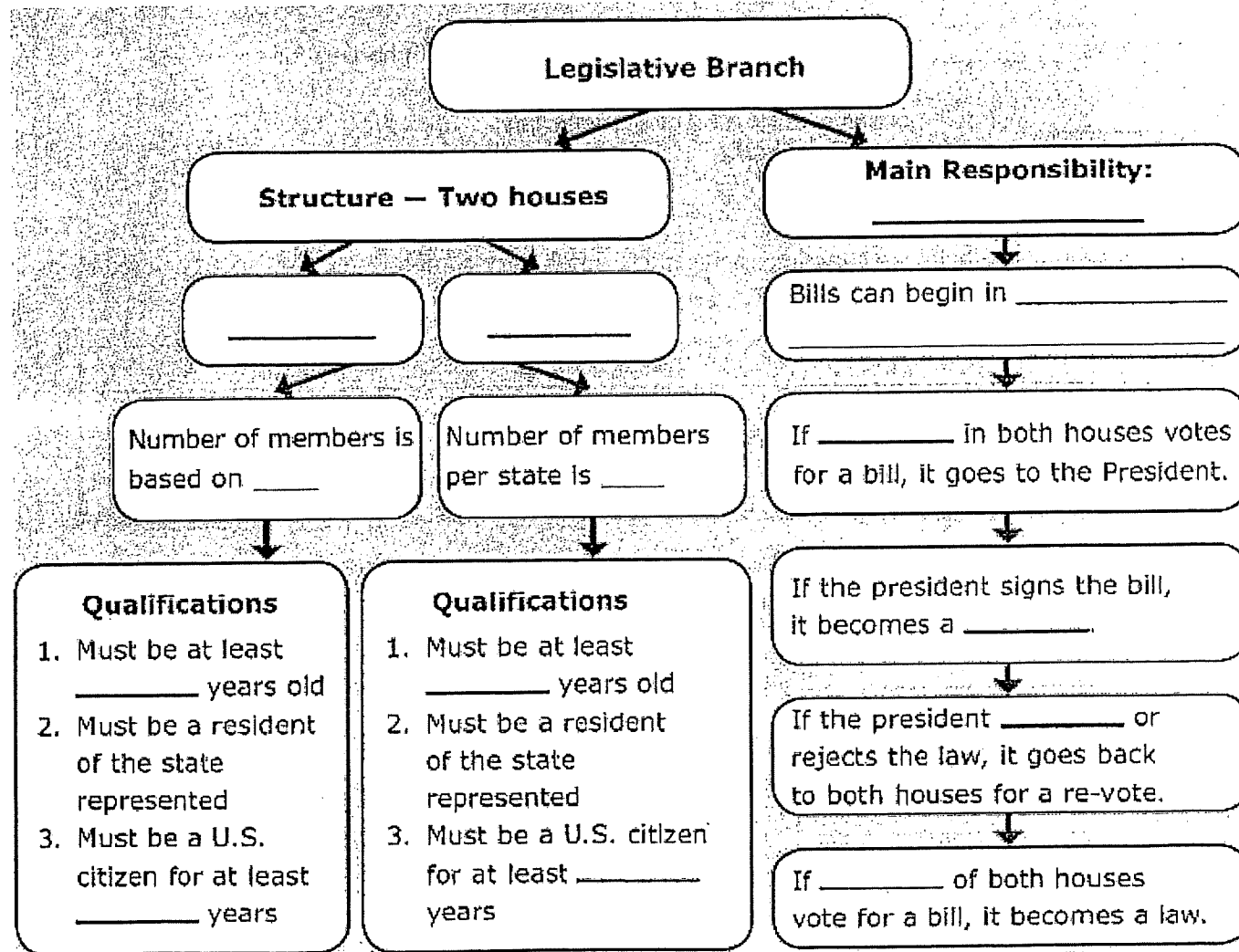


What Do You Know? THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Concept Web

Directions: Complete each part of the web by writing the correct word or phrase from the list below where it belongs.

House of Representatives	either house	law
25	to pass laws	two-thirds
a majority	veto	7
each state's population	Senate	9
30		the same for all states--two




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How a Bill Becomes a Law

Source: Junior Scholastic

About 25,000 bills are introduced in each term of Congress, but only 10 percent become law. These are the steps in the law-making process. A bill may begin in either the House or the Senate except for money bills, which must be introduced in the House.

1. **Bill is Drafted:** Members of Congress, the Executive Branch, and even outside groups can draft (write or draw up) bills.
2. **Introduced in House:** Representative introduces the bill in the House. Only members can introduce bills.
3. **Sent to Committee:** The Speaker of the House sends the bill to a committee.
4. **Committee Action:** Most bills die here. The committee may pigeonhole, table, amend, or vote on the bill. If bill passes, it goes to Rules Committee.
5. **Rules Committee:** It decides the rules for debate, and when the bill will come up for debate.
6. **Floor Action:** House debates the bill, and may add amendments. If a majority votes in favor of the bill, it goes to the Senate.
7. **Introduced in Senate:** A Senator introduces the bill, which is sent to a committee.
8. **Committee Action:** Same procedure as in the House. If the committee majority votes for the bill, it goes to the whole Senate.
9. **Bill Called Up:** Majority floor leader decides when the whole Senate will consider the bill.
10. **Floor Action:** The Bill is debated, and amendments may be added. If a majority votes in favor of the bill, it is returned to the House.
11. **Conference Committee:** If the House rejects any of the changes, the bill goes to a conference committee of members from both houses. It works out a compromise.
12. **Vote on Compromise:** Both houses must approve changes made by the conference committee. If approved, the bill goes to the president.
13. **Presidential Action:** The president may sign (approve) the bill or veto (reject) it. If approved, it becomes law.
14. **Vote to Override:** If the president vetoes the bill, it can still become law if two thirds of both houses vote to override the veto.

Adapted from *Junior Scholastic*.

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Name: _____ Date: _____

Branch Breakdown

	Legislative Branch	
Article of the U.S. Constitution		
Structure of the branch	House of Representatives	Senate
Number of Members		
Elected or Appointed?		
If appointed, how are they approved?		
Requirements to Serve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age • Citizenship Requirements 		
Length of Term		
Role of Branch of		

SENATE LEADERSHIP

(A basic overview)

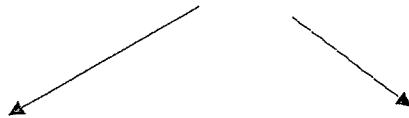
_____ of the _____
(Serves as the president , presiding chairman , of the Senate)

WHO CURRENTLY:

WHAT POLITICAL PARTY:

WHAT STATE DO THEY REPRESENT:

WHAT is the President **pro tempore**:



_____ Leader

WHO Currently:

WHAT Political Party:

WHAT state do they represent:

_____ Leader

WHO Currently:

WHAT Political Party:

WHAT State do they represent:

HOUSE LEADERSHIP

(A basic overview)

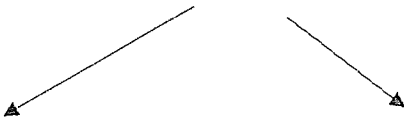
_____ of the _____
(only officer mentioned in the Constitution)

WHO CURRENTLY:

WHAT POLITICAL PARTY:

WHAT STATE DO THEY REPRESENT:

ROLE: (just one or two duties)



<p>_____ Leader</p> <p>WHO Currently:</p> <p>WHAT Political Party:</p> <p>WHAT state do they represent:</p>	<p>_____ Leader</p> <p>WHO Currently:</p> <p>WHAT Political Party:</p> <p>WHAT State do they represent:</p>
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