

# How a Bill Becomes a Law

A Description of the Indiana Legislative Process With a Glossary of Terms

**Indiana Chamber**

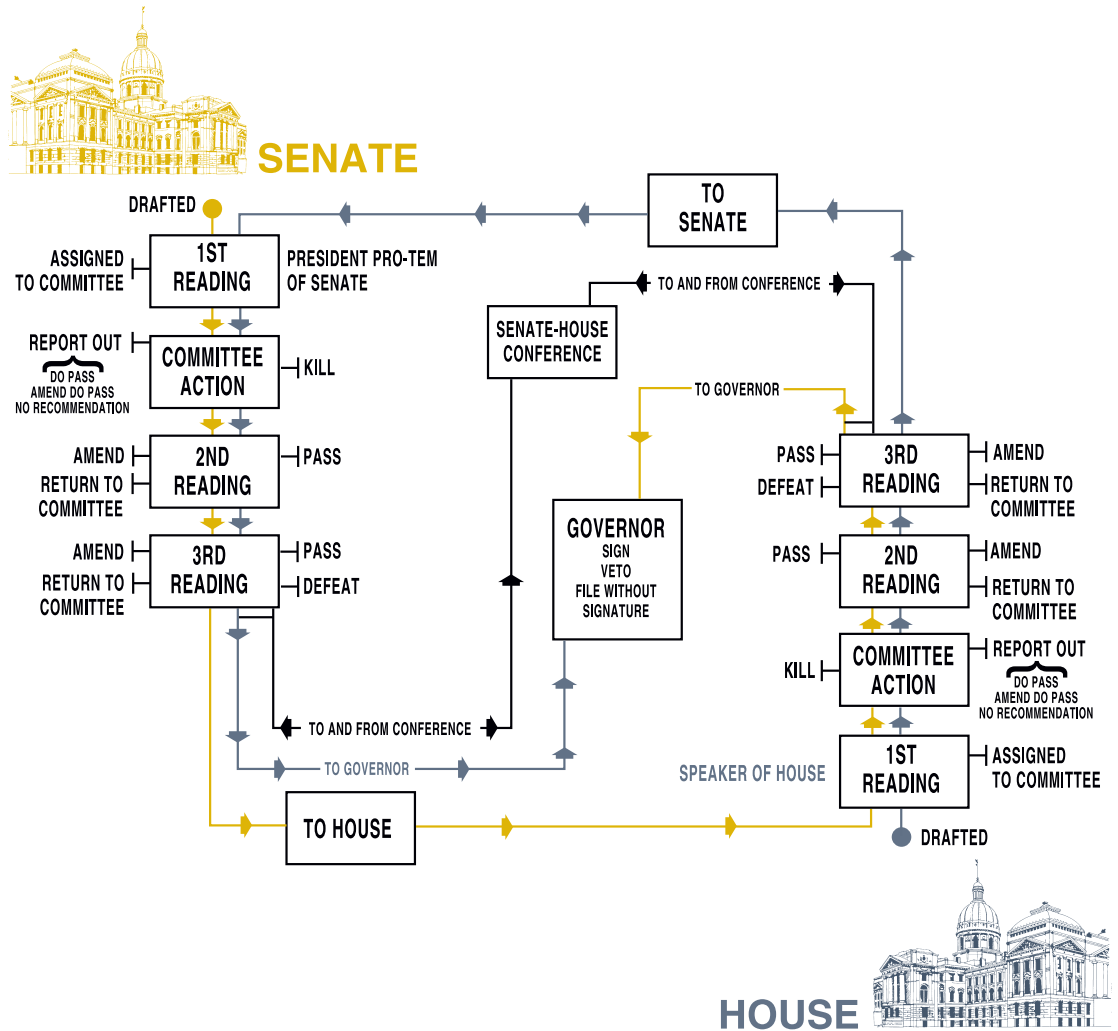
*The Voice of  
Indiana Business.*<sup>®</sup>



© 2008, Indiana Chamber of Commerce, 115 West Washington St., Suite 850S, Indianapolis, IN 46204

# How a Bill Becomes a Law

The diagram below indicates the steps by which a bill introduced in the Senate or the House of Representatives becomes a law with possible actions at each step. Bills may originate in either house of the General Assembly except for revenue-raising bills, which must be introduced in the House of Representatives.



