

FLORIDA RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION

Legislative
Handbook

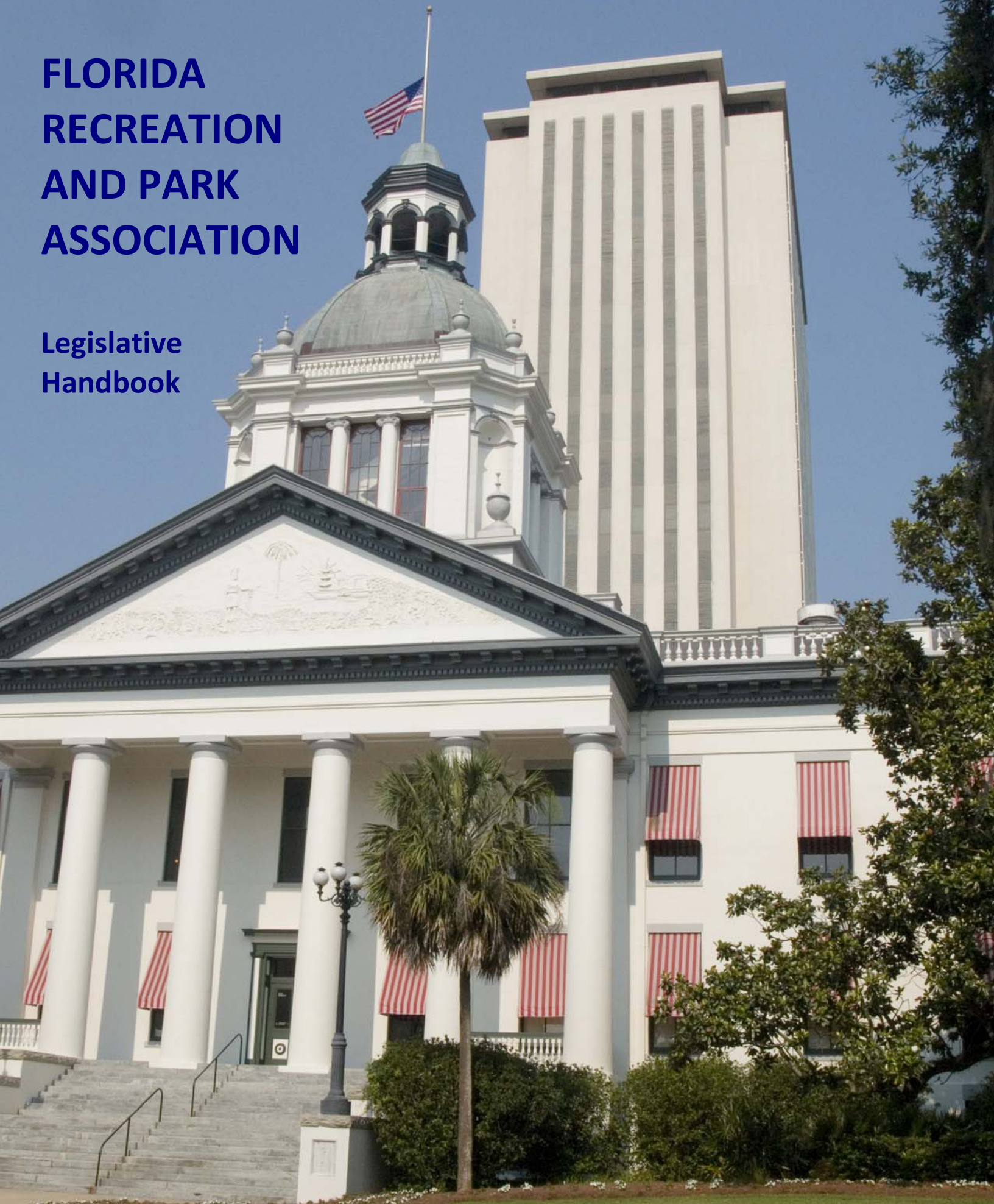




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*Version 2.2020
Developed by The Florida Recreation and Park Association
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LEGISLATIVE HANDBOOK

Introduction

Advocacy is everyone's responsibility. The goal of the Florida Recreation and Park Association is to provide you with tools that enhance your efforts to educate audiences about the value of parks and recreation.

FRPA's advocacy efforts are multi-faceted to assure that elected officials and our own professionals are prepared to be active advocates for the programs and services provided by parks and recreation agencies throughout the State of Florida. We hope this information is helpful in your endeavors to advance the parks and recreation profession on the local, state and national levels.

Our message is clear, and your call to action requires you to

- ✓ participate in the political process before elections, during elections, after elections
- ✓ familiarize yourself with your elected officials (local, state and federal)
- ✓ communicate on a regular basis with your elected officials, reinforcing the benefits of parks and recreation
- ✓ communicate with your citizen advocates, reinforcing the benefits of parks and recreation, and encouraging them to work on your behalf
- ✓ keep FRPA posted on your advocacy efforts and let us know how we can continue to provide you with the tools to increase your influence

Throughout this document, you will see highlighted boxes calling your attention to additional resources.



The "Did You Know" icon will call your attention to facts that you may want to keep in mind for the future.

Legislative Direction

FRPA's legislative policies are directed by the Association's Board of Directors in concert with its contracted Governmental Representative. Prior to any position being formed on a specific issue, the issue is thoroughly researched and vetted through dialogue with our Governmental Representative, professionals, and any other organizations or individuals who may have expertise on the issue.

It is rare that the entire FRPA membership agrees on a single position regarding an issue. Differing perspectives are often based on the environment in which an individual or organization exists. Therefore, it is the mission of FRPA to make policy recommendations based on the most common areas of concern.

Dealing in legislative matters is never an exact science. It has been said *“Logic ends when you step through the doors of the Capitol building.”* We must remain diligent and consistent. Results may be apparent in days, or it could take months or years of legislative networking and policy development.

Legislative Communication

The FRPA Executive Office is charged with the responsibility of developing a plan for communicating on legislative issues. The communication may take many forms, however having communication be consistent is critical for legislative success. The FRPA President, the FRPA Executive Director, and the contractual Governmental Representative are the official spokespersons before legislative bodies.

Monitoring and reporting developments on both state and federal legislation is important if you and your peers are to advocate effectively. Fortunately, it has never been easier to stay up-to-date on bills through FRPA. Not only will you receive legislative updates, alerts, and calls to action, the FRPA website provides a wealth of information and resources.

Another resource that will assist you is www.leg.state.fl.us. This site has links to the Florida Senate and Florida House of Representative websites. It is here you can locate your state legislator, query specific bills from numerous legislative sessions, and search the Florida Statutes.

Legislative Policy Principles and Priorities

Public parks provide a unique legacy that defines a community’s character. From the smallest, pocket neighborhood park to the grandest metropolitan treasures, parks give spirit and vitality to residents of the State of Florida.

Park and recreation agencies and professionals play a vital role in

- promoting the quality of life and livability of communities where residents enjoy and improve their mental and physical health;
- conserving and protecting natural and cultural resources and open spaces;
- responsibly using energy resources; and,
- providing a clean, healthy environment to be enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Parks and recreation resources strengthen local economies, attract new businesses, contribute to the local tax base, and increase property values. FRPA has developed a set of guiding values based on the above premises, which will direct our advocacy efforts.



GUIDING VALUES – *It Starts in Parks!*

Conservation of our Natural Treasures - Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability

Parks and outdoor recreation lands are the essential green infrastructure of our communities. Parks and public recreation lands are carbon reducing landscapes that help clean our air and water; recharge aquifers; and reduce storm-water runoff. Through energy, climate change, and other legislative measures, we advocate for dedicated resources that will sustain, protect, restore, and expand these environmental assets.

Healthy Communities - Health and Wellness for All People of All Abilities, Transportation and Livable Communities

FRPA believes that opportunities for active recreation are critical to an individual's and a community's health and wellness. We will advocate for legislation that supports the growing role of public parks and recreation by improving individual and community health through the prevention of chronic disease, the rehabilitation of wounded service members, and the inclusion of individuals with disabilities in all activities. As the Nation's Surface Transportation Program comes up for reauthorization, FRPA supports funding and places a high priority on national policies that encourage walking, biking and the development of alternative transportation networks that will create more livable and healthy communities.

Investment in Florida's Future - Public Parks

Parks and recreation agencies deliver essential public services and provide recreation opportunities for every community in America. FRPA advocates for state and federal investments that provide funding for the acquisition, development, and rehabilitation of parks and public lands as well as recreation infrastructure and resources. FRPA recognizes the unique challenges faced by urban park and recreation agencies and the value these agencies provide to our state's cities and urban communities.

Connection to Nature

Improving access, outreach and developing an appreciation for nature is a national agenda; especially with regards to children. Access to nature must be a priority for Florida's future. FRPA believes that by providing safe and healthy experiences in which youth can explore nature, public parks, greenways, trails and recreation we can increase the connectivity between youth and their environment. Success in this area will assure future generations of environmental stewards.

The City Parks Forum is dedicated to providing information on how healthy parks are fundamental to many aspects of community prosperity. These include improving economic health and vitality, reducing crime, improving public physical and mental health, creating a strong sense of community, supporting overall quality of life. All these issues are important to communities across the country, and to those both in and outside the parks profession.

The City Parks Forum has produced a series of briefing papers on "How Cities Use Parks For ..." to meet this specific need. This series helps to support mayors, their parks advisors, private sector parks advocates, planners, and others in promoting parks and ensuring an urban parks legacy across the country.

How Cities Use Parks for ...
[Community Revitalization](#) by Peter Harnik

[Community Engagement](#) by Mark Francis

[Economic Development](#) by Megan Lewis, AICP

[Create Safer Neighborhoods](#) by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Human-Environment Research Laboratory

[Green Infrastructure](#) by Mark Benedict and Edward T. McMahon

[Help Children Learn](#) by Robin Moore

[Improve Public Health](#) by Howard Frumkin, M.D., and Mary E. Eysenbach

[Arts and Cultural Programs](#) by David Rivel

[Promote Tourism](#) by John L. Crompton

[Smart Growth](#) by Kathy Blaha

[Climate Change Management](#) by Joseph A. MacDonald, AICP

Economic Development

Parks provide jobs and economic impact! Continued funding of parks and open space managed by parks and recreation agencies, and the programs operated and administered by these agencies, result in the continuation of hundreds of thousands of jobs in the State of Florida. In addition, sports tournaments and events attract millions of out of state visitors to cities through local park facilities and sports venues. FRPA advocates for the appropriate funding of programs which assure these spaces and programs are continued in order to secure employment opportunities for full-time staff and seasonal job opportunities for youth in communities. These jobs allow these individuals to continue to be a contributing part of the communities where they reside.



THE STATE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The state legislative process is much the same as the federal one. Differences between the national and state legislatures, and between individual states, mainly lie in how long legislative sessions are; if a bill requires re-introduction for each legislative session; and what titles the legislators use.

