



Business and  
Professional  
Women/IL

# LEGISLATION MANUAL

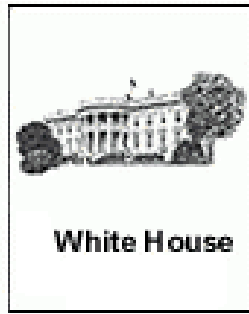
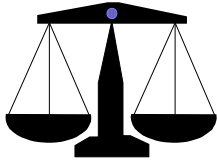
**Illinois Federation of Business & Professional Women's Clubs, Inc.**

**PMB 366 2743 S. Veteran's Pkwy**

**Springfield, IL 62704**

**Website: [www.bpw-il.org](http://www.bpw-il.org)**

**Email: [bpwil@bpw-il.org](mailto:bpwil@bpw-il.org)**



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## **LEGISLATION CHAIR**

It is the mission of the legislation chair to educate and involve members of BPW in the legislative process. You must understand BPW's state and national legislation platforms; the local, state and national legislative processes; and the skills of grassroots lobbying. Try to report on pending legislation at every meeting and in your local newsletter. Develop quick response mechanisms, such as a telephone tree, to generate telephone calls, letters and telegrams to legislators; also establish a email data base for those members who have internet capability. Keep the public informed and help members develop lobbying skills by presenting workshops, town meetings and press briefings. Supply sample letters and testimony on BPW issues.

Legislation is one of the most important and exciting areas of BPW. Too often we think of legislative activities only on the national level; but the local organization has a vital legislative role to play. The local organization's legislation chair educates herself and her members on specific legislation relating to the national legislative platform, the state federation's platform and local issues; identifies legislative arenas for action; and follows through by guiding members in techniques such as lobbying, letter writing, coalition building, fundraising and campaigning.

## **EDUCATION**

The issues on the national legislative platform affect individual working women, and the local legislation committee can be a special resource for educating the public and making BPW's issues known in legislatures and city halls across the country. Education means knowing the issues on all levels. In addition to the national platform adopted by BPW/USA members at their annual summer conference, Illinois and most state federations have legislative platforms. There may also be issues before your county or city council on which members want to act.

## **ORGANIZING**

Grassroots support is the source of BPW's legislative power. Without the support of all of our members, our lobbying efforts cannot be effective at any level. Obviously, no one person or local organization can tackle all of our issues effectively. Focus on a few specific issues by polling your members on their interests and looking for what is "do-able" in the foreseeable future. Then make sure your members are organized and follow-up and respond to those issues. Put together your telephone tree and email data base. Keep in touch with your state chairman. Make assignments for media contacts, lobbying and other activities.

## TAKING ACTION

The most important step in effective action is getting to know your legislators. No matter what heights of power they have reached, all legislators are interested in what their constituents think and how they vote. While making contact is easier at the state and local level, national legislators frequently visit their home districts and most now have email addresses. Make an appointment to see them or ask them to attend one of your meetings. Send them your state platform. Once you have taken a stand on a particular issue, write to your representatives and ask for their support. If they disagree with your position, find out why. You may even want to organize a lobby corps at the local level. You don't have to do it alone. There are probably other organizations in your community that support the same issue. Enlist the help of as many organizations as you can. Hold joint meetings, set up workshops or special programs open to the public.

Endorsing candidates for office is a good way to flex your political muscle on the local and state level. In addition, the BPW/PAC enables members to have an impact on the political and legislative process at the federal level. To get support for your Congressional candidate, contact your state PAC coordinator or your state president.

### **BUILDING BPW's STRENGTH...Using Continuing Legislative Programs**

The best legislative efforts build long term alliances rather than one-time projects. How can you find the support you need for long term legislative strength?

#### National Legislative Award

Are you doing something exciting in legislation? Let other BPW members know about it by applying for the national legislative award. The entry form is included in the **RESOURCE KIT** given to your Local President (National Kit mailed annually). Your State Legislation Chair can tell you the deadline for the state award. Each state federation may enter one submission for the national legislation award, presented at national conference.

#### National Legislative Platform

All members in your local organization know, at least in general terms, something about every item on the national Legislative Platform, which was sent to your Local President after the National Conference.

#### National Lobbying Efforts

Lobbying activities are important in order to keep BPW's power in Congress. Your National Legislation Committee as well as the office of Government Relations, are busy generating activities on our legislative issues. BPW publications keep you updated on the status of those efforts and urge letters and other support when an issue is especially hot.

#### Publications

Articles on issues and legislation relating to state and national platform items are published in **National Business Women and the Illinois Bulletin**. In addition to the office of Government

Relations, refer to local libraries, newspapers, magazines, the legislative internet sites, and newsletters on women's issues for issues and legislative information.

