



**From Idea to Law**  
**Your How-to**  
**Guide:**  
**The Legislative Process**  
**&**  
**Advocating for Life & Dignity**



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# Tips to use during your meetings with legislators



- 1 Be courteous and respectful.** Show up on time for your meetings. Keep things civil, even if you disagree on an issue. Be gracious and thank your lawmakers for their service and time.
- 2 Make personal connections.** Your legislator is a resident of your district. Introduce yourself and tell him/her where you live. Find common interests or acquaintances. Share about your work or experience if it's relevant to a bill.
- 3 Know the basics.** Be prepared to give a brief overview of a bill, and why you support/oppose it. Don't get into the weeds and make sure to stay on track. Identify the legislation by its bill number so lawmakers can keep tabs on it.
- 4 Follow up.** Your legislative visit can be the start of an ongoing dialogue with your lawmaker. Send a follow-up message expressing your gratitude and reiterating your points. Reference your visit in future communications.

## 5 FLOOR

After the full House or Senate accepts the committee report, the bill has its *second reading* and is placed on the House agenda (*General Register*) or the Senate agenda (*General Orders*).

After this point, the House and Senate procedures differ...

## House **6** DEBATE Senate

Bills on the *General Register* await action by the full body. Bills chosen to appear on the *Calendar for the Day* or the *Fiscal Calendar* are drawn from the *General Register*.

Bills on the *General Orders* can be debated and amendments can be offered. Then they vote to either: pass the bill, progress (delay action), or send it back to committee.

## House **7** CALENDAR FOR THE DAY Senate

Once a bill is on the *Calendar for the Day*, members can amend it before it is given a *third reading*. It is then voted on by the full body.

Bills that pass are placed on the *Calendar for the Day* and have a *third reading*—no further amendments can then be made without unanimous approval.

**If the House & Senate pass the same version of the bill, it goes to the governor.**

## 8 CONFERENCE

If the House and Senate versions are different, the bill goes to a conference committee of 3 to 5 members from both the House and Senate.

The committee works out differences and reaches a compromise.

## 9 FLOOR

The compromise bill goes back to the House and Senate for another vote. If both bodies pass this version, it goes on to the governor.

If either party does not pass the bill, it goes back to conference committee for further consideration.

The compromise bill cannot be amended on the House or Senate floor.

## 10 GOVERNOR

Once the governor has the bill, he can sign it into law, veto it within 3 days, or allow it to become law by not signing it.

During session, the House and Senate can override a veto with a 2/3 vote.

The governor may *line-item veto* parts of a money bill, or *pocket veto* a bill passed during the last 3 days of the session by not signing it within 14 days after final adjournment.

# Communicating with your Legislators



**Build Relationships.** Relationships cultivate possibilities. It is through relationships that significant things happen. When people are in relationships, they can share, plan, dream, create, and get things done. People are more likely to respond to an invitation to work together from someone with whom they have a relationship.

**Uncover interests.** Interests are those things that a person feels most strongly about. They are the things that motivate people to get involved and take action. A visit can help legislators clarify their interests and set priorities.

**Gather Information.** Visits are an opportunity for a legislator to gain information about the parish and the surrounding community. Legislators will find out what is going on in the community, who other church members are, and most importantly, what parishioners are thinking and feeling about key issues. It's also important for visitors to have a better sense of what the legislator is thinking so that they can be effectively lobbied and educated specific to their concerns about a bill.