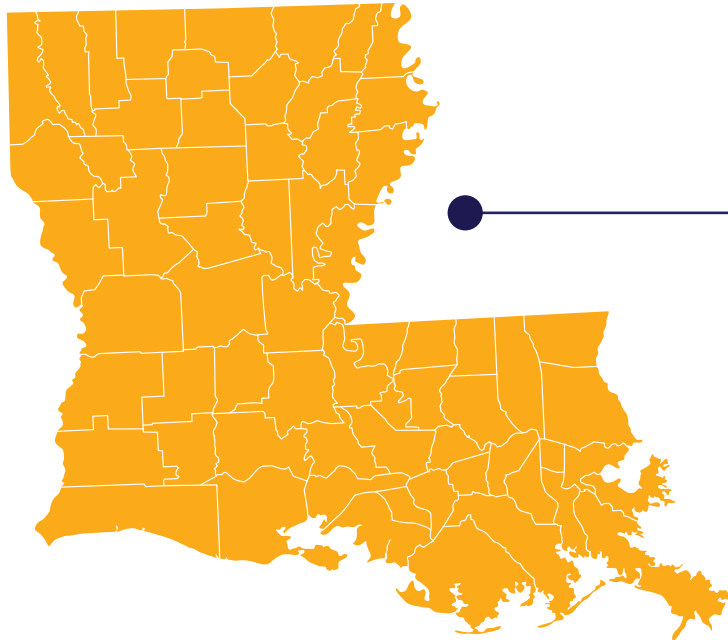




# **WERK THE LEGE:**

**LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY AT A GLANCE**

# HOW THE LEGISLATURE WORKS



Louisiana elects

**105**

STATE REPRESENTATIVES

**39**

STATE SENATORS

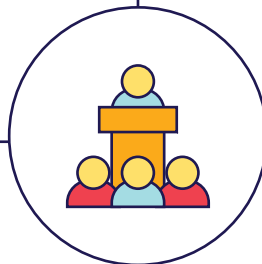
State representatives and senators serve four year terms.

## LEGISLATORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR

DEBATING THE  
MERITS OF BILLS

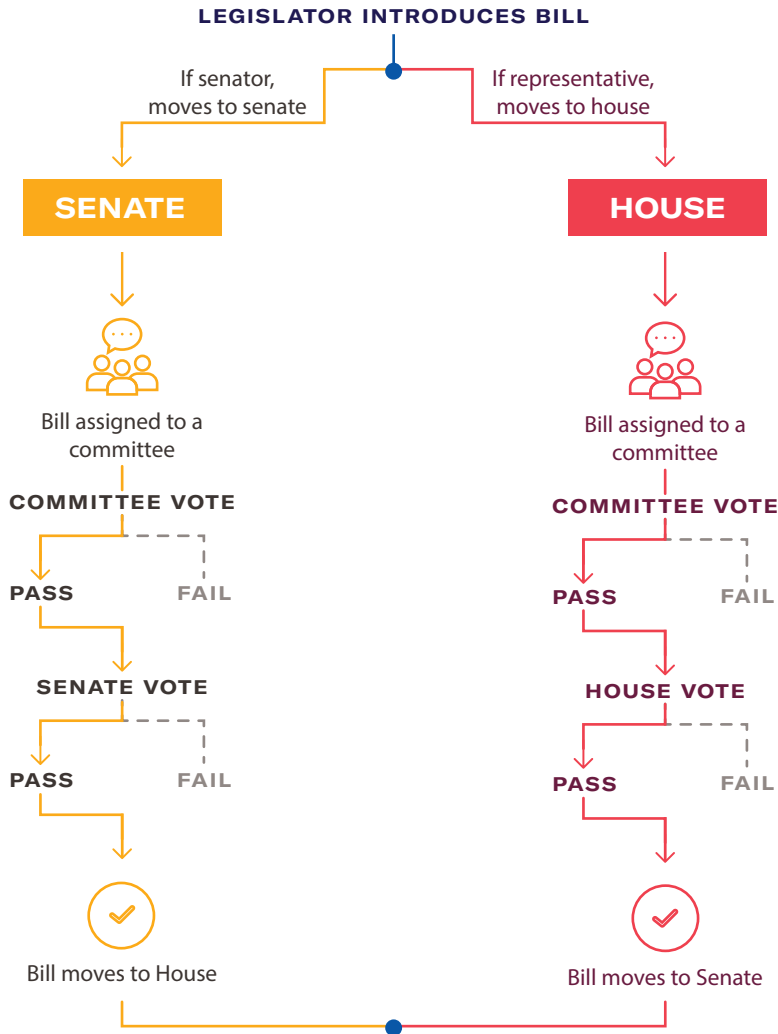


DRAFTING AND  
INTRODUCING BILLS



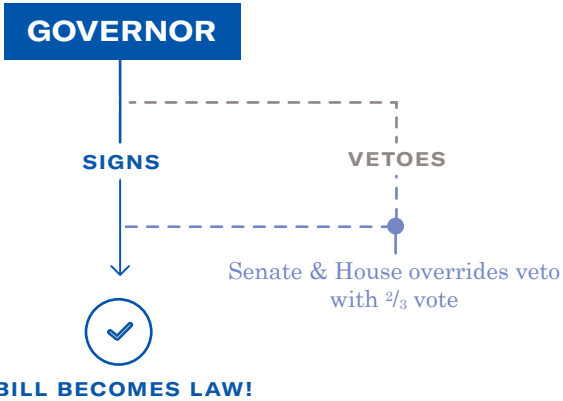
VOTING TO PASS  
OR KILL BILLS

# HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW



**BILL PASSES IN BOTH HOUSES**

Once a bill has made it through one chamber, the process “repeats” in the other chamber. If the bill does not pass in both the House and Senate in the same form, it’s sent to a Conference Committee.



# WHAT YOU CAN DO AND WHEN

## BEFORE A BILL IS INTRODUCED:

- Research the issues, and your legislators.
- Connect with local special interest groups that analyze policy to learn about the bills they are supporting or opposing.
- Encourage your legislators to introduce bills on issues that you care about.
- Tell others why legislators need to act by sharing information in person, Online, and in the news.

**NOTE:** Check the Louisiana Legislature's website often:

<https://legis.la.gov/Legis/Home.aspx>.

This includes information about all bills and the calendar for the day.

## WHEN A BILL IS IN COMMITTEE:

- Contact committee members to ask them to support, reject, or amend the bill. Recruit your friends to contact them as well.
- Attend committee meetings. Testify at the hearing for or against the bill, particularly if you have a personal story.

**NOTE:** If you don't feel comfortable or are unable to attend meetings in-person, you can watch the video of the committee meetings or email your public comments. Go to <https://legis.la.gov/Legis/Home.aspx> to find the daily and weekly schedules. For instructions on how to email your comment, click the PDF icon next to the video link. Public comments are typically due at noon the day before the committee meeting.

## WHEN A BILL IS ON THE FLOOR:

- Contact your legislator to support, reject, or amend the bill. Ask your friends to do the same.
- Tell people why you think the bill should or should not pass by posting on social media or writing a letter to the editor in your local newspaper.

## WHEN A BILL IS ON THE GOVERNOR'S DESK:

- Contact the Governor's office to encourage signing or vetoing the bill.
- Identify other people who may have special influence with the Governor and contact them.

**NOTE:** If you don't get the outcome you're hoping for, stay positive. Passing quality legislation takes time.

# LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY



**ELECTED OFFICIALS**



**CONSTITUENTS**

● If legislators don't hear from you, they assume you approve of their actions.

## WAYS TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATOR

### CALL THEM OR WRITE THEM



✔ **TIP 1**  
Know your district and name of your legislator

✔ **TIP 2**  
Plan out what you will say

✔ **TIP 3**  
Remember to mention the bill number (if there is one) and why you are calling or writing

✔ **TIP 4**  
Make it short and sweet and get to your point quickly

✔ **TIP 5**  
Tell a personal story they can connect to

✔ **TIP 6**  
Problem, solution, action (ie. "Vote yes on HB xxxx!")



### MEET THEM IN PERSON



**STEP ONE**  
Schedule your meeting



**STEP TWO**  
Be flexible and patient



**STEP THREE**  
Prepare and educate yourself and establish a clear goal



**STEP FOUR**  
Follow up and say thank you!

## CONNECT WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS **EARLY AND OFTEN**

**FIRST THINGS FIRST,**  
**RESEARCH YOUR LEGISLATOR**

[www.legis.la.gov/legis/FindMyLegislators.aspx](http://www.legis.la.gov/legis/FindMyLegislators.aspx)



# STAY UP TO DATE

Throughout the session, the ACLU of Louisiana will send regular updates on what's happening in the Capitol and ways you can take action.

**Here's how to stay connected.**



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