State lawmakers may introduce either a bill or a resolution. A bill is a proposal to enact new legislation or amend an existing statute. A resolution is a legislative proposal for an action not affecting statutory law. An example of a resolution would be to

- commend or honor an individual or organization,
- inform the U.S. Congress of the state legislature's opinion on a particular issue,
- create a legislative commission, or
- request a legislative study of a specific subject area.

Legislative Bodies are either ---

Bicameral - having two houses; in Florida, these two houses are the Senate and the House of Representatives – on their own, called a “body”; or

Unicameral – only the state of Nebraska has a unicameral legislature.

Either chamber may introduce new legislation or they may introduce it simultaneously.



FLORIDA'S LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

The Florida Constitution divides the powers of the state government of Florida among three branches.

The Executive Branch

The Executive Branch is headed by the Governor. Under the State Constitution, the Governor must ensure that the laws are faithfully executed, commission all officers of the State and Counties, and transact all necessary business of the officers of government. The Governor may also, by proclamation, stating the purpose, call the Florida Legislature into special session. Any bill passed by the Legislature which is presented to the Governor must be signed or vetoed by the Governor or it automatically becomes law without the Governor's signature within a prescribed time period.

The Lieutenant Governor is elected at the same time as the Governor. The Lieutenant Governor works with the Governor, taking their place when they are out of state. The Lieutenant Governor also attends functions for the Governor when they are unable to. Sometimes the Governor appoints the Lieutenant Governor to oversee certain projects at their discretion.

The Attorney General serves as one of three members of the State Cabinet who, along with the Governor, oversees several policy areas such as the environment, law enforcement, veterans, growth management, highway safety/motor vehicles, revenue, and finance. Priorities are to ensure the safety and security of all Floridians; fight to protect consumers from fraud; and, protect the natural environment.

The Chief Financial Officer oversees the Department of Financial Services, which is responsible for assisting consumers who need information and help related to financial services, including banking, securities, and insurance. Responsibilities that fall directly under the chief financial officer include: overseeing the state's accounting and auditing functions; monitoring the investment of state funds and managing the deferred compensation program for state employees; Investigating fraud, including identity theft and insurance fraud; overseeing cemeteries and funeral homes that sell pre-need contracts; licensing and oversight of insurance agents and agencies; ensuring businesses have workers' compensation coverage in place for employees and helping injured workers with benefit payments and re-employment; and, serving as state fire marshal, investigating fires and suppressing arson.

The Commissioner of Agriculture's job is to help promote Florida agricultural products and expand markets for our state's growers. This is increasingly important in today's competitive global economy. Agriculture is an important part of our state's heritage and economy. Florida is one of America's leading agricultural states, and the state's agriculture has an economic impact estimated at more than \$87 billion annually.

The Florida Legislature is a bicameral structure – meaning it has two houses, the Florida Senate and the Florida House of Representatives. The Senate and the House make rules or laws that govern our state. Members of the legislature, Senators and Representatives, are chosen by the citizens of Florida to represent them and the area where they live. These areas are called districts. Each member of the Florida Legislature must live in the district that they represent. Each is responsible for making sure that the people who elected them have a voice in all matters concerning the state.

Each year the legislature meets in legislative session to determine and debate issues important to the people of our state. The Florida Legislature meets in session every year for sixty consecutive days. A regular session shall convene on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in March of each odd-numbered year, and on the second Tuesday after the first Monday in January of each even-numbered year. Sessions end either in sine die adjournment, with the ceremonial dropping of white handkerchiefs by each house’s Sergeant at Arms, or in an extension of the regular session to complete unfinished work.

There are 40 Florida Senators serving 4 year terms.

There are 120 members of the Florida House of Representatives, each serve 2 year terms.

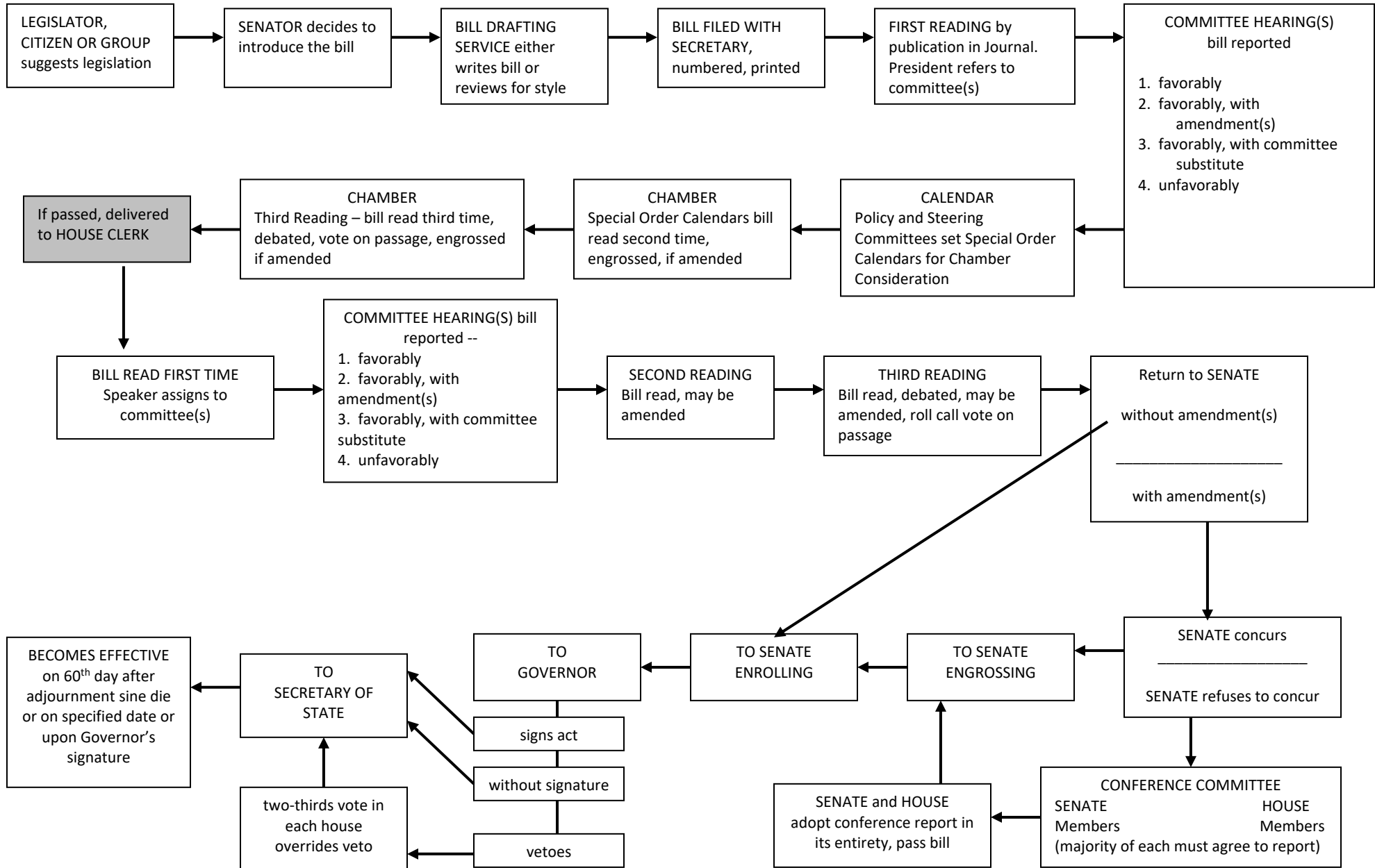
All must be at least 21 years old and must have lived in Florida for two years prior to running for election.



How an Idea Becomes Law

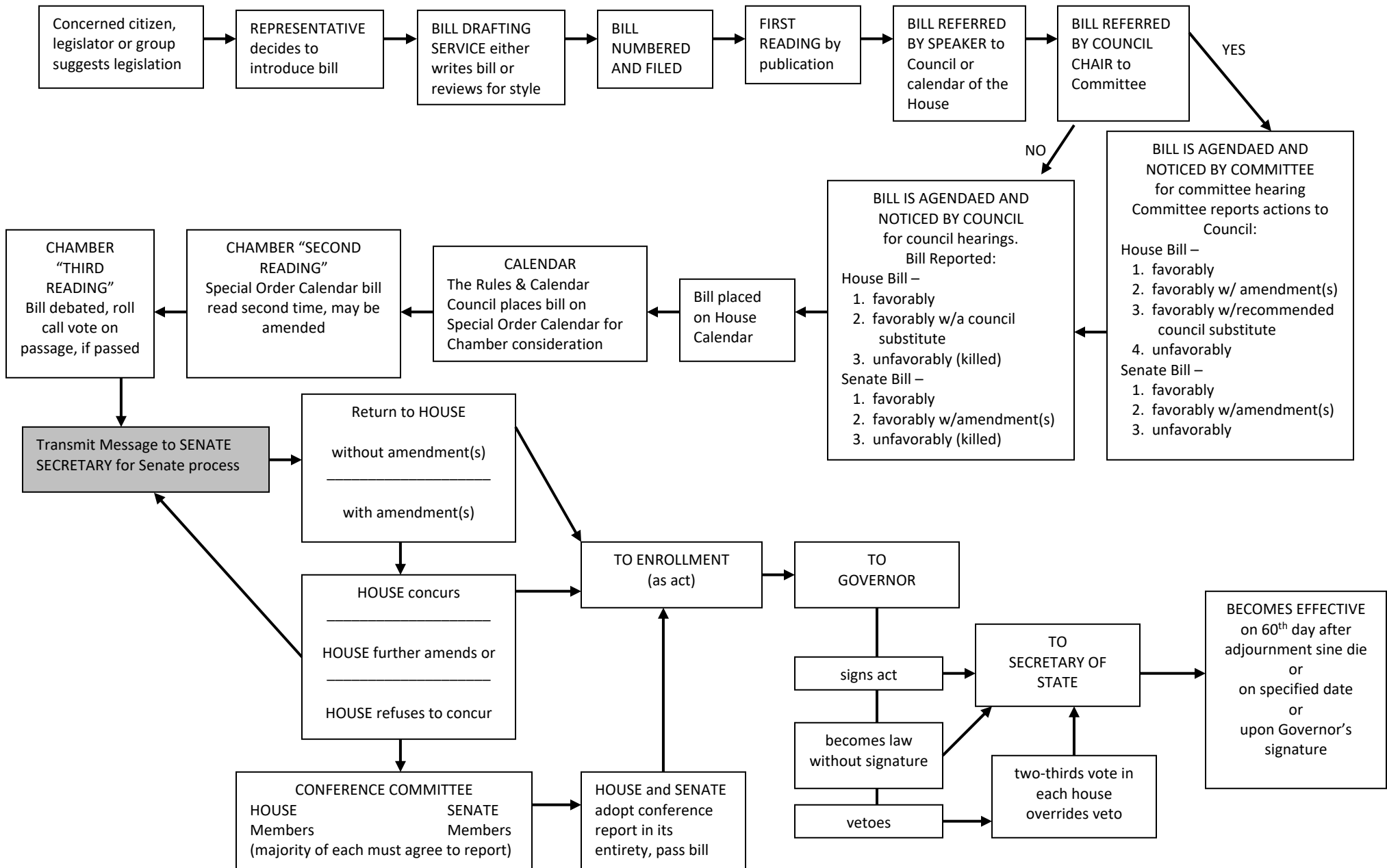
During session, legislators work on making new laws or changing old laws. Either house may originate proposed legislation. However, the processes differ slightly between bodies. The following pages follow proposed legislation from their beginnings in the Senate and the House of Representatives.