(The Indiana Chamber of Commerce hereby grants permission to duplicate this diagram).

## How A Bill Becomes A Law In Indiana

If you should someday choose to run for a seat in the Indiana General Assembly, there are certain “ground rules” you will want to know. First off, the Indiana State Constitution requires that you be a citizen of the United States and a resident of Indiana for at least two years.

You will declare your political party affiliation and file your candidacy with the Indiana secretary of state. Then you will face two elections – first a primary election to determine your party’s legislative nominees, followed by the general election in which membership in the General Assembly is finally determined.

If you seek a seat in the House of Representatives, you must be at least 21 years old and, if in the Senate, at least 25 years old at the time of the general election.

The General Assembly meets in regular session annually, but work must be completed no later than April 29 in odd-numbered years and no later than March 14 in even-numbered years. Between sessions, legislators serve on special study committees probing into subjects likely to be considered by the Assembly’s next session. Special legislative sessions may be called by the governor.

Indiana has a “citizen legislature”; lawmaking is not a full-time profession and most legislators make their living at other occupations. The most common occupations of Indiana legislators are business owners or operators, teachers, attorneys and farmers. But the Assembly’s membership has included persons from nearly every conceivable occupational group in Indiana.

A legislator who wants a bill drawn up submits a request to the Office of Bill Drafting and Research of the Indiana Legislative Services Agency. The legislator might have called upon governmental officials, private citizens or non-governmental groups for information to help determine the potential effect of the proposed bill on certain social or economic segments of the population or in a particular governmental area. Representatives of outside groups who register with the Indiana Lobby Registration Commission to consult with legislators are called “lobbyists.” They work to get a legislator’s support of, or opposition to, bills of interest to them.

There are more than 1,200 registered lobbyists in the state of Indiana. They represent business and industry, farmers, labor unions, teachers, veterans, women, professional and religious organizations, local governmental officials and many other groups. Veteran legislators look upon lobbying as a constructive adjunct to the legislative process because of specialized information the lobbyists may have that will help the lawmakers do a better job.

### How Bills Pass

**First Reading** – Each bill presented by a legislator is first read by title in the house of its origin. At this point, either the speaker of the House or the president pro tempore of the Senate (depending on which chamber is the house of origin) refers the bill to a committee.

**Committee Action** – The committee’s responsibility is to consider the merits of a bill and determine whether it can be improved by amending the language or by making additions or deletions. It is required that committee schedules be posted on House and Senate bulletin boards. Committee hearings are open to the public so that interested parties may speak on the measures being heard. The committee’s final action is to report the bill back to the legislative body with the committee report. If the committee report is adopted, the bill is printed and ready for further action.

**Second Reading** – When the bill is brought up for second reading, it is ready for “amendment, recommitment or engrossment.” At this point it can be recommitted to a committee for further study, or legislators have an opportunity to propose amendments. Amendments must win the approval of a majority of the legislators present and voting in order to be accepted. The bill is then “ordered to engrossment.” This means that with its amendments the printed bill is authenticated as being accurate and genuine. If the amendments are extensive or complicated, the bill may be reprinted at this time.

**Third Reading** – The engrossed bill is again called up to be read. After the reading, legislators have an opportunity for debate on its merits before the final vote is taken. It must receive a constitutional majority, meaning 51 “aye” votes in the House of Representatives or 26 “aye” votes in the Senate, before it is passed. Approved bills are sent to the other chamber, where the entire process will be repeated.

**Conference Committee** – If the bill passed by one chamber is then amended by the other, the amendment(s) must be agreed to by the first chamber before the legislative process can be completed. Should the first chamber dissent (refuse to give its consent), a conference committee of two members from each house is appointed to work out a version of the bill that will be satisfactory to both houses. All four members must sign the conference committee report and it must be favorably voted on in both houses. Once this has been accomplished, the bill goes to the governor for signature.

**Governor’s Action** – The governor sends every bill received to the attorney general for examination to see if its content is legally acceptable. The last step in the enactment process is for the governor to sign the bill or to let it become law without signature. Bills become effective on July 1 of the year they are enacted unless a different effective date is specified in the bill.

