

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW IN MARYLAND & THE U.S.

[ASL](#)
[Video](#)
[of How a Bill](#)
[Becomes a Law](#)
[in MD](#) ➔



1.



AN IDEA IS CREATED

Anyone can think of a new law or a change to an old law. This idea can come from lawmakers or people in the community.

2.



A LAWMAKER WRITES THE BILL

The idea is written into a bill by a lawmaker. **In Maryland**, that's a Delegate or Senator. **In the U.S.**, that's a Representative or Senator.

3.



THE BILL IS INTRODUCED

The bill is officially introduced and given a number. It is then sent to a group called a committee to be reviewed.

4.



A COMMITTEE REVIEWS THE BILL

A small group of lawmakers reads the bill, talks about it, and may make changes. If they agree, they send it to the full group to vote on.

5.



FIRST CHAMBER REVIEW & VOTE

The first chamber, which is the group where the bill started (House or Senate), talks about the bill and votes on it. If most say yes, it goes to the other chamber.

6.



SECOND CHAMBER REVIEW & VOTE

The bill now goes to the "second chamber" meaning if it started in the House, it goes to the Senate, and if it started in the Senate, it goes to the House. The second chamber reviews & votes on it too.

7.



FIXING DIFFERENCES

A special group of lawmakers called a "conference committee" works together to fix any differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill.

8.



GOVERNOR'S OR PRESIDENT'S DECISION

The Governor (Maryland) or President (U.S.) can sign or veto the bill. If they do nothing, it becomes law **after 6 days (Maryland) or 10 days (U.S.)**, unless lawmakers are no longer in session. Then it does not become a law—this is a pocket veto.

9.



OVERRIDING A VETO

If the bill is said no to (vetoed), lawmakers can vote again to pass it. **In Maryland, it takes three-fifths votes** of the House and Senate. **In the U.S., it takes two-thirds votes** of the House and Senate.