How an Idea Becomes a Law in the Florida Senate





How an Idea Becomes a Law in the Florida House of Representatives



Committees: A General Introduction

Each legislator serves on several committees where the effects of laws on the people of our state are studied.

Committees are the heart of the legislative process as they can and should do the fact-finding groundwork. The committee level is where you, as a citizen, have the most influence in how the bill turns out. This is the best time to inform your legislators of your opinion of the bill and its potential impact on your life and business. Remember, state legislation may impact you more directly than national legislation.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Write a letter or email
- Visit your elected official during their office hours
- Testify at a public hearing

Because of the volume of proposed legislation in the Florida Legislature, it would be difficult to complete review of all proposals if the entire legislative body attempted to study every bill that is introduced. Committees afford the houses an opportunity to more closely study elements of the bill that would be impossible to debate on the floor. The legislator sponsoring or introducing the bill is heard during this preliminary screening process. There is also an opportunity for other legislators to speak in favor of or in opposition to the bill. The committee may also go outside the Legislature to learn the opinion of interested persons who may be experts on the subject of the bill. The committee may subpoena for witnesses and for records.

There are standing, select, and conference committees.

Senate Standing Committees

Standing Senate Committees are established for the management of the business of the Florida Senate. They are established by authority of rules adopted by the Senate. Members are appointed, and committee chairs and vice-chairs are appointed by the Senate President. Proposed legislation is referred to a standing committee. The committee then has the responsibility of passing judgment on that legislation. Each committee may originate legislation within its field of expertise.

The Senate President refers bills to one or more committees for review. The Senate Policy and Calendar Committee determine the order in which bills are scheduled for consideration on the Senate floor.

Nearly every bill must travel the same road in each house. A bill passed by the Senate may be referred to one or more committees when it reaches the House of Representatives. And, the same is true in the Senate of a House-passed measure.

Senate Select Committees

Select Committees are those that have been appointed, or selected to perform a specific task. The life of a select committee may last for a few minutes for example, the time required for one house to notify another of its readiness to transact business on the opening day of the legislative session, or a select committee might last for years.

The powers of each select committee are set forth in the action creating it. Some are given the authority to subpoena witnesses and open records. Some are empowered to employ counsel and clerical assistance.

House Council / Committee Process

Former House Speaker Dan Webster incorporated “councils” as part of a larger revision of the House Rules adopted at the 1996 organizational session. Their purpose was to oversee legislative policy-making for committees with certain jurisdictions. Councils have existed in some form in all succeeding terms except for 2002-2004.

The number of House councils and committees and their names change with virtually every biennial leadership. The name usually describes the council’s or committee’s policy jurisdiction. The name and number of councils and committees are part of the rules the House and Senate adopt during organization session.

The Speaker appoints the chair, the vice chair, and all members for each standing council and committee as well as each conference committee, select committee, joint committee, and joint select committee.

House Councils

Councils have committee groups within them. A council is comprised of House members appointed by the Speaker to direct the development of policy within a wider jurisdiction than that of a standing committee.

Bills, upon filing or introduction, may be referred by the Speaker to a council. A council chair, after receipt of a referred bill, may refer the bill to one or more committees within the council. A council may introduce a council substitute embracing the same general subject matter of one or more bills in possession of the council.

House Standing Committees

Standing committees are those with a continuing authority to consider matters within their subject field, including bills filed by members of the House.

House Select Committees

Select committees are created for the purpose of dealing with a specific and usually rather narrow situation. Unlike standing committees that continue in existence for the duration of the term, a select committee usually goes out of existence when the purpose for which it was created has been accomplished. Often a select committee will be an interim committee, meaning it will do its work between regular sessions of the Legislature.

Conference Committees

For a bill to become an act, it must be passed by both houses in precisely the same words and figures. The second house frequently amends and returns the bill to the house of origin. In the case of bills with substantial differences, the shortcut of a conference committee likely will be taken almost immediately.



Conference committees are among the oldest lawmaking procedures, dating back to early days of the British Parliament.

A conference committee is composed of separate committees from the Senate and the House of Representatives, intended to resolve and reconcile differences. As separate committees, they vote

separately, not only the final product but on any subsidiary questions put to a vote. A majority of each committee prevails. This suggests a give and take process because if a majority of the conferees from either house refuses to budge, the conference would be stalemated and the bill could fail.

The Senate and House have the conference committee report presented on a take-it-or-leave-it basis. No amendments can be offered. Occasionally, a report will be rejected and the bill returned back to conference. Usually, however, conference reports are submitted in the waning hours of a session when the shortness of time might mean the bill would be lost or the Legislature called into an extended or special session. Thus, the committee has the pressure of time on its side.

The Senate President and House Speaker agree upon the number of conferees. The largest of conference committees is the General Appropriations Bill, because of its magnitude. The conferees are known as managers, and are generally appointed from the committee that handled the bill, but sometimes the President or Speaker will go outside the committees to select one or more conferees. Usually this occurs when the House/Senate has so amended the bill during floor consideration, that the bill may no longer resemble the bill reported from the committee. Then, those who shaped the bill during floor consideration may more easily speak for the House/Senate in the conference committee.

Joint Committees

Joint Select Committees may be appointed by the President of the Senate or Speaker of the House, and function like a select committee, except that they include members of both bodies appointed by the Speaker and President.

HOW CONGRESS WORKS



In Congress, members of the House of Representatives are elected to two year terms, and Senators are elected every six years. One-third of the Senate is re-elected every two years.

Congressional Power Structure

Congress is divided into two main bodies: The House of Representatives and the Senate. The House and Senate are each controlled by whichever party has the most members in that chamber – the majority party. Party leaders have great influence over the legislative process, and rarely does a bill become law without the support of the majority leadership, especially the Speaker of the House and Majority Leader in the Senate.

Although congressional committees are not mentioned in the Constitution, committee consideration of legislation is perhaps the most important phase of the entire legislative process. Therefore, Committee and Subcommittee Chairs are extremely important when lobbying on a particular bill.

Introducing a Bill (Congress)

While a large portion of legislative proposals are conceived by legislators, many are introduced following constituent requests – either individually or through organizations such as professional associations and coalitions. Legislative proposals may be introduced in both the House and Senate together as companion bills or in just one chamber. There is only one Constitutional restriction regarding the introduction of a bill – revenue bills must be introduced in the House of Representatives first.

After a bill is introduced, it is referred to one of the standing committees of Congress by the Speaker of the House or the Senator Majority Leader or, under a process called “unanimous consent,” it can be considered directly by the House or Senate. However bypassing the committee process is very unusual.

Committee Action (Congress)

Similar to the Florida Legislature, once a bill has been referred to a committee, the chairs may decide to further refer the bill to a relevant subcommittee. If so, then the subcommittee members decide whether or not the legislation is worth considering and in what manner. Committee action generally follows this process: hearings are held on a bill; a bill is amended during mark up sessions; and, finally, a bill is voted on by the committee or subcommittee.

Hearings are an important way that committees and subcommittees receive advice on often complex issues. In the hearing process, other members of Congress, public officials, business people, private citizens, experts, and other interested groups are invited to offer their opinions on the issue being considered by the committee. The purpose of the hearing can be to: determine the impact of proposed legislation; gather information; test public opinion; build support for proposals; delay action on a bill; provide a forum for parties to be heard; and provide an opportunity for the lawmakers to

examine the performance of an agency or program to see if it is meeting the intent of the law as it was passed by Congress.

Mark-up sessions are where the actual decisions on the bill are made. All viewpoints are considered; the bill is examined – usually line by line – and it is amended. Then a vote is taken to determine the action of the subcommittee. Members may decide to report the bill out favorably to the full committee with or without amendments; to report it unfavorably; or to table the measure and take no further action. The full committee may then decide to approve the action of the subcommittee and report the bill to the full House or Senate, or to begin the hearing, mark up and reporting process all over again.

In both the House and Senate, committees must write a report for every bill they report favorably. Committee reports explain the justification for the measure, describe the purpose, scope, and impact of the bill, and elaborate on any changes the committee made to the original version. If a committee fails to report a bill the measure is basically dead. One exception: the bill may be discharged from the committee only if its sponsor can get a majority of his or her chamber to agree to bring it out. This is the stage where most bills die as comparatively few are ever reported from committees.

Scheduling a Bill for a Vote (Congress)

If the bill is reported favorably out of committee, it is placed on the legislative calendar for debate. In the House, controversial bills, or bills that violate any budget or House rules must get a waiver from the Rules Committee. In addition, the Rules Committee must grant each bill a rule before it can be considered on the House floor. The rule determines how much time will be permitted for debate, and whether or not the bill may be amended by the full House.

Although the Senate also has a Rules Committee, its function is more of a formality; it does not exercise any of the power of the House Rules Committee. The Senate Majority Leader determines if and when a bill comes to the floor for debate and there are fewer time constraints on its consideration. Scheduling is another stage of the legislative process that often is fatal to bills.

Floor Actions (Congress)

Most votes are decided by a simple majority although some require a larger percentage. For example, a two-thirds vote of the total membership in each chamber is necessary to adopt a resolution to amend the Constitution, to override a Presidential veto, or to suspend the rules of the chamber.

The House and the Senate utilize two principal types of votes – the voice vote and roll call or recorded vote. The voice vote is used primarily for routine or noncontroversial matters, whereas the roll call or recorded vote is used for more substantive or controversial issues.

The first chamber to pass a bill sends it to the presiding officer or the other chamber – the Speaker of the House or the President of the Senate – to repeat the steps taken in the originating chamber. If both chambers are working simultaneously on identical or similar measures, the first one completed will be sent to the other body for consideration.

Conference (Congress)

Members of the conference committee are selected by the Speaker of the House and the Senate Majority Leader. Usually, the appointees are members of the House and Senate committees which first handled the legislation. Conferees from either side generally have three options available to them in trying to reconcile two bill versions:

- Recommending the other chamber withdraw from its provisions;
- Recommending their own chamber withdraw from its provisions to accept those of the other house; or
- Recommending that both chambers withdraw on some of their provisions in exchange for keeping others – in effect, a compromise.