### **How Bills Fail**

**First Reading** – Either house has the authority to vote not to receive a bill on its introduction (first reading). Also, a motion for indefinite postponement or to table the bill may be made from the floor at any time throughout these steps. If approved, either of these motions has the effect of preventing any further progress.

**Committee Action** – The committee to which a bill is referred can kill it simply by refraining from acting on it. (The bill can be forced out of committee by bringing the issue before the entire legislative body, but this rarely occurs.)

**Second Reading** – A motion for indefinite postponement or to table sometimes is made from the floor at this point in the process. Attempts also may be made to amend the bill in such a way that it will stand less chance of passage.

**Third Reading** – A bill can win approval of more than half the legislators voting on it and still falter at this point through failure to gain a constitutional majority – meaning 51 “aye” votes in the House of Representatives or 26 “aye” votes in the Senate. A bill which has simply failed to win a constitutional majority can be called up again for another vote. If it has been defeated by a constitutional majority, however, it cannot be considered again during that session.

A bill which reaches the second house is subject to all the opportunities to succeed or fail which exist in the house of origin.

**Conference Committee** – A bill which survives both houses but is amended in the second chamber in a manner unacceptable to the house of origin must go to a conference committee consisting of two members appointed from each house. The committee members attempt to reach an agreement that will be acceptable to legislators in both chambers. All four members of the committee must sign the conference committee report and it must be approved in both houses. Bills sometimes die because no such agreement can be reached.

**Governor's Action** – The final obstacle to a bill passed by both houses is a veto by the governor. The veto can be overridden, but it requires a constitutional majority of both houses to do so. The governor has seven days in which to act on a bill that has been passed by both houses. If the governor neither signs nor vetoes the bill within that period, it becomes law without signature on the eighth day.

**Mortality Rate** – On the average, a bill is more likely to fail than to succeed. Only two to three of every 10 measures introduced successfully run the legislative gauntlet to become law. Why is this so? Generally speaking, a bill fails for one of three reasons: 1) the bill lacks intrinsic merit to the point of failing to gain sufficient support; 2) the bill attracts powerful opposition or generates strong disagreements; or 3) the bill gets stalled somewhere in the legislative machinery and fails to regain momentum in time to be enacted.

Copies of bills, amendments, roll calls, committee schedules, legislative calendars, etc., are available through the Indiana Chamber's IndianaNet online subscription service ([www.indiananet.org](http://www.indiananet.org)), or from the Legislative Services Agency Public Information Office, Room 230, Statehouse, Indianapolis, IN 46204. (317) 232-9856.

Other information about Indiana's legislative process is given in the book *Here Is Your Indiana Government*, published by the Indiana Chamber. It tells the complete, office-by-office story of Indiana state and local government and is kept up-to-date by regular revisions.

# Glossary: Legislative Terms & Phrases Commonly Used in Indiana

## A

- Adjournment** - Termination of a session for that day, with the hour and day of the next meeting being set prior to adjournment.
- Adjournment Sine Die** - Final termination of a regular or special legislative session. (Literally, adjournment “without a day” set for reconvening).
- Adoption** - Approval or acceptance, usually applied to committee reports or resolutions upon acceptance on the floor.
- Advisor(s)** - Legislator(s) appointed to a conference committee by the presiding officer of Senate or House. An advisor does not have authority to sign a conference report.
- Aides** - Legislative staff members, hired or appointed to perform clerical, technical or official duties.
- Amend** - To alter a measure formally by modification, deletion or addition.
- Amendment** - Any alteration made or proposed to be made, in a bill, motion or clause thereof; by adding, changing, substituting or omitting language.
- Amendment, Constitutional** - Resolution passed by both houses that affects the Constitution; requires approval by voters at a general election.
- Amendment, Floor** - An amendment offered to a legislative document, or to modify another amendment, presented by a legislator while the document is on the floor of that legislator’s house.
- Appeal from Ruling of the Chair** - A parliamentary procedure for testing and possibly changing the decision of a presiding officer.
- Apportionment** - Establishment of legislative districts from which members are elected.
- Appropriate** - To allocate funds.
- Appropriation** - Fund allocated to a department of government set aside by formal action for specific use.
- Approved by Governor** - Signature of the governor on a bill passed by the legislature.
- Assembly** - The two houses of the legislature made up of the 50 members of the Senate and 100 members of the House of Representatives.
- Author** - Legislator who presents a bill or resolution for consideration.

