



OHIO HOUSE

DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS

Anti-worker, women and voter laws have come from the legislature in recent years because of the Republican stronghold in the House and Senate. Winning and increasing Democratic House seats directly influences the laws which come out of the Statehouse.

How a bill becomes a law

Changes to current Ohio law are introduced in the legislature as bills. Bills can be introduced by any member of the General Assembly. To be adopted into law, bills must be approved by the House, Senate and Governor.

Introduction of bills

Upon its introduction, a bill is given a number (starting with one and running consecutively) in the chamber of its introduction. The bill is then assigned to a committee that considers similar subject matter.

Committee process

A bill faces its first test when it is presented to committee. Committee hearings to discuss a bill's merits are the most important part of the legislative process. The fate of a bill is usually determined in committee. All committee meetings are open to the public.

During committee hearings, the bill's sponsor and/or proponents tell committee members why the bill's passage is needed. Opponents are also given an opportunity to testify against the bill. At this time, a bill can be amended or completely re-written (as a substitute bill).

Following debate, a bill may be voted on and passed out of committee.

Floor debate

After a bill has been passed by its committee, it can be considered by the entire chamber of the bill's introduction.

When a bill is scheduled for consideration, it is debated on the floor during session. The bill can be amended at this time. A majority vote of all members is required for passage.

Following passage of a bill in the chamber of its origin, it is sent to the other chamber where the committee and floor process is repeated. If the bill is amended in the second chamber, these amendments must be agreed upon by the chamber of origin before final enactment of the bill can occur.

If agreement cannot be reached, a Conference Committee comprised of three members of each chamber is appointed to resolve the differences. The Conference Committee will then report recommendations for final approval by both chambers.

After a bill has been passed by both chambers, it is presented to the Governor for consideration. If the Governor approves of the legislation, it is filed with the Secretary of State, becomes law and, under most circumstances, becomes effective 90 days after filing. Emergency bills and bills containing appropriations become effective immediately upon the Governor's signature.

Veto

If the Governor does not approve of the bill and vetoes the measure, it is sent back to its chamber of origin. If three-fifths of the members of each chamber vote to pass the measure notwithstanding the Governor's objections, they have "overridden" the Governor's veto and it becomes law. If either chamber fails to muster the necessary votes, the Governor's veto stands and the bill does not become law.