Most bills that survive a conference are approved using the third option – the compromise. In this case, the conference committee’s function is similar to that of the original legislative committees during the markup stage. The conferees analyze the differences line by line, voting on amendments and compromises throughout the process.

If the conference committee is able to resolve all the points of disagreement, it votes to issue a conference report – much like the original committee voting to report the bill. Occasionally, however, conferees are unable to come to agreement and any bill which is not reported back to the full House and Senate “dies in conference.”

Final Floor Action (Congress)

Since a bill may undergo considerable rewriting in conference, both the Senate and House must approve it in its amended form. At this stage, legislators no longer have the opportunity to offer amendments. The bill is usually brought up on the floor for a limited amount of debate and is then subject to a “yea” or “nay” vote. If both chambers vote to accept the final language, the bill is put in final form and signed by the Speaker of the House and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate.

Executive Action (Congress)

The bill is then forwarded to the President who has ten days to sign or veto it. If he chooses to sign it, it becomes public law. If he vetoes it, it is sent back to Congress for a chance to override the veto. If, however, the President chooses not to sign a measure during the ten day period and Congress adjourns at the end of a session, the bill dies by “pocket veto” without Congress having the chance to reconsider. If Congress remains in session, the bill becomes law without the President’s signature.

A bill vetoed by the President still has an opportunity for enactment. When it is returned to Congress, the measure can be subjected to an override vote, in which both houses can decide whether to honor the President’s veto or to enact law without his signature. However, unlike the simple majority required to initially pass the legislation, an override action requires a two-thirds vote in both chambers. If this occurs, the bill becomes public law, having the same effect and power as if it had been approved by the President.

HOW YOU CAN INFLUENCE LEGISLATION

In very general terms, there are two principal concerns that guide the decisions of elected officials:

1. They want to make good public policy; and
2. They want to make the decisions that help them get re-elected.

Your contact with legislators and other elected officials responds to both of these goals. Good public policy means creating environments in which citizens can thrive and in which there is a high quality of life – these are the exact community issues addressed by parks and recreation agencies.

There are many ways to contact, build relationships, and influence your elected officials, including writing letters or emails, calling the office directly, in-person meetings, organizing fundraisers, working on a campaign, or inviting them to your park programs and events.

Building a Relationship With Your Elected Official

Cultivating a relationship with your legislators (and any elected official) and their staff is fundamental to any successful grassroots lobbying effort. Interaction is especially valuable when it involves constituents who the legislator or elected official knows well and trusts.

There are several ways to build and nurture these relationships, including becoming involved in the campaign process. Ways to become involved in the campaign process include:

- Donating money to the campaign – Political candidates will appreciate and acknowledge any contributions to their campaigns. Federal and state laws require candidates to report contributions. You should check with your jurisdictional Election Commission for specifics on amounts you may contribute to federal, state and local candidates.
- Volunteering your time – Campaigns always need volunteers to help with stuffing envelopes and other tasks. Volunteering for a campaign can be a good family activity, giving children insight into the political process and demonstrating the importance of being involved.
- Hosting fundraisers for the candidate. Fundraisers do not have to be elaborate. For example, you could host a fundraising breakfast for a small group in your home. If you decide to hold a fundraiser on behalf of a candidate, be sure to familiarize yourself with the applicable election laws first.



Politicians always remember the people who put them in office – especially those who were involved from the beginning. Being active in a political campaign will significantly improve your access to that legislator once he or she is in office.

EFFECTIVE INTERACTION WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS

As a Floridian, one of your greatest responsibilities is to help elect the legislators who represent you and the state's more than 14 million other residents. Your role in the democratic process of government does not end at the polls. By sharing your opinions and ideas with your representatives and senators in Tallahassee, you help them decide what to do about the issues and pending legislation that affect us all.

Your legislators receive a huge amount of phone calls and mail from their constituents. Unfortunately, their full agendas limit their ability to personally read and respond to it all. How then, can you be sure your voice is heard? Here are some tips to help you get the most impact out of your communications with your legislators in Tallahassee.

Visiting Your Legislator

Regardless of whether or not you supported your legislator, you should meet with them shortly after their election. **Personal visits** will help build a relationship. A courtesy call after the election to introduce yourself and offer your expertise as a resource on parks and recreation issues is appropriate. **Personal contact** is the most effective form of communication with legislators and elected officials who want to hear from their constituents. This also includes building your sphere of influence and credibility in the community by being engaged in a variety of networking opportunities such as Chamber of Commerce programs, Economic Development events, partnerships with your local school district, etc.

Influencing policy/legislation is most successful when individuals have developed personal relationships with their elected officials, or the agency assigned to implementing the policy/legislation. As constituents and leaders in the parks, recreation and leisure services field, you are best equipped to be influential with your elected members of Congress, the Florida House of Representatives, the Florida Senate, and your local elected officials.

Following are tips that will allow you to maximize your visit with an elected official:

- 1. Know Your Elected Official:** You can find information at www.leg.state.fl.us about your elected legislator. Information will include their educational background, hobbies, interests, bills filed, and other personal information. Reviewing this will allow you to better understand their position on issues. You can often determine where a legislator's interests are by the bills they file.
- 2. Respect Staff Members:** Because of the harried schedule of elected officials, you will often visit with an assistant or aide. Understand often the assistant/aide may be more familiar with your issue than the legislator, because it is their responsibility to educate and prepare the legislator for issues on which the elected official will vote. These individuals are critical to getting

information to the elected official and may also control access to the elected official. They are your best link to the elected official.

3. Be punctual: Never be late for a meeting with an elected official, and always expect to wait when you arrive in their office. An elected official's time is not their own, and often they are running late. Be respectful of time constraints, by being prepared to shorten your message if needed.

4. Plan Your Meeting and Focus: Make an advance appointment if possible. If you are "dropping in" for a visit, understand you are less likely to see the elected official, and more likely to see a staff member.

The time you will have with an elected official will be limited. It is rare to have lengthy face-to-face meeting time, so you want to make the most of the time you have. Begin with thanking them for their time, state the reason for your meeting, and thank them on your way out the door – even if you disagree with their position or don't reach consensus on an issue.

5. Stay on Course: Be prepared to articulate your message in a concise and focused manner. If you don't feel you are hearing the response you desire, never argue with the elected official. Instead, stay on topic, state your position in a positive manner, and never interject your personal feelings on issues not related to what you are there to speak on. Understand you may not always agree with an elected official, but you must always be positive. Never engage in a battle of the tongue. Your purpose is to educate the elected official/legislator, not debate them.

6. Your Request Should be Specific: The goal of your visit is ACTION! Have a concrete ask – refer to specific issues and have the bill number or agenda item number. Provide support and documentation for the request, re-state the request, and leave understanding what the elected officials' action will be. Always offer to follow-up with additional information if the elected official requests this. And, then follow up. There is not anything worse than offering to provide further information, and not doing it.

HINT: APPLY THE RULE OF THREE --

Summarize your points in three, quick, easy reference statements or talking points.

7. Always Provide Factual Information: Don't fall victim to the trap of providing information that is not factual. It is always better to say "I don't know" than to provide information that is not factual and have an elected official use that information in a public forum. You will never regain the trust of the elected official. If you provide information at your visit and later find that the information has changed, always follow-up letting the elected official know of the change.

8. Leave Reference Materials: If you have information that will further assist the elected official in becoming educated on your issue, leave the information with the elected official or with their staff. You don't want to leave volumes of unnecessary information, only that which will document or further justify your position on an issue. Again, remember to summarize a fact sheet that can provide three key messages on your issues. Your elected official will be much more likely to recall this concise information, especially if it is repeated throughout your communications.

9. Follow Up: Be sure to inquire if and when the elected official would like you to follow-up with them. You want to keep your issue fresh in their minds without being pesky. Always send a thank you note to the elected official for their time, and never underestimate the value of a hand-written note. Be sure to track the ACTION that your elected official took, and if it was positive for your issue, thank them again.

10. De-Brief and Report: If you are visiting with a group, schedule a time after your meeting(s) to summarize what occurred and who will be following-up. If you are attending a legislative visitation event, there will most likely be a report that should be made. Assure someone is taking charge of that responsibility, and offer yourself as a source for the event coordinator if more information is necessary.

11. Don't Wear Out Your Welcome: It matters not how well you know an elected official, you must create a balance between meeting to "catch up" and meeting on issue. Their time is valuable and they will hold you in higher regard if you are mindful of that. The old cliché "You can only go to the well so often" is especially true with elected officials. Be aware not to ask too often.

Your influence with elected officials is critical. That influence is created through connections, and those are best made "back at home". Maximize your success by visiting with elected officials in their "off time" when you can have more of their undivided attention. Remember, you can never say "Thank You" enough, and plan to take advantage of public forums in which to thank your elected official.



If you are participating in a group meeting with an elected official, be sure you have informed the elected official that there will be a group. Plan your meeting with your group members so that you don't talk over each other, keeping duplicate position statements to a minimum, and that the message is concise. Select an individual in your group who is the "expert" and can best speak to the issue.

Writing Your Legislator

About Letter Writing

Most constituents don't write letters to their elected officials or their hometown media for similar reasons. Some believe they're not read or that they're not heeded. Others believe no one will actually listen to them. Some are concerned about their writing ability, or that they don't know who to write or their address. But, your letters are read and needed for the reasons we've already cited. We need to show legislators we have the votes. We believe they will be more concerned with your honest, personal expressions of concern than your handwriting or command of the language.

Here's some advice for writing to your legislators when we issue a Call to Action.

To Write, Email, Text, Twitter – These are Today's Question?

Technology of today affords constituents a variety of methods in which one can communicate to their elected official. There are many people with many answers to the question "What is the most effective method of communicating to my elected official?" The answer that really counts is that of the elected official, and even today they agree, the hand crafted mailed letter is most effective. They are read, they are responded to, and they are valued.

Of-course, there are always instances because of the time sensitivity of an issue, that rapid communication is necessary.

It is not recommended that you text elected officials unless you are very close personal friends with the individual and they have requested you to communicate in that manner.

As is always the case, one should ALWAYS remember that what is blogged, discussed via the internet, is available for the public to view and law enforcement to retrieve. Communications whether addressed to the official, or addressing something about the official, should always be professional and above board.

Things to Keep in Mind

When writing your elected official, regardless of the delivery method, one should always remember that the communication – electronic or written – is public record and must be maintained and recorded according to Florida Statutes governing legislative correspondence. Never assume that if you are communicating to and elected official there is any level of confidentiality afforded that communication.

Five Guidelines for Writing Your Legislator

There are five basics to effective letter writing.

TONE - Be personal and sincere. Be firm and direct, *never* coy or threatening. Form letters, petitions and other obvious mail efforts have much less effect than letters in your own words and style.