### State Legislative Efforts

Your state federation will have a state legislative platform focusing on legislation of special state interest, perhaps a state legislative conference or lobbying day. The state legislative chair receives legislative alerts and is the channel for more information on national and state legislative issues. Maintain close contact with her by providing at least one email address for a member of your local to her for mailing time sensitive information.

## **LOBBYING YOUR LEGISLATORS**

### Suggested Activities

1. Provide mailing addresses and telephone numbers of state and national senators and representatives to each member of your local organization. ***Place them in your annual yearbook!***
2. Establish a legislative telephone tree and email data base contact list. In lobbying, time is frequently of essence. To establish a telephone tree in your local, legislation committee members serve as key people. Divide the total membership into groups of approximately 6 to 10; with a committee member in charge of each group. The legislation committee member calls # 1 on the list; # 1 calls # 2, etc. # 10 reports back to the legislation committee member who began the calls. If a member cannot reach the next person on the list, they call the following number to keep the tree going; then report to the group leader that they were unable to reach # \_\_\_\_\_. In one hour or less, the entire membership has been contacted. Similarly, utilizing an email data base to inform members on pending legislative issues will also provide quick and easy notification as well as many times provide the means to merely forward a response to the sender as well.

Assure your members that their phone calls will simply be tallied for or against the legislative bill. They will not be asked to explain their position and do not need extensive legislative knowledge to place a telephone call. When phoning on a bill members should

- Identify themselves by name and their hometowns;
- State the bill number and whether they support or oppose the bill.

***Note: Your legislative telephone tree or email data base can be used for numerous purposes; not just legislation!***

3. Lobbying Letters – You may write to any legislator in the state or nation. However, your contact will have the most influence in the legislative district where you vote or with legislators outside your district to whom you have made financial contributions. When writing or sending email to any legislator, ensure that you:
  - Write legibly or type;
  - Keep your letter short and to the point;
  - Discuss only one (1) issue or bill;
  - State specifically whether you are for or against the bill.

Address your legislators as follows:

***The Honorable*** \_\_\_\_\_

## Address

4. Lobbying in Person:
  - Research your issue carefully, studying both the pros and cons;
  - Schedule an appointment with the legislator;
  - Dress professionally;
  - Discuss One (1) issue;
  - You may be more comfortable lobbying with another person or two. However, one person should serve as the spokesperson.
5. “Money and Hard Work Talk” – It is important that we support candidates who have excellent voting records on women’s issues. Volunteer to work in election campaigns and make a financial contribution. The candidate’s position on issues and voting record are the criteria. A female candidate may not always be the best candidate.
6. BPW/USA and BPW/Illinois Legislative Platforms – the platforms should be mailed to your representatives. Let them know what BPW stands for!

### Additional Tips

- Almost without exception, legislation comes as a direct result of letters, phone calls, and email received in support of the proposal.
- BPW members must be actively involved in the lobbying process. This is the only way that we will gain the benefits that we deserve.
- Lobby efforts can change a legislator’s position, and thus the vote.
- When contacting a legislator, state your position and request specific action.
- Whenever possible, refer to a specific bill by name and number.
- Don’t try to lobby for your entire agenda at one time; discuss one issue at a time.
- Timing is important and can ensure maximum impact. If the Legislator is a member of the committee to which a bill has been referred, contact the legislator when the committee begins hearings. If the Legislator is not a member of the committee to which a bill has been referred, contact the legislator just before the bill comes to the floor. (*Committee assignments can be found on the national and state legislative home pages as well as their schedules for meetings.*)
- Legislator contact is crucial to BPW’s legislative effort; and YOU are the key to that contact!

### Non-effective Lobbying

- Petitions
- Pre-printed form letters or postcards
- Threats; anger; profanity; rudeness; suggestions of pay-offs.

## ISSUES MANAGEMENT for the local BPW

Issues management, BPW’s process for decision-making, means identifying important issues and acting on them, or “managing” these issues to find solutions.

Issues management goes beyond sponsoring speakers and programs. It identifies issues which are close to the hearts of working women in your locals, and taking effective action on them.