## B

- Bicameral** - A legislature containing two houses.
- Biennium** - Two-year period of legislative activity.
- Bill** - Draft of proposed law presented to the legislature for consideration.
- Bill History** - Record of all the action on any given bill or resolution.
- Bill Jacket** - Colored paper back enclosing legislative proposal, bearing number, author and dated track of progress through both houses of the legislature.
- Bill List** - List of bills introduced on a specific day.
- Bill, Pre-Filed** - Bills prepared and filed prior to the opening of a regular session.
- Blast Motion** - Motion to bring a bill to the floor after it has been under consideration by a committee for at least six days. This motion requires a constitutional majority in the House and a two-thirds majority in the Senate for passage.
- Budget** - Suggested allocation of state monies. It is presented as a bill every two years in the first regular session. In Indiana the budget is prepared for a biennium.

## C

- Calendar** - A list of bills and other business scheduled for consideration during a daily session.
- Caucus** - A group of legislators who have certain interests in common and who may vote together on matters affecting that interest. May also be used as a verb.

**Censure** – An act by a legislative body to officially reprimand an elected official for actions by that official while in office.

**Chair** – Presiding officer or chair person.

**Chamber** – Official hall for the meeting of the Senate or House.

**Christmas Tree** – Appropriation bill with numerous items for special interests.

**Co-Author** – Member(s) joining the original author of a bill. In the House all additional members after the author are called “co-authors” and with consent of the author may call a bill for second or third reading. In the Senate all additional members after the author and second author are called “co-authors.” (In Indiana the terms “author,” “second author” and “co-author” apply only to first house members.)

**Code** – The compilation of state laws; the official publication of the statutes.

**Commit** – Action to send a measure to a committee after it has been introduced.

**Committee** – A body of elected members delegated by a legislative body to consider and make recommendations concerning disposition of bills, resolutions and other matters, often restricted to certain subject areas.

- 1) **Conference** – Committee made up of two members of each house, appointed by the presiding officers, upon refusal of the first house to concur with the amendments adopted by the second house. A conference committee attempts to prepare a version of the measure acceptable to both houses.
- 2) **Interim** – Committee of legislators established to work between sessions on a particular subject matter and report to the next legislative session.
- 3) **Joint** – Committee composed of members of both houses.
- 4) **Select** – Committee appointed to consider and make recommendations for specific proposals.
- 5) **Standing** – A committee appointed with a continuing responsibility in the general field of legislative activity. Members and chairmen are appointed by the President Pro Tempore in the Senate and by the Speaker in the House.
- 6) **Statutory** – A committee specifically established by law.

**Committee Chairman** – A member appointed to function as the parliamentary head of a standing or special committee in the consideration of matters assigned to such committee by the body.

**Committee of the Whole** – Either house of the legislature sitting as a committee. (Prior to 1995 the House sat as a committee of the whole to consider the budget bill.)

**Committee Report** – An official release from a committee of a bill or resolution with a specific recommendation, or without recommendation.

**Concurrence** – Action by which one house agrees to amendments to a bill adopted by second house action.

**Concurrent Resolution** – A document expressing sentiment or intent of the legislature, governing the business of the legislature or to express recognition.

**Conference Committee** – Committee made up of two members of each house, appointed by the presiding officers, upon refusal of the first house to concur in amendments adopted by the second house. A conference committee attempts to prepare a version of the measure acceptable to both houses.

**Conflict of Interest** – Untenable position which threatens the ability of a legislator to vote impartially due to some personal interest in a legislative issue.

**Constituent** – A citizen residing within the district of a legislator.

**Constitution** – A written instrument embodying the fundamental principles of the state that guarantees powers and duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people.