FORM - Say what you mean precisely and succinctly. A good rule: one subject, one letter. This gives your letter more impact and makes a reply easier. Keep your letter to one page, no matter how important the issue.

CONTENT - In your first paragraph: (1) identify your subject clearly, providing bill name or numbers if appropriate; and (2) state your reason for writing on that subject. Then, in your own

words and avoiding clichés, campaign phrases and jargon, explain how and why the subject or bill would affect you, your family, your business or your community. Use facts to support your point of view, but be certain you're accurate. However, your own personal experience can be your most effective argument.

TACTICS - Say "Please" and "Thank You." Regardless of the issues that concern you at the moment, if an elected official does something that really pleases you, write and say so. It doesn't hurt to write your elected officials periodically, but don't wear out your welcome by writing frequently to philosophize or argue. *Never* burn your bridges. Express any dissatisfaction politely; your legislator may be your hero on the next issue.

LOGISTICS AND TIMING - Write on personal stationery or on plain paper. Put your return address on the letter, not just on the envelope. Time the arrival of your letters for mid-week when the mail isn't as heavy.

Recommended Salutations and Address Formats:

Address information can be best obtained from the State Legislative website www.leg.state.fl.us. Once there, you can select the Senate or Representatives, and then select Member Pages where both the district office and legislative Capitol address will be posted.

For your state senator:

Off-Session

The Honorable John Doe
The Florida Senate, District ____
District Address

During Session

The Honorable John Doe
The Florida Senate, District ____
____ (Office #) Senate Office Building
OR ____ (office #) The Capitol
404 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1100

Salutation

Dear Senator Doe:

For your state representative:

Off-Session

The Honorable Jane Doe
The Florida House of
Representatives District

District address

During Session:

The Honorable Jane Doe
The Florida House of Representatives
District ____
____ (Office #) House Office Building
OR ____ (office #) The Capitol
402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1300

Salutation

Dear Representative Doe:

For the Governor:

The Honorable _____
The Capitol
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor _____:

For Congress:

The Honorable _____
United States Senate, District _____
District Address OR DC Address

The Honorable _____
United States House of Representatives
District _____
District Address OR DC Address

General Guidelines for any elected official: format as follows:

The Honorable _____
Position
Government Entity
Address

Dear Councilman, Councilwoman, Mayor, Manager (for City and County Managers), etc.



How You Can Play an “Active” Role In The Political Process

Advocacy -- it is everyone’s responsibility. Being an advocate, or asking someone else to advocate on an issue of relevance to you or the profession, is critical to advancing the profession of parks and recreation. Our story must be told, and who better to tell that story than professionals and citizens working in tandem to promote the benefits of parks and recreation.

PERSONAL INVOLVEMENT PLAN

You Must be Involved in the Action! No one in the parks and recreation profession today can afford to stand by and not be involved in the political process. Our very livelihoods depend on our meeting head-on attempts to categorize the services we provide as "non-essential", or the unawareness of the value and benefits of the services we provide. Here are some steps that you should take individually. If every professional follows every step, we have a good chance to increase our success!

STEP 1	Let the FRPA Executive Office know what elected officials you know. This will allow us to advise you when we need your help.
STEP 2	Become familiar with the issues and concerns published in the FRPA Legislative Platform, and others that are important to parks and recreation.
STEP 3	Write a personal letter, now, to each of your state representatives and senators, encouraging them to remember the issues during the legislative session. Don't stop here! Make plans to personally visit your state Representative or Senator. If you can't see them, make it a point to visit and educate their staff.
STEP 4	Regularly check the FRPA Web Site at www.frpa.org to get the latest information on bills being monitored.
STEP 5	Encourage your local parks and recreation boards to get involved as well. Who better to speak your message than those who know the benefits!
STEP 6	Be on the lookout for communications from FRPA requesting your immediate action. During committee meetings or during floor debate, we may need you to act quickly.
STEP 7	Enlist support from anyone who is committed to our cause, our issues and our concerns. Citizen support strengthens our stance. Spokespersons should be able to articulately communicate our message in a brief, concise, and educated manner.
STEP 8	Always call the FRPA Executive Office with any questions you may have.

MEANINGFUL RESOURCE MATERIALS FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Being respectful of the time constraints of your elected official is a must. We also recommend you leave reference materials behind. Those materials also take time to read, and you want the official to focus on those points of importance to you – so don't make it lengthy.

REMEMBER: APPLY THE RULE OF THREE --

Summarize your points in three, quick, easy reference statements or talking points.

Helpful Hints on Compiling Resource Materials:

- ✓ **Know Your Elected Official:** As stated earlier, this information will be very useful when you develop your materials.
- ✓ **One Size Does NOT Fit All:** Create your reference material around the specific issue you are speaking to. Customize the material to the elected official's district. For instance: If Representative "A" is from District "999", they want to know if the funding list is not fully funded, which of their projects are not going to be funded.

A good example of customizing material is what FRPA has done with the Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program funding list each year. The list contains a field "Amount Needed to Fund This Project". The list is then sorted by Senator and/or Representative, and provided to the elected official so they know for each project, what amount must be funded in the total Grant Program. It takes the guessing work out of it for the elected official, and is a handy piece of information they can carry with them to the Appropriations Committee Staff and Chair.

- ✓ **A Picture Paints a Thousand Words:** Colorful, interactive photographs make the parks and recreation point more than mere words. Smiles on the faces of youth and seniors, pets playing in the dog park, interaction that allows you to almost hear the laughs when you look at the smiles – that will capture their attention. High quality, colorful photographs make them see the good they can do, or the good they have done.
- ✓ **Bring the Information Home:** Don't speak in generalities such as "we would like to see full funding of program XYZ" or "this law will greatly affect parks and recreation programs". Let them know how it will affect their constituents. Be careful in providing that information, making sure that your information is accurate.
- ✓ **Stick to the Facts:** Don't threaten. Present the facts, and in a calm manner demonstrate the consequences (factually) of the legislation they are considering. This is part of the education process and threatening will get you no where – except invited out the door!
- ✓ **Follow Up:** After you provide the information, follow up a week or so later to assure the information was understood, and make yourself available to answer any additional questions, or provide further information.

WORKING WITHIN FRPA ON LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

FRPA's goal is to present a single unified voice for parks and recreation. FRPA relies heavily on professionals within the parks and recreation field to assist in our legislative efforts. The work of individuals who serve by simply make calls and contacts as we request, contribute to the overall success of FRPA's legislative agenda.

Who Knows Who

As stated earlier in this document, relationships are key in the legislative process. You may live next door to a legislator, attend the same church, work out in the same gym, or you may even have their children or grand-children in your programs. If this is the case, please let the FRPA Executive Office know you have that relationship. There are many times when we may need to contact a legislator that you know. Your personal relationship with that individual may make a difference in our ability to more effectively communicate our message.

Getting Involved

There are many ways you can get involved with FRPA's legislative activities, which include:

- Let us know who you know. Or, let us know who your citizen advisory board members know.
- Let us know what you know – we are always looking for technical expertise when legislation is proposed.
- Let us know you will be willing to make contact if needed.
- Let us know you are available to travel to Tallahassee during session for committee testimony if needed.
- Stay informed by reading the FRPA E-lets, legislative correspondence, etc.

Getting members interested and involved is the key to our legislative success, and your participation is critical. It would not be possible for us to conduct an effective letter writing campaign without our members. You can exponentially increase our legislative reach by engaging your local citizen supporters. Who do they know? Who can they access? Finding this information out will allow us to grow our "legislative tree", and additional success will follow.

Many FRPA members are experienced in the legislative process. Share your expertise, experience and knowledge with someone interested in the legislative process. Serve as a resource to them as they increase their knowledge in this area.

Local Participation

There are many opportunities at the local level for you to gain more information and knowledge about legislative proposals and your individual legislators.

Local Delegations

Each county has a delegation of legislative members. Those delegations meet on a regular basis outside of session to formulate their priorities. This is often where proposals for legislation begin. You can find information on those meetings and contact information on the delegation staff at www.leg.state.fl.us and select the Information Center.

In addition, many cities and counties partner with local business organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce to help develop the local issues “platform”. Legislators stay in tune with the local business and educational community as they represent a large portion of a community’s constituency.

Coalition Building

There are many organizations in your local area that may share interest in proposed legislation. It is always helpful for FRPA to be advised of that, so that we can increase our advocacy reach. Whether the organization shares the opinion of FRPA on an issue or not, is equally important.

FRPA members serve on a plethora of commissions, boards, and, study or work groups, for other organizations and in many cases state agencies. Always let FRPA know if you are participating in a group that may provide additional information on our advocacy efforts. Keep in mind that a portion of our advocacy work is not related to legislative. Those coalitions being built at local levels or by our members’ participation is important. There are many times that we may ask an FRPA member to be our official representative on panels and to coalitions as it is not possible for our staff to be at every meeting at which FRPA should have a voice and presence.

Local Events and Activities

Communicating the benefits of parks and recreation should be a part of the every day activities of our professionals. You can assist in that communication by assuring you participate in local events and activities such as

- Local “politics in the parks” events where elected officials gather to gain information on issues of concern to their communities.
- Town hall meetings where you can hear the concerns of others on issues of importance to you, and you can share your perspective and provide information that may help advance our message.
- Host a “park tour” for elected officials. When they can feel, see, smell, touch, and experience what our programs and parks have to offer, the message is much more impactful.
- Don’t limit your activities to elected officials. What better advocates than real estate agents, hotel clerks and staff, convention and visitor bureau staff. If they experience what you have to offer, they will become parks and recreation promoters as what you do directly impacts their business.

It Isn't Just Legislation – Stay in Touch with Your State and Federal Agencies

It is just as important to monitor regulatory agencies as it is to monitor state and federal legislative bodies. Monitoring and influencing regulatory activities demands great vigilance since few issues are publicized to the degree that proposed legislation is.

Many legislative bills will result in a state regulatory body creating rules that will serve as policy implementation guides, and these often have “unintended consequences” that are not uncovered until implementation of the rule begins. FRPA depends on our professionals to alert us when this occurs so that we can attempt to influence the rule-making process, and in some cases create a priority to amend the legislation in the next regular legislative session.

While FRPA rarely becomes involved in local regulatory issues, we do monitor those as needed. What begins in one area of the State often expands into others. Knowing what is happening in our members’ local areas, allows us to monitor that for any statewide impact which may indicate that a legislative proposal is in order.

CONCLUSION

Advocacy is everyone’s responsibility. This is where we began our handbook, and this is where we conclude. Advocacy is everyone’s responsibility, along with properly preparing yourself and those you may work with, to be the best advocate. The legislative process is a fascinating one.

Never before has there been a more appropriate time for voters to influence their elected officials. However, it should be noted that advocacy work is not a sprint, it is truly a marathon. It is an activity that we must be consistently involved in if we are to experience the high visibility and respect needed to be successful in the legislative arena.

