

## Prezi Presentation: How Does An Idea Become A Law In Florida

Transcript:

### How Does An Idea Become A Law In Florida

1. A concerned citizen, advocacy group, government agency, or legislator has an idea to make the State a better place...
2. Then, the idea is proposed to a legislator or group of legislators in either the House or Senate. If the legislator/s decides it's a good issue, then a bill is drafted.
3. A new bill is filed and given a "First Reading." Then the bill is assigned to a committee or several committees. Each committee is in charge of studying the bill, and reporting its findings to the whole House or Senate.

Definition: A committee is a group of legislators chosen to study proposed bills. Because they are small, committees can look at the bill more closely than the whole House or Senate would be able to do. Committee meetings also allow time for the public to comment on proposed legislation.

The House and Senate both have many committees. Each committee studies different issues, such as education, natural resources, the budget, etc.

Question: Who assigns the bills to committees?

The leader of the House of Representatives is called the Speaker of the House and the leader of the Senate is called the President of the Senate. These positions hold lots of power within the House and Senate, respectively. One of their responsibilities is assigning bills to their chamber's committees. Both also assign legislators to be members of these committees, usually at the start of session.

For Example: There is a proposed bill that would help school districts install speed detectors in school zones. This bill could be assigned to the Transportation Committee, Education Committee, and Budget Committee.

4. In each committee, the bill is debated and amended if changes are needed. If approved in one committee, the bill moves onto the next assigned committee. Each committee studies the bill from a different perspective.

Remember! Citizens can get involved at any point in this process! They can call their elected officials, write them letters and emails, and even schedule a meeting with them to talk about issues.

Committee meetings are also open to the public. Citizens can ask to speak at these meetings to let their legislators know what they think on the matter!

5. If all committees approve the bill, then the bill is placed on the calendar to be heard on the floor. When it comes up on the calendar, it's debated, amended, and then voted on by the entire chamber!
6. **THE BILL IS PASSED!**

But wait...

Now a companion bill must make its way through the other Chamber following the same process!

Definition: A companion bill is a version of the bill that moves through the other chamber. It addresses the same issue, and is very similar in language.

In order for it to become law, both bills must be identical. So, the bills go back and forth between chambers until a consensus is reached or they give up on the idea entirely.

7. Once both Chambers pass an identical form of the bill, it proceeds to the Governor.

The Governor can do one of three things...

1. If the Governor approves of the bill, he/she can simply sign the bill into law.
2. If the Governor doesn't like the bill, he/she can decide to veto the bill. If that happens, the bill will go back to the Legislature where it will need a 2/3 majority vote in both the Senate and the House to override the veto.

Definition: the veto is the power of a chief executive to reject a bill passed by the legislature and prevent or delay it from becoming law.

3. The Governor can also choose not to sign the bill at all. After 7 days the bill becomes law without the Governor's signature.
8. Once the Governor signs it, the seven days pass, or the House and Senate both pass it by a 2/3 majority vote, then...

Congratulations!

**THE IDEA HAS FINALLY BECOME A STATE LAW IN FLORIDA !**

**NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO LEGISLATE!**

Pick on o the issues above, which are real issues from Florida's past.

You will learn more about the bill's pros and cons. Then, you will get to decide if the proposed bill would be beneficial to the State of Florida.

Choose the proposed legislation YOU would like to learn about and debate.

1999 Opportunity Scholarship Program

You get to decide if Florida should provide “Opportunity Scholarships” to students in failing public schools. These scholarships would provide funds for these students to go to a better public school or private school. This program is one part of former Governor Jeb Bush’s A Education Plan.

#### 1982 The Equal Rights Amendment

You get to decide if Florida should ratify the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA). The ERA would guarantee men and women equal rights. Thirty-five states have already ratified the amendment. If Florida does too, it would set the stage for it to be added to the U.S. Constitution.

#### 1961 The Cross Florida Barge Canal

You get to decide if Florida should build a man-made waterway across the state. It will connect the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico. This canal would allow barges to move goods and people more quickly and safely.