You are practicing issues management if you:

- Survey your local members and/or the local population of working women to find out their needs and the issues they deem important. You can take a formal survey or a straw poll, asking working women to rank, in order of importance, the current BPW focus issues or any list of issues affecting working women.
- Educate yourselves about the issues. Read the Federation Focus issues of *National Business Woman and the Illinois Bulletin Legislative Articles* and encourage your members to track media coverage of the issues. Organize Roundtables to explore one or two of your selected issues. Invite an expert from the community to speak on the issue or share information among yourselves in a Roundtable structure.
- Determine the “local angle” on the issues. Look at the local election campaigns, news stories and community events; or include a section in your survey asking about local issues which are of most concern to working women personally or to the community. Look for local examples of employer or community responsiveness to working women’s needs, such as support of convenient day care facilities.
- Set your goals and objectives. Define what you want to accomplish on this issue. For instance, on the issue of the high-tech future, do you want to educate your community or help individual women plan careers? Do you want to study the effects of office automation or start a computer literacy project? Do you want to utilize a telephone tree only or avail yourselves of the opportunity to utilize modern email for notifying members of pending legislation?
- Design an on-going project or one-time activity, (or both) to accomplish your goals. Based on the goals and objectives you set, determine the most effective action to take. If your goal is public education, you might sponsor a symposium or workshop; if it is to support women’s career plans, you might start a mentoring program or an IDC course.
- Contact other organizations and groups who may be interested in coordinating efforts with you. Members may have contacts with other groups in the community. As you clarify your activities, think of these contacts for possible joint projects. If, for example, you decide to organize a mentoring project, your target group might be a Girls’ Club, girl Scouts, high school girls, or women re-entering the work place or college. A high school guidance counselor might be interested in coordinating with your mentoring project. You might find a local employer who would allow proteges from your group to tour its facilities.
- Create timetables, project guidelines and work assignments for members involved in the project. Draw up a calendar from beginning to end, including planning, publicizing, carrying out, and following up on your activity. Determine the resources you will need; money, time, volunteers and materials. Develop fundraising ideas, if needed, and make work assignments for members.
- Coordinate media coverage of your issues action projects in order to raise awareness of issues affecting working women and to gain greater recognition for BPW. Publicity is a key ingredient to an effective and successful action project. Make your strongest appeal to your target audience. If you work with high school girls, for example, advertise widely in the high school newspaper and on bulletin boards. Send press releases to local weekly and daily newspapers at the beginning and end of your project or at the time of a special event. Your action projects are the best means for advertising BPW and building a reputation as an action-oriented organization.
- Evaluate your achievements and process at the conclusion of the project. Develop criteria for evaluating your activity. At your project’s conclusion, discuss the goals and objectives you set to determine which ones you accomplished and evaluate your process. At this point, consider how you can use the project for further planning. For example, a forum on women in government could lead to a candidates’ workshop on BPW issues, or a political campaign.



**\*\*\*Remember, It's a Man's World Unless Women Vote\*\*\***

The above title has been the rallying cry of our voter registration efforts for the past years. BPW/USA's pamphlet, "Women's Vote Project Workbook", states the following facts:

"Women gained the right to vote in 1920 with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The struggle for suffrage, like the current one for the Equal Rights Amendment, was long and bitter, but ultimately successful. Suffragist leader Carrie Chapman Catt told women in 1920 that the 'vote is a power, a weapon of offense and defense'."

It is BPW policy that a voter registration drive run by BPW *must be nonpartisan* - - that is, not favoring one political party over others. You are more likely to receive support for such a drive if you make it known that your drive is nonpartisan. A nonpartisan voter registration activity means that you register all voters regardless of their political party and do not express support for particular candidates or parties.

In our efforts to make BPW a known legislative force, voter registration is a most important first step. Once this has been accomplished, getting out the vote on election day is the next vital step because candidates and elected officials know that voters can do one of two things on election day - - they can vote, or they can stay home. While each may have an advantage for a particular candidate, your role on election day is to make sure that all of the newly registered voters and your previously registered members go to the polls. Actual support at the polls of candidates that are backing the issues that are of concern to us will demonstrate how earnest we are in furthering those issues.

Two basic pieces of literature that will assist you in your voter registration efforts are the following:

*The Election Code of Illinois*

Illinois State Board of Elections  
State of Illinois Center  
100 W. Randolph, Suite 14-100  
Chicago, IL 60601  
Phone 312/814-6440  
Fax 312/814-6485

State Board of Elections  
1020 S. Spring Street  
Springfield, IL  
Phone 217/782-4141  
Fax 217-782-5959

*League of Women Voters*

332 S. Michigan, Suite 1142  
Chicago, IL 60604  
312./939-5935

*Women's Vote Project Workbook*

Office of Public Policy  
BPW/USA  
2012 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
202/293-1100

## **Basic Voter Registration Information**

In order to register to vote, you must meet the following criteria:

1. Be *eighteen* years of age (with proof).
2. Bring two pieces of identification, at least one of which must show your current address and one should prove American Citizenship. (These might include a birth certificate, social security card, driver's license, citizenship papers, if naturalized, etc.).
3. Live at your current address for at least *thirty days prior to an election*.