An organization can’t afford to be here today, gone tomorrow – only being visible when there is an issue to challenge or support. The more visible we are, the less chance we have of being forgotten. It is often easier to have a conversation with an elected official when you are not in a position to need to ask them for something.

Showing appreciation is always the best way to end an interaction with an elected official. It is also how we would like to conclude our Legislative Handbook. Thank you for being a parks and recreation advocate every day you report to work. Your input and influence is greatly needed by the Association, and is appreciated.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does the underlining and over-striking in bill and amendment text mean? Required by the rules of both houses of the Legislature, underlining and over-striking indicate changes being made to the text of existing law or an existing constitutional provision. Underlined text is new language and over-striking indicates text being removed from existing law.

What is the difference between an engrossed bill and an enrolled bill? An engrossed bill is a bill which has been amended. A bill may be engrossed many times. An enrolled bill, which may or may not have been engrossed, is a bill that has passed both houses of the Legislature in identical form and has been converted into an act for presentation to the Governor or Secretary of State.

How can I tell the difference between a House and a Senate bill? House and Senate bills are numbered in serial order as they are filed. House bills receive odd numbers and are prefixed by "H" or "HB"; Senate bills receive even numbers and are prefixed by "S" or "SB".

How often do the houses elect officers? Every two years the Legislature convenes for the sole purpose of organizing each house. At this organization session, held fourteen days after the general election, members are sworn in, officers are elected, rules are adopted, and the committee appointment process is begun.

What does the CS, CS1, CS2, etc., mean on a bill number? "CS" denotes a council substitute in the House and a committee substitute in the Senate, which is a substitute bill proposed by either a House council or Senate Committee for a bill considered and amended by that council or committee. Each House council or Senate committee to which a bill is referred may adopt a substitute for that bill. If the previous council or committee of reference adopted a substitute for the bill, the next council or committee may adopt a substitute for that substitute. Occasionally, there will be a substitute for a substitute for a substitute for a bill (CS/CS/CS/CS or C4). A House council or Senate committee substitute may also combine multiple bills from the same house.

What happens when the Governor vetoes a bill? When the Governor vetoes (objects to) a bill, it is sent back to its house of origin. It is available for consideration until the end of the current session or, if the Legislature is not in session when the bill is received, until the end of the next regular session. If two-thirds of the members of each house vote to override (set aside) the Governor's objections, the bill becomes a law.

What is the deadline for the Governor to sign bills? While the legislature is in session, the Constitution allows a 7-day period following presentation of a bill to the Governor within which to sign or veto the bill. If the Legislature adjourns sine die before an act is presented to the Governor or while an act is in the Governor's possession, the Governor has 15 days from the date of presentation in which to take action. Details of this process can be found in Article III, section 8 of the Florida Constitution.

What are the different types and versions of bills? Different types and versions of bills include: Appropriation, Claim, Combined, Committee, Enrolled, Engrossed, General, Joint Resolution, Local, Memorial, Reviser, Resolution, and Trust Fund. See the Glossary of Terms for detailed descriptions of each.

What is a linked bill? A bill that is contingent upon passage of another bill within that chamber is a linked bill. A trust fund bill, a bill providing a public record exemption, or an implementing bill may be a linked bill.

When does the regular legislation session begin and end? The regular legislative session starts on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March for a period not to exceed 60 days.

What are the meanings of "identical", "similar", and "compare" as they relate to the companion checking of bills? A companion bill introduced in one house that is identical or similar to a bill introduced in the other house. Use of companion bills permits their concurrent analysis and deliberation by both houses. Companion bills which are identical word-for-word, including titles, are marked "identical" in bill history. However, Resolutions and Concurrent Resolutions are considered identical when the only difference is the word "House" or "Senate". Companion bills are marked "similar" in bill history if they are substantially similar in text or have substantial portions of text that are identical or largely the same. If one word is different, the bills are "similar". Companion bills with selected provisions that are similar in text are marked "compare" in bill history.

What does the bill action "In messages" mean? "In messages" refers to the location of a bill passed by a chamber en route to or residing in the other chamber for consideration.

ADVOCACY GUIDELINES FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

Public employees are subject to regulations concerning contacts with members of Congress or state legislators. Fortunately, this does not translate to a blanket prohibition on lobbying your legislators, i.e. conducting activities for the purpose of influencing a member of Congress or state legislature to favor or oppose legislation or appropriations.

The First Amendment protects your right to lobby members of Congress and congressional staff and committees as well as state legislators.

However, statements you make must not be construed as official pronouncements of federal or state policy. Therefore, you must explicitly separate yourself from your local, federal or state capacity when lobbying members of Congress or state legislatures. That is, identify yourself as a concerned citizen presenting your personal views.

Even so, there is no need to conceal your government employment. You may choose to identify your official local, state or federal capacity and to discuss your professional activities as long as you make it clear that you are speaking on behalf of yourself or a non-governmental organization (i.e. local or state organization or the Florida Recreation and Park Association) and the views expressed are your own.

Appropriated federal or state funds may not be used, directly or indirectly, to pay for lobbying activities.

This means that anything paid for by the government, including your salary, telephone, copier, paper, postage, secretary, etc., may not be used to support your lobbying activities. However, personal funds or funds provided by non-governmental organizations may be used to support lobbying activities.

These two simple precepts should not discourage you from lobbying your legislators, but rather are meant to inform you of your responsibilities as a government employee. Your participation in the democratic process can be personally satisfying and is critical to success in advancing the parks and recreation movement.

Please contact your local ethics official with questions about your involvement in the legislative process.

(Adapted from the National Recreation and Park Association - January 2010)

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Act - A bill that has passed both houses of the legislature. See Law.

Adjournment - The recess of a legislative house until a later stated time or until the time fixed by its rules for reconvening. Sine die adjournment is the final adjournment of a legislative session. Each house recesses after its daily session and adjourns sine die at the end of each session.

Agenda - The list of business (including proposed legislation) to be considered at a committee meeting or during a hearing.

Amendment - A proposal to change a procedural motion or proposed legislation. Types and versions of amendments include:

Committee amendment - Recommended changes to a bill, which a committee has agreed upon. Each adopted committee amendment accompanies the bill reported favorably out of committee for floor consideration. When the bill goes to the floor, the committee amendment must be considered before any other amendment may be taken up.

Floor amendment - A proposal offered by one or more legislators for consideration in the respective chamber.

Technical amendment - A non-substantive amendment used to correct errors such as spelling, numbering, incorrect coding or directory language.

Analysis - Sometimes called a bill analysis or staff analysis, it is prepared by the staff of each committee of reference. It summarizes the bill and explains the current law affected by the bill, the likely impact of the bill, any constitutional issues raised by the bill, and committee amendments, if any, are summarized.

Apportionment and redistricting - Legislative action required following each decennial census, fixing the size of each house of the Florida Legislature and drawing legislative and congressional district boundaries to provide representation in the Florida Legislature and the U.S. Congress for the people of the state.

Biennium - A two-year period. This term is often used to describe the two-year term of the Florida Legislature that begins in November of an even-numbered year and ends in November of the next even-numbered year. See Legislature, the Florida.

Bill (SB, HB) - A proposed act filed in either house of the legislature. Types and versions of bills include:

Appropriations and Implementing bills - Bills authorizing the spending of public money. Such bills are effective for one year only.

Claim bill - A bill that presents a claim to compensate a particular individual or entity for injuries or losses caused by the negligence or error of a public officer or agency.

Committee bill - A bill that is the product of a legislative committee rather than by an individual legislator.

Committee Substitute (CS or C1) - A Senate bill going through the committee hearing process sometimes has numerous amendments, or the amendments change the original concept of the bill. In these instances the bill is rewritten and becomes a "committee substitute." The next committee of reference may again rewrite the bill, and more than one bill may be combined. The committee substitute continues to carry the identifying number(s) of the original bill(s) filed. A CS/CS or C2 is a Committee Substitute for Committee Substitute.

Companion bill - A bill introduced in one house, which is identical, or similar to a bill introduced in the other house. The use of companion bills allows bills in each body to move through the committee process at the same time.

Compare bill - As used in bill history, bills that have selected provisions that are similar in text.

Engrossed bill (E, E1, 1st Eng., E2, 2nd Eng., etc.) - The version of a measure that incorporates adopted floor amendments. The revision is done in the house of origin and engrossed under the supervision of the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the House.

Enrolled bill (ER) - A Senate or House measure approved by both houses and signed by the legislative officers which is sent to the Governor for action and transmittal to the Secretary of State or filed directly with the Secretary of State. The bill is enrolled in the house of origin under the supervision of the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the House.

General bill (SB, HB) - A bill of general statewide interest or whose provisions apply to the entire state.

Identical bill - As used in bill history, companion bills that are identical word-for-word, including titles. However, Resolutions and Concurrent Resolutions are considered identical if the only difference is the word "House" or "Senate."

Linked bill - A bill that is contingent upon passage of another bill within the same chamber, e.g., a trust fund bill, a bill providing a public record exemption, or an implementing bill.

Local bill (or Special Act) - A bill that applies to an area or group that is less than the total area or population of the state. Its subject matter is such that those to whom it is applicable are entitled to publication or referendum as required by section 10 of Article III of the Florida Constitution.

Memorial (SM, HM) - A measure addressed to an executive agency or another legislative body, usually Congress, which expresses the consensus of the Florida Legislature, or urges that certain action be taken, on a matter within the jurisdiction of the agency or body to which it is addressed. When both houses adopt the measure, the memorial is signed by the legislative officers and transmitted to the Secretary of State for presentation to the addressee. A memorial is not subject to the approval or veto

powers of the Governor, is not subject to constitutional title requirements, and does not have the effect of law.

Proposed Committee Bill (PCB) - A proposal that represents a committee interim project. When the idea is expanded, drafted in bill form, receives a favorable vote by the committee, and filed, it becomes a bill.

Proposed Committee Substitute for a Senate Bill (PCS) - A proposal that represents the changes that a committee intends to make to a bill that is being heard by that committee. When voted favorably by the committee, it is drafted in bill form and reported out as a committee substitute.

Resolution - A bill that is not subject to action by the Governor, is not subject to the constitutional one-subject limitation or to the constitutional title requirements, and, except for certain uses of joint resolutions and concurrent resolutions, does not have the effect of law. When adopted by both houses, it is signed by the legislative officers and presented to the Secretary of State. Types include:

Concurrent Resolution (SCR, HCR) - A resolution that is adopted by both houses and is limited to procedural legislative matters, redistricting, and ratification of federal constitutional amendments.

Senate or House Resolution (SR, HR) - A one-house document used for matters not involving the other house. It is often ceremonial or congratulatory in nature.

