

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Legislation may begin in either chamber. Similar proposals are often introduced in both.			
Measure introduced in the House		Measure introduced in the Senate	
↓		↓	
Measure referred to committee, which holds hearings and reports measure to the House		Measure referred to committee, which holds hearings and reports measure to the Senate	
↓		↓	
For important measures, special rule reported by the Rules Committee and adopted by the House			
↓		↓	
Leadership schedules measure for floor consideration		Leadership schedules measure for floor consideration	
↓		↓	
House debates and can amend measure		Senate debates and can amend measure	
↓		↓	
House passes measure		Senate passes measure	
↓		↓	
Measures must pass both the House and Senate in identical form before being presented to the President.			
One chamber agrees to the other chamber's version	Each chamber appoints members to a conference committee, which reconciles differences and agrees to a conference		House and Senate exchange amendments to the bill and reach agreement
↓	↓	↓	↓
House approves conference report		Senate approves conference report	
↓		↓	
Legislation presented to the President.			
<u>President signs measure</u>	<u>If President does not sign measure into law within 10 days</u>		<u>President vetoes measure</u>
↓	↓	↓	↓
Measure becomes law	If Congress is in session, measure becomes law	If Congress is not in session, measure does not become law ("pocket veto")	Measure does not become law, unless both chambers override the veto by 2/3 majority.

Source: Congressional Research Service, Congressional Deskbook 2001-2002, TheCapitol.Net., Inc., Copyright 2001.