**Constitutional Majority** – One more than half of the members of a deliberative body.

**Constitutional Right** – Right or privilege provided or guaranteed by the constitution.

**Contested Seat** – The situation in which two or more contestants claim the right to represent a given legislative district.

**Contingency Fund** – Money appropriated by the respective houses for incidental operational expenses.

**Convene** – The opening or beginning of the day’s legislative session.

**Convention, Constitutional** – The assembling of citizens or delegates for the purpose of writing or revising a constitution.

**Co-Sponsor** – Member(s) joining original sponsor of a bill (see Co-Author). In the House all additional members after the sponsor are called “co-sponsors” and with consent of the sponsor may call a bill for second or third reading. In the Senate all additional members after the sponsor and 2nd sponsor are called “co-sponsors.” (In Indiana the terms “Sponsor,” “2nd Sponsor,” and “Co-Sponsor” apply only in the second house.)

## D

**Debatable** – Open to parliamentary discussion or argument.

**Debate** – Discussion of a matter according to parliamentary rules.

**Decorum** – Proper order, etiquette and conduct of members during a floor session.

**Died in Committee** – Measure defeated, or not acted on in committee.

**Digest** – A brief statement of the effect of a proposed measure on existing law.

**Dissent** – Failure of first house to agree to second house amendment(s) to a bill; a negative vote.

**District** – That division of the state represented by a legislator distinguished numerically. In Indiana there are 50 state senate districts and 100 state house districts.

**Division of the House** – A method of voting; a request that members stand or raise hands to be counted when the outcome of a voice vote is unclear or in dispute.

**Division of the Question** – Procedure to separate a matter to be voted upon into two or more questions.

**Do Pass** – The affirmative recommendation made by a committee in sending a bill to the floor for additional action.

**Do Pass Amend** – Recommendation by committee that certain changes be made in a bill before additional action is taken on the floor.

## E

**Effective Date** – The date a law becomes binding. If no specific date(s) is named in the bill the following applies in Indiana; 1) for bills passed in a regular session, the effective date is July 1 of the year of passage, 2) for bills passed in a special session, the effective date is the first day of the third calendar month following sine die of that session.

**Emergency Clause** – A statement in the bill indicating the act shall take effect immediately upon passage.

**Enacting Clause** – That clause of an act which formally expresses the legislative sanction. In Indiana legislation that phrase is, “Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana.”

**Engrossed Bill** – An official copy of a bill or resolution incorporating all amendments up to that point in time.

**Enrolled Bill** – The final copy of a bill passed by both houses of the legislature.

**Excused** – Absent with permission of the presiding officer.

**Executive Order** – Rule or decision of the governor.

**Ex Officio** – The holding of a particular office by reason of holding another office.

**Expunge** – An action which directs that specific portions be removed from the journal.

## F

**File** – To present to the Clerk of the House or Secretary of the Senate a bill, resolution or amendment for action by that house.

**First Reading** – To read the first of three times, the bill or resolution (actually only the title is read) for consideration by that body; also called “introduction.”

**First Regular Session** – Session which meets in odd numbered years; must be completed by April 29.

**Fiscal Note** – The statement of the estimated amount of increase or decrease in revenue or expenditures and the present and future fiscal implications of a pending bill.

**Filibuster** – The prolonged discussion of a bill to delay legislative action.



**Floor** – That portion of the assembly chamber reserved for members and officers of the assembly and other persons granted the privilege of the floor while the body is meeting.

**Floor Leader** – One Democrat and one Republican chosen to lead floor action in each house.

## **G**

**Gallery** – Balconies of chamber from which visitors may view proceedings of the houses.

**Germane** – Relevance of amendment to subject matter of the bill to which it is being proposed.

**Gerrymandering** – Legislative district boundary lines drawn to obtain partisan or factional advantages.

**Grandfather Clause** – Clause in a new law which exempts persons presently practicing in a profession from having to comply with enhanced or additional qualifications for the profession made by that new law.

**Gut a Bill** – Striking everything after the enacting clause of a bill and inserting totally new material.

## **H**

**Hearing** – Public meeting and discussion on a proposal scheduled by a committee.

**House** – A single body of the legislature or the House of Representatives.

**House Resolution** – A document expressing sentiment or intent of the House of Representatives, sometimes called a “simple resolution.”