Joint Resolution (SJR, HJR) - A resolution that is the only authorized method by which the legislature may propose amendments to the Florida Constitution. If passed, the proposed amendment would appear on a statewide ballot for voter approval or rejection. It must pass each house by a three-fifths vote of the membership.

Reviser's bill - A bill prepared by the Division of Statutory Revision of the Office of Legislative Services which makes grammatical, editorial, or other technical changes in the Florida Statutes for clarity and proper interpretation. It may also remove certain obsolete, inconsistent, redundant, invalid, or superseded statutes and laws or parts thereof from the official statutes.

Similar bill - As used in bill history, companion bills that are substantially similar in text or have substantial portions of text that are largely the same.

Trust Fund bill - Section 19(f)(3) of Article III of the State Constitution requires the legislature to periodically review trust funds to determine whether they should be terminated, modified, made exempt from review, or re-created without modification. Creation of a trust fund requires a three-fifths vote of the membership. Section 215.3208, Florida Statutes, provides the schedule for termination and review of trust funds.

Bill draft - A proposal that has been drafted, at the request of a legislator or a legislative committee, by the bill drafting office of the Senate or House of Representatives.

Bill Drafting - The Office of Senate Legal Research and Drafting Services in the Senate or the Bill Drafting Service in the House of Representatives.

Bill history - A chronological listing of all actions that occur on a bill from its introduction to its final disposition. This information can be found in the Citator and is available electronically.

Bill Information System, Legislative (BHIN) - Online computer access to real-time legislative bill information that is available on the current and previous year for all bills pre-filed in the interim and filed during regular and special sessions.

Bill number - The identifying number given each bill filed for introduction. Since 1990, Senate bills have received even numbers and House bills have received odd numbers. Bill numbers do not carry over from session to session or from a regular session to a special session.

Budget - The totality of appropriations measures passed by the legislature. The detailed spending plan submitted by the Governor to the legislature which recommends monetary allocations for each of the departments of the state for the next fiscal year is also known as a "budget." Using recommendations from the Governor and individual departments, each house prepares its own version of the budget. See Appropriations and Implementing bills.

Calendars - Important tools in the legislative process which serve as official notification of bills to be considered, sessions, and committee meetings and hearings. Types and versions of calendars include:

Claim Bill Calendar - A special calendar of claim bills for chamber consideration.

Consent Calendar - A special calendar of noncontroversial bills, passage of which may expedite the work of the legislature.

Daily Calendar - A document containing the schedule of meetings and individual committee agendas, the day's order of business, the special order and other special calendars, bills on second and third reading, and other business. The Daily Calendar is published each weekday during session.

Interim Calendar - Published periodically during the months between regular sessions, this document contains a list of agendas of committee meetings, pre-filed bills and their committee references, and other significant legislative information. Printed copies are available from the Secretary of the Senate and the Clerk of the House.

Local Bill Calendar - A special calendar of local bills for chamber consideration. This listing is generally incorporated into the Daily Calendar.

Special Order Calendar - The list of bills on second reading, to be taken up in session on a particular day.

Trust Fund Bill Calendar - A special calendar that deals with the legislative review of specific trust funds as required by section 19(f) of Article III of the State Constitution.

Caucus - A private (although not necessarily closed) meeting of legislators. A caucus may be composed of members of a political party, members from a geographical area, or members allied for some temporary purpose. Legislative officers and leaders are designated and nominated within the political parties at caucus. A party's position on pending legislation is often discussed at caucus.

Chair - A term used to refer to the presiding officer in a floor session or in a legislative committee meeting.

Chamber - The large rooms in which the Senate and the House meet. The Senate and the House chambers are located on the fourth floor of the Capitol. See Gallery.

Chapter law - The identifying number assigned by the Secretary of State to a bill that has been enacted into law. The number indicates the year passed and the printing number. For example, chapter 2000-541 represents the 541st law printed in the year 2000. Chapter laws are compiled and published annually in the Laws of Florida.

Citator - A publication provided by the Division of Legislative Information Services of the Office of Legislative Services which shows the status of and a chronological listing of all actions concerning all legislation introduced during a session. The Citator also provides statistics, descriptions by bill number, sponsor reports by member and committee, and indices by statute number affected and by subject.

Clerk of the House of Representatives - The person elected by the House of Representatives to assist the members of the House in the detailed processes of enacting laws and recording that history.

Clerk's Manual, The - Published biennially by the Clerk of the House of Representatives, this book contains biographical information on members of the legislature and other information.

Coding - The underlining of new language and over-striking of deleted existing language in a bill, required by the rules of both houses of the legislature, which indicates changes being made to the text of existing law or an existing constitutional provision.

Committee - A panel of legislators chosen by the respective presiding officers to perform specific functions. Types of committees include:

Conference Committee - A committee composed of members of the Senate (appointed by the President) and members of the House of Representatives (appointed by the Speaker) whose sole purpose is to resolve the differences between the two houses on the content of a bill.

Joint Committee - A committee composed of Senate and House members appointed by their respective presiding officers to oversee a specified legislative function.

Select Committee - A committee created for the purpose of studying or investigating a specific matter within a specified time period.

Standing Committee - A committee appointed by the respective presiding officer and given a continuing responsibility over legislation covering specific subject matters.

Subcommittee - As used in the Senate, a committee within a full committee, which makes recommendations to the full committee.

Committee report - The findings or recommendations of a committee on a measure or matter referred to it or on a subject it has been asked to study.

Conferees - Members of a conference committee appointed by the Senate President and House Speaker.

Conference Committee Report - The report of a conference committee on the bill or bills for which the committee was formed. The conference committee report will usually include amendments proposed by the conference committee. The report of the conference committee must be either adopted or rejected as a whole by each house.

Consensus Estimating Conferences - An umbrella term designating a group of conference bodies, consisting of members of the legislature, representatives from the Governor's Office, and designees from various state agencies, which meet to develop caseload/workload data and revenue projections to assist in the budgeting and appropriations process.

Constituent - A resident in an elected official's district.

Constitution - The written instrument embodying the fundamental principles of the state which establishes power and duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people.

Constitutional amendment - A joint resolution that proposes an amendment to, or revision of, the State Constitution. After final passage and filing with the Secretary of State, a proposed constitutional amendment is presented to the voters at the next regular general election pursuant to section 5 of Article XI of the State Constitution.

Convene - To assemble the legislature or either house thereof. The annual session of the Florida Legislature begins for a period not to exceed 60 days on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of each odd-numbered year and on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March, or such other date as may be fixed by law, of each even-numbered year.

Daily Order of Business - The items of business and the order in which they are to be considered each day as set out in the rules of each house.

Debate - Discussion by legislators during a committee meeting or while a house is meeting supporting or opposing an issue.

Decorum - Appropriateness of behavior or conduct.

Delegation, Legislative - A group of legislators who represent parts of the same county or geographical area.

District - The area from which a state senator, representative, or Congressman is elected. The boundaries of state legislative and congressional districts are drawn in the decennial process known as apportionment and redistricting.

District staff - Personnel employed by a legislator to work in the legislator's district office.

Effective date - The date upon which an act becomes effective. If a date is not specified in the bill, an act takes effect 60 days after the final adjournment of the legislative session at which it was enacted.

Enabling legislation - A bill designed specifically to carry out an adopted constitutional amendment.

Enacting clause - The State Constitution requires that each bill be prefaced by the phrase: "Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida."

Fiscal Year - The period used for budgeting and accounting. In Florida state government, this is the period from July 1 of one calendar year to June 30 of the next calendar year.

Floor - Synonymous with Chamber or "in session." Floor action suggests consideration by the entire Senate or House rather than committee action.

Florida Constitution - The document that outlines the basic framework of Florida's system of government. Revised in 1968 and subsequently amended.

The Florida Senate Handbook for Kids - A printed student guide to the Florida Legislature, similar to Senate Kids, which contains facts about the Legislature and games and puzzles designed to help students learn. The office of the Secretary of the Senate publishes it.

Florida Statutes - An edited compilation of general laws of the state.

Gallery - The seating area on the floor above the Senate or House chamber where the public may observe a house in session.

Guide to Florida Government - Compiled by the Clerk of the House, a list of agency, executive, legislative, judicial, and congressional offices and the reporters of the Capitol Press Corps.

History notes - A note following each section of the Florida Statutes which contains citations to the section and chapter number of the creating act and each subsequent amendatory act as located in the Laws of Florida. Consult the Laws of Florida to determine the effective date of a creating act or a particular amendment.

House - Generally, either body or chamber of the legislature. When capitalized, the term refers to the House of Representatives.

Impeachment - The process of considering removal of an office-holder for charges brought against the office-holder. The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, members of the Cabinet, justices of the Supreme Court, and judges may be removed from office by impeachment. The House of Representatives has the sole power to impeach. It may do so by a two-thirds vote of the members voting. The Senate tries all impeachments, with the Chief Justice of the Florida

Supreme Court presiding. A two-thirds vote of the Senate is required to convict. If convicted, the officer is removed from office.

Initiative - An amendment to the State Constitution proposed by a number of electors. An initiative is accomplished by filing with the Secretary of State a petition containing a copy of the amendment proposed which has been signed by a specified number of electors.

Instantier - Latin for immediately. A motion to take up an issue immediately.

Interim - The period between the adjournment of a regular session sine die and the convening of the next regular session.

Introduction - The reading of a bill (including a committee substitute) the first time in a house of the legislature. Publication of the title of the bill in the journal of a house constitutes its first reading in that house.

Journal - The official legal record of the proceedings of the Senate or the House of Representatives. Each legislative house publishes a journal for each day of session. The Journal records only the formal action in the legislature and committees. Its contents include titles of bills introduced and considered, a record of members' votes on issues, as well as motions and other business before the legislature.

Law - An act becomes a law when the Governor either approves it or fails to sign or veto it within the period specified in the State Constitution. An act can also become a law when a subsequent legislature overrides a veto by the Governor. While the legislature is in session, the constitution allows a 7-day period following presentation of a bill to the Governor within which to sign or veto the bill. If the legislature adjourns sine die before an act is presented to the Governor or while an act is in the Governor's possession, the Governor has 15 days following the date of presentation in which to take action.

Laws of Florida - A verbatim publication of the general and special laws enacted by the Florida Legislature in a given year and published each year following the regular session of the legislature. It presents the laws in the order in which they are numbered by the Secretary of State, as well as resolutions and memorials passed by the legislature.

Legislative Information Services, Division of - The unit of the Office of Legislative Services responsible for compiling the history of legislative actions and statistical information on filed bills.

Legislature, The Florida - Florida's bicameral legislature, composed of the 40-member Senate and the 120-member House of Representatives. Each house is the sole judge of the qualifications and elections of its members and has the power to choose its own officers and establish its own rules of procedure. Either house may initiate legislation on any subject. Senators serve 4-year, staggered terms and representatives serve 2-year terms. No legislator

may seek reelection "if, by the end of the current term of office, the person will have served . . . in that office for eight consecutive years." See Section 4 of Article VI of the State Constitution.