## **I**

**Impeachment** – Procedure to remove from office public officials accused of misconduct.

**Indiana Administrative Code** – Compilation of all regulations promulgated by the state’s regulatory agencies.

**Indiana Code** – Compilation of all laws passed by the Indiana General Assembly.

**Interim** – The interval between regular sessions.

**Interim Committee** – Committee of legislators established to work between sessions on a particular subject matter and report to the next legislative session.

**Introduction** – The formal presentation of a bill or resolution after it has been processed, also known as the first reading.

**Invocation** – Prayer given prior to a session.

## **J**

**Joint Committee** – Committee composed of members of both houses.

**Joint Resolution** – Proposal for a change in the State Constitution which must be passed in two legislative sessions, with an election intervening, and then submitted to the electorate.

**Joint Rules** – Rules adopted by both houses at the outset of the First Regular Session, which govern the procedures to be followed in all areas of joint legislative activity.

**Joint Session** – Both houses meet together in one chamber.

**Journal** – The constitutionally required official chronological record of the actions taken and proceedings of the respective houses.

**Junket** – Travel by an official at public expense.

## **L**

**Lay on the Table** – Postponement of the matter before the house, which may later be brought up for consideration by a motion to “take from the table.”

**Legislative Council** – Statutory council composed of sixteen legislators (most are ex-officio members), which is responsible for coordinating and assisting with the many functions of the legislative department. The President Pro Tempore of the Senate serves as chairman in odd-numbered years; the Speaker of the House serves as chairman in even-numbered years.

**Legislative Services Agency** – Statutory bipartisan service and administrative agency maintained by the legislative council to provide legal and bill drafting, impartial research, and technical and other services for the General Assembly.

**Line item** – Specific numeric line in an appropriation bill.

**Lobbyist** – A person, usually under hire, engaged in representing a particular interest or group of interests before the legislature.

## **M**

**Majority Caucus** – Members of the political party with the greater number of members in either house.

**Majority Report** – Recommendation of action on a measure submitted by majority of a committee.

**Mason’s Manual** – The volume of parliamentary law and procedure providing a basis for ruling on questions of order in the General Assembly.

**Measure** – A bill or resolution.

**Member Elect** – Elected member who has not taken the oath of office or is not yet officially serving.

**Memorialize** – Method by which the legislature speaks to Congress and other governments or governmental agencies.

**Message From Governor** – Official communications from governor read into official record.

**Message From House or Senate** – Official communication from opposite house read into official record.

**Minority Caucus** – Members of the political party with the lesser number of members in either house.

**Minority Report** – A report which reflects the thinking of the members of a committee not favoring the majority position or action.

**Minutes** – Accurate, chronological record of the proceedings of a meeting.

**Motion** – Formal proposal offered by a member of the deliberative assembly.

**Motion to Reconsider** – A move which places the question in the same status it was prior to the vote on the question, most often to reconsider a bill previously failed on third reading. Motion must be made by person previously voting with the majority, within a specified period of time, and is non-debatable.

## **N**

**Non-debatable** – Those subjects or motions that cannot be discussed or debated, for example a motion to reconsider on third reading.

## **O**

**Oath of Office** – Oath taken by members-elect of the legislature prior to being seated and embarking upon official duties.

**Order of Business** – The defined routine of procedure in the legislative body each day, may be deviated from by permission of the membership.

**Organization Day/Meeting** – Meeting of the legislature on the third Tuesday following the third Monday in November of each year to prepare for the upcoming session.

**Out of Order** – Not being conducted under proper parliamentary rules and procedures.

**Override** – To pass a bill over the governor’s veto; requires a constitutional majority of both houses.

## **P**

**Passage of Bill** – Favorable action on measure before either house.

**Pending Business** – Unfinished business which has been left from previous day or earlier in same calendar day.

**Per Diem** – Literally, “per day,” daily expense money rendered legislators and personnel.

**Point of Information** – A request from a legislator to the presiding officer for clarification of a procedural matter.

**Point of Order** – Calling attention to a breach of order or rules.

**Point of Personal Privilege** – Statement by a legislator defending his/her rights, reputation, conduct or explaining a particular vote.

**Pre-filed bill** – Bill presented to the Secretary of the Senate prior to the convening of a regular session. (The House does not use the term “pre-filed” but lists of bills filed in the clerk’s office are released prior to the convening day next set.)

**President of the Senate** – By constitutional enactment the lieutenant governor holds this position. He/She presides over the Senate and is required to cast the deciding vote to break a tie.

**President Pro Tempore** – The person, elected by the Senate, to preside in the absence of the president. The President Pro Tempore, (or Pro Tem), appoints committee chairmen, majority officers and majority staff, with the exception of the secretary of the Senate, who is also elected by the Senate.

**Presiding Officer** – Person designated to preside at legislative session.

**Prevail** – To approve or accept, usually applied to a motion.

**Previous Question** – Move to end debate on pending issue.

**Principal Clerk of the House** – Chief officer of the House staff elected by the House membership.

**Principal Secretary of the Senate** – Chief officer of the Senate staff elected by the Senate membership.

## Q

**Quorum** – The required number of members present to transact business. In Indiana, two-thirds of the membership of a house constitutes a quorum.

**Quorum Call** – Check to establish the presence of the required number of legislators for the lawful transacting of business.

## R

**Reapportionment** – Redrawing legislative district boundaries so as to provide equality of representation. Indiana House and Senate reapportionment is constitutionally required in Indiana every 10 years following the federal census.

**Reassign** – To change the committee assignment on a bill which has not yet been heard by the original committee.

**Recall a Bill** – A motion which enables either house to recall a bill previously passed.

**Recede** – Withdraw from an amendment or position.

**Recess** – Intermission in a daily session.

**Recommit** – To send back to a committee or send to another committee a bill which has already passed out of a committee.

**Reconsideration** – A motion which, when granted, gives rise to another vote annulling or reaffirming an action previously taken. Motion may be offered only by a member having voted previously on the prevailing side and is non-debatable.

**Record** – Request by a legislator that the “record” show or that he/she be “recorded” in a certain way; these requests, if approved, are entered in the official journal. By constitutional right a member may, upon request, have a protest and reasons for his/her dissent recorded in the journal.

**Referendum** – A measure adopted by the legislature is submitted to popular vote of the electorate.

**Referral** – The sending of a bill or resolution to committee.

**Regular Technical Session** – One-day session which meets at the option of the General Assembly no sooner than 30 days after the sine die of a regular session; limited to the consideration of vetoes, conflicts or technical errors in bills passed in the immediate previous regular session.

**Regulation** – A rule or order of an agency promulgated under the authority of a statute passed by the legislature. These regulations are contained in the Indiana Administrative Code.

**Repeal** – A method by which legislative action is revoked or abrogated.

**Representative** – A member of the House of Representatives.

**Resolution, Concurrent** – A document expressing sentiment or intent of the legislature, governing the business of the legislature, or to express recognition.

**Resolution, Joint** – Proposal for a change in the State Constitution which must be passed in two legislative sessions, with an election intervening, and then submitted to the electorate.

**Resolution, Senate or House** – Sometimes called a “simple resolution,” the same as a concurrent resolution except it is the expression of one house.

**Return to a Committee of One** – Return of a bill at third reading to the author or sponsor, with specific instructions to amend the bill or resolution prior to the vote being taken. These amendments are generally technical in nature or correct printing errors.

**Revised Code** – Updated statutory laws of the state.

**Roll Call** – The vote on an issue before the body; either by an electronic tabulating machine or by voice vote with names of members being called in alphabetical order by reader and recorded.

**Rostrum** – Podium or desk area at the front of a chamber.

**Ruling of the Chair** – A decision by the presiding officer concerning a question of order or procedure.

## **S**

**Second Author** – This term used only in the Senate refers to the second senator signing on to a Senate bill; all additional signers are called “co-authors.” With consent of the author, the second author of a bill is the only other senator who may call it for second or third reading in the Senate.

**Second Reading** – Presentation of a bill or resolution to the full body following the adoption of the committee report. At this point the bill or resolution is eligible for amendment, recommitment or engrossment.