Lobbyist - One who encourages, directly or indirectly, the passage, defeat, or modification of any legislation.

Majority Leader - A legislator from the majority party designated by the presiding officer of each house to be the leader of the majority party members in that house.

Majority party - The political party having the most members in a house.

Message - Communication by one house to the other house concerning action taken on a bill. Each bill, and any amendments to it, is transmitted from one house to the other accompanied by a document (Message) that states the action taken on the bill. The term "Messages" is also used to describe the unit of the office of the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the House responsible for transmitting bills to the other house.

Minority Leader - The legislator elected by minority party caucus in each house to be the leader of the minority party members in that house.

Minority party - The political party that has less than a majority of members in a house.

Motion - A formal request made by a legislator on the floor or in a committee meeting to take some procedural action. The rules of each house determine the importance of a motion, whether it may be debated, and the vote required for adoption of the motion.

OLS (Office of Legislative Services) - Joint Rules of the Florida Legislature provide for an Office of Legislative Services to provide legislative support services that are determined by the President and the Speaker to be necessary and that can be effectively provided jointly to both houses and other units of the legislature.

One-subject rule - The constitutional requirement, imposed by section 6 of Article III of the State Constitution, that requires every law shall embrace but one subject and matter properly connected therewith.

Open meetings - Section 4(e) of Article III of the State Constitution provides that specified legislative meetings shall be open and noticed to the public. All legislative sessions are open to the public except executive sessions of the Senate.

Oversight - Analysis of how the agencies of the executive department go about the performance of their duties is an important responsibility of committees.

Pamphlet law - Prior to the compilation of the volume of newly enacted laws, the printed copies of the individual laws are available in Adobe Acrobat PDF format for viewing or printing

from the Department of State's website in pamphlet or "slip" form. This term is used interchangeably with "session law" or "chapter law."

Passage - Favorable floor action on a bill.

Popular name - Name by which some legislative acts come to be known. It may include the name of a person (Mrs. Doubtfire bill), an action (10-20-Life bill), or an acronym (WAGES bill).

President of the Senate - The presiding officer of the Senate, having been designated by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the full membership of the Senate for a term of two years at the organization session.

President Pro Tempore of the Senate - A senator who is chosen by the President and elected by the full membership of the Senate for a term of two years at the organization session.

Proclamation - The proclamation issued by the Governor or the Senate President and House Speaker jointly to call the Florida Legislature into a special session. It states the reason for the session, the issues to be addressed during the session, and the length of the session. Also referred to as "the Call."

Proof of Publication - Verified newspaper notice of intent to seek enactment of specific legislation. This notice is attached to the filed claim or local bill and remains a part of the permanent file.

Proviso - In a general appropriations bill, language used to qualify or restrict a specific appropriation.

Public records law - A law providing that public records that are not exempt from public disclosure may be inspected at reasonable times, under reasonable conditions, and under the supervision of the person who has custody of the records.

Public Review Period, Constitutional (72-hour rule) - A 72-hour public-review period required by section 18(d) of Article III of the State Constitution before final passage of general appropriations bills. Section 1(e) of Article VII requires a 72-hour period after third reading before the final passage of a bill increasing state revenues.

Quorum - A majority. The State Constitution requires a majority of the members elected to a house to be present for the transacting of legislative business.

Quorum call - A call made by the presiding officer to establish the presence of a majority for the lawful transacting of business.

Ratification - The act approving an amendment to the United States Constitution.

Reading - Each bill or proposed constitutional amendment must receive three readings on three separate days in each legislative house before it can be passed (unless waived by a two-thirds vote of the members for readings on the same day). These readings are:

First Reading - The bill is introduced and its title is published in the journal; sometimes first reading takes place during a chamber session.

Second Reading - After favorable reports by all committees of reference, the bill is available for placement on the calendar. When it is considered on the floor, it is read a second time. Debate occurs and amendments may be considered. If amendments are adopted, the bill is engrossed.

Third Reading - Debate on final passage occurs; a two-thirds vote is required to amend at this stage.

Recall a bill - A request by either house for return of a bill from the other house or from the Governor's Office. When the request is from one house to the other, a written Message is sent to the other house. The adoption of a concurrent resolution is required to recall a bill from the Governor's Office.

Recess - The period within a legislative day during which a legislative body is not in session after having been convened for that particular day.

Referendum - A vote of the electors. A referendum is required as a condition for the effectiveness of a local bill if proof of publication has not been provided.

Repeal - The removal of an entire section, subsection, or paragraph of law from the Florida Statutes by the legislature. The repeal of a statute or statutes is accomplished by the insertion of a repealer clause in a bill that becomes a law.

Roll call - The calling of names of members of the Senate or the House, either to determine the presence of a quorum or to act upon a matter before that house. In the chamber, the roll is recorded by an electronic voting machine.

Rules - Each house determines its own process for conducting its business and adopts rules at the beginning of each legislative term.

Ruling by the chair - A decision by the committee chair or the presiding officer concerning a question of order or procedure.

Secretary of the Senate - The officer specified in section 2 of Article III of the State Constitution and elected by the Senate to serve at its pleasure, and who is responsible for assisting the officers, members, and staff of the Senate, in the detailed processes by which laws are enacted.

Senate Handbook, The Florida - Published by the office of the Secretary of the Senate biennially. The handbook provides information on senators and officers and outlines and describes the Senate, its operations, and its relationship with the House and the other branches

of government. It is distributed free of charge to Capitol visitors and other interested Floridians to enhance their knowledge and understanding of Florida's government, and particularly, the Florida Senate.

Senate Legal Research and Drafting Services - The unit of the Senate which is primarily responsible for drafting Senate bills and amendments and performing related legal research.

Sergeant at Arms - The person charged with enforcing the directions of the President of the Senate or the Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Sergeant's office is responsible for the security of the respective legislative body and maintenance of property of that house.

Session - The term is used to refer both to a particular day's meeting of the Senate or the House and to the entire period for which the legislature has been convened. Types of sessions include:

Executive Session - Section 4(b) of Article III of the State Constitution provides that the Senate may resolve itself into executive (closed) session for the sole purpose of considering a person's appointment to office or removal or suspension from office.

Extended Session - A regular or special session that has been prolonged beyond its allocated time in order to complete action on introduced legislation. Extension requires a three-fifths vote by members of each house. Additional business may be considered only by a two-thirds vote of the membership of each house.

Joint Session - The annual session held the first day of the regular session in the House chamber and attended by members of both houses, the Governor, the Cabinet, members of the Supreme Court, and invited guests. The purpose of this session is for the Governor to inform the legislature concerning the condition of the state, propose such reorganization of the executive department as will promote efficiency and economy, and recommend measures in the public interest. Joint sessions are also held on other occasions.

Organization Session - Section 3(a) of Article III of the State Constitution directs the legislature to convene on the 14th day after the general election, solely for the purpose of organizing. Organizing includes the taking of the oath by members, the election of officers, the appointment of committees, and the adoption of the rules.

Regular Session - This is the name given to the annual session that begins on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of each odd-numbered year, and on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March, or such other date as may be fixed by law, of each even-numbered year, for a period not to exceed 60 consecutive days.

Special Session - Special sessions may be called by Proclamation of the Governor or by Joint Proclamation of the Senate President and the House Speaker for the purpose of considering specific legislation, and shall not exceed 20 consecutive days unless extended by a three-fifths vote of each house.

Sine die - Latin for without day. The motion to "adjourn sine die" is the last action of a session of the legislature. Each house may adjourn on its own motion.

Slip law - See Pamphlet law.

Speaker of the House of Representatives - The presiding officer of the House of Representatives, designated by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the body for a term of two years at the organization session.

Speaker Pro Tempore of the House of Representatives - A member of the House of Representatives who is designated by the majority party in caucus and then elected by the body. The Speaker pro tempore presides over the House of Representatives at the request of the Speaker or in the absence of the Speaker.

Sponsor - The legislator who files a bill for introduction or the committee that votes to file the bill for introduction. The introducer's name appears first on the bill, in the journal, and in any material dealing with the bill. This term is often used interchangeably with sponsor. A co-introducer or co-sponsor is a legislator who signs a bill in addition to the introducer. If a bill becomes a committee substitute, the first-named introducers and all others then become co-introducers or co-sponsors.

Statutory Revision, Division of - The unit of the Office of Legislative Services, which is responsible for the continuous revision of the Florida Statutes, including editing, compiling, indexing, and publishing.

Summary - The brief explanation of the contents of a Senate bill which is prepared by the Office of Senate Legal Research and Drafting Services and which appears at the end of each Senate bill filed for introduction.

Temporarily postponed - "Temporarily postponed," "temporarily passed," "temporarily deferred," or "TP'd" refer to the postponing of consideration of an agendaed bill or other legislative matter.

Term limits - Section 4 of Article VI of the State Constitution provides that specified elected officials may not seek reelection "if, by the end of the current term of office, the person will have served . . . in that office for eight consecutive years."

Veto - Objection by the Governor to an act passed by the legislature, which objection kills the act unless it is reenacted later by a two-thirds vote of both houses.

Veto, Line item - Power of the Governor to selectively veto items in a general appropriations act or any specific appropriation in a substantive act containing an appropriation. See section 18(b) of Article III of the State Constitution for restrictions on the Governor's use of this power.

Veto override - Action by the legislature to set aside the Governor's objections to an act. It takes two-thirds of the members voting in each house to override a veto.

Vote - The Constitution requires the recorded yeas and nays on final passage of legislation. Types of votes include:

Extraordinary vote - Certain measures require more than a simple majority vote for passage; thus such measures are said to require an “extraordinary vote.” For example, it takes two-thirds of the members voting to override the Governor’s veto or to move to waive the readings of a bill on separate days.

Favorable vote - The necessary majority of the legislators in either house vote for the legislative matter before them.

Tie vote - An equal number of legislators in either house vote for and against a bill, amendment, or motion, thereby killing the measure.

Unfavorable vote - An issue fails to receive the necessary number of favorable votes.

Voice vote - An oral vote is allowed on some legislative issues such as motions, amendments, and resolutions. A voice vote cannot be used for passage of bills or joint resolutions.

Vote board -The electronic voting displays located in each chamber which show how legislators are voting on a measure before the body

Waive the rules - The process, requiring a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting, of setting aside certain rules in order to take certain action.

Withdraw - To remove a bill, amendment, or other legislative matter from a committee or from further consideration by the body.

Without objection - A phrase used by the presiding officer to indicate that he or she is disposing of a matter without taking a roll call vote of the members, assuming that the action taken is approved unanimously.

Yield - A legislator may release part of the allotted time for which he or she has the floor to another member of his or her chamber, usually for questions or clarification of the yielding legislator’s discussion.