**Second Regular Session** – Session which meets in even numbered years; must be completed by March 14.

**Second Sponsor** – This term used only in the Senate refers to the second senator signing on to a House bill, all additional signers are called “co-sponsors.” With consent of the sponsor, only the second sponsor of a bill may call it for second or third reading in the Senate.

**Select Committee** – Special committee of legislators created for a special function.

**Senate** – The legislative body having 50 members. Sometimes referred to as the “Upper House.”

**Senate Resolution** – A document expressing sentiment or intent of the Senate, sometimes called a “simple resolution.”

**Session** – Period during which the legislature meets.

- 1) **First Regular** – Session which meets in odd numbered years; must be completed by April 29.
- 2) **Second Regular** – Session which meets in even numbered years; must be completed by March 14.
- 3) **Regular Technical** – One-day session which meets at the option of the General Assembly no sooner than 30 days after the sine die of a regular session; limited to the consideration of vetoes, conflicts or technical errors in bills passed in the immediate previous regular session.
- 4) **Special** – Session called by the governor as provided by the constitution; limited to 40 calendar days.

**Simple Majority** – One more than half of those voting on a question.

**Simple Resolution** – A document expressing sentiment or intent of the house in which it is offered, also known as a House or a Senate resolution.

**Sine Die** – Final termination of a regular or special legislative session. (Literally, adjournment “without a day” set for reconvening).

**Skate** – To purposely avoid voting on a measure by leaving the floor.

**Speaker** – Presiding officer of the House of Representatives, elected by the body.

**Speaker Pro Tempore** – Substitute presiding officer in the House; or member taking the chair on request of the Speaker in his absence.

**Special Order of Business** – Matter of business set for a special time and day designated and agreed to by motion.

**Special Session** – Session called by the governor as provided by the constitution; limited to 40 calendar days.

**Sponsor** – Legislator who carries a bill in the second house.

**Spread of Record** – Request by a legislator that the “record” show or that he/she be “recorded” in a certain way; these requests, if approved, are entered in the journal. By constitutional right a member may, upon request, have a protest and reasons for his/her dissent recorded in the journal.

**Standing Committee** – Regular committees of the legislature set up to perform certain legislative functions. Members are appointed by the President Pro Tempore in the Senate and by the Speaker in the House.

**Standing Vote** – Members vote by standing to indicate approval of a measure.

**State the Question** – To place a question before a legislative body for its consideration.

**Statutes** – Laws as passed by the legislature.

**Statutory Committee** – A committee created by statute.

**Stopping the Clock** – Practice of lengthening the hours of the legislative day irrespective of the passing of the hours of the calendar day by stopping the clock.

**Strip a Bill** – Striking everything after the enacting clause of a bill and inserting totally new material.

**Sunset** – Expiration date of a measure.

**Suspension of the Rules** – Parliamentary procedure whereby actions can be taken which would otherwise be out of order.

**Synopsis** – A brief statement or summary of the contents of a proposed measure.

## T

**Table, Motion to** – A means of disposing of a bill or other matter for an indefinite period of time.

**Term of Office** – Period of time for which a person is elected.

**Third Reading** – Recitation of measure number, title and author/sponsor, by reading clerk, before consideration and vote in either house.

**Title** – One of 36 divisions of the Indiana Code; brief description of a bill.

## U

**Unicameral** – A single body legislature. (At the present time Nebraska is the only state in the U.S. having a unicameral legislature.)

## V

**Veto** – The action of the governor disapproving a measure.

**Veto Override** – Passage of a bill over the governor’s veto, requires a constitutional majority of both houses.

**Voice Vote** – Oral expression of the members when a question is submitted for their determination. Response is given by “ayes” and “nays” and the presiding officer states his decision as to which side prevailed.

## W

**Whip** – A member elected from each of the majority and minority parties to keep the rest of the members informed as to the decisions of the leadership.

**Withdraw** – To recall or remove a bill, resolution or motion from further consideration for that legislative session.

**Withdraw Call** – To recall a measure from floor action, usually only temporarily, after it has been placed before the body.

**Without Recommendation** – A committee report which is neither favorable nor unfavorable.

## Y

**Yield** – The relinquishing of the floor to another member to speak or ask a question.