In most instances during a non-registration drive period, you will register at your city or village hall, usually with the Clerk. If you do not live within corporate limits, register at your township office. During a registration drive you would more than likely register at your normal polling place. This information is usually printed in your local newspaper or is obtainable from your Village, City or Township office.

*If your BPW organization is going to participate in a special voter registration drive, contact your County Clerk or Board of Election Commissioners for specific information. There are specific times immediately prior to an election when voter registration may not occur. Members who participate in this drive and are appointed deputy registrars may accept registration at any time other than the 35 day period preceding an election. All persons appointed as deputy registrars shall be registered voters within the election jurisdiction. A copy of The Election Code of Illinois can give you the specifics.*

A voter registration record card will be kept with the County Clerk containing such information as the voter's name, sex, residence, term of residence in State and precinct, nativity, citizenship, date of application and age. A registration record card may contain additional information such as *physical disability* or *inability to read English*, thus *marking registration cards of persons in need of assistance in voting*.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Glossary of Congressional Terms**

- BUDGET** The document sent to Congress by the President in January of each year estimating government revenue and expenditures for the ensuing fiscal year and recommending appropriations in detail. The President's Budget Message (as well as the Congress' own budget recommendations) forms the basis for Congressional hearings and legislation on the year's appropriations.
- CALENDAR** An agenda or list of pending business before committees of either chamber. The House uses five legislative calendars (Consent, Discharge, House, Private and Union Calendars). In the Senate, all legislative matters reported from committee go on a single calendar. They are listed there in order, but may be called up irregularly by the Majority Leader either by a motion to do so or by obtaining the unanimous consent of the Senate. Frequently, the Minority Leader is consulted to ensure unanimous consent. Only cloture can limit debate on bills thus called up. The Senate also uses one non-legislative calendar for treaties, etc.
- CHAMBER** Meeting place for the total membership of either the House or the Senate, as distinguished from the respective committee rooms.
- CLOTURE** The process by which debate can be limited in the Senate, other than by unanimous consent. A motion for cloture can apply to any measure before the Senate, including a proposal to change the chamber's rules. It requires 16 senators' signatures for introduction and the votes of two-thirds of the senators present and voting. It is put to a roll-call vote one hour after the Senate meets on the second day following introduction of the motion. If voted, cloture limits each senator to one hour of debate.
- COMMITTEE** A subdivision of the House or Senate which prepares bills for action by the parent chamber or makes investigations as directed by the parent chamber. There are several types of committees (Standing, Select or Special). Most standing committees are divided into sub-committees, which study bills, hold hearings, and report their recommendations to the full committee. Only the full committee can report measures for action by the House or Senate.
- CONCURRENT RESOLUTION** A concurrent resolution, designated *H Con Res* or *S Con Res*, must be passed by both houses, but does not require the signature of the President and does not have the force of law. Concurrent resolutions generally are used to make or amend rules applicable to both houses or to express the sentiment of the two houses. A concurrent resolution, for example, is used to fix the time for adjournment of a Congress. It might also be used to convey the congratulations of Congress to another country on the anniversary of its independence.

**CONFERENCE** A meeting between the representatives of the House and Senate to reconcile differences between the two houses over provisions of a bill. Members of the conference committee are appointed by the Speaker and the President of the Senate and are called “managers” for their respective chambers. A majority of the managers for each house must reach agreement on the provisions of the bill (often a compromise between the versions of the two chambers) before it can be sent up for floor action in the form of a “conference report”. There it cannot be amended, and if not approved by both chambers, the bill goes back to conference. Elaborate rules govern the conduct of the conferences. Not all bills passed by the House and Senate in slightly different form need to be sent to conference; either chamber may “concur” in the other’s amendments.

**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD** The daily, printed account of proceedings in Both House and Senate chambers, with expressions reported verbatim. Committee activities are not covered, excepting their reports to the parent body.

**ENACTING CLAUSE** Key phrase in bills saying “Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives....”. A successful motion to strike the enacting clause from a bill kills the entire measure.

**ENGROSSED BILL** The final copy of a bill as passed by one chamber, with the text as amended by the floor action and certified to by the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate.

**ENROLLED BILL** The Final copy of a bill which has been passed in identical form by both chambers. It is certified to by an officer of the house of origin (House Clerk or Senate Secretary) and sent on for signatures of the House Speaker, the Senate President and the U.S. President. An enrolled bill is printed on parchment. In modern times, Congress has ignored the warning of Thomas Jefferson and older English parliamentarians that “when the bill is enrolled it is not to be written in paragraphs, but solidly, and all of a piece, that the blanks between paragraphs may not give room for forgery.”

**EXECUTIVE DOCUMENT** A document, usually a treaty, sent to the Senate by the President for consideration or ratification. These are identified for each session of Congress as Executive A, Executive B, etc. and are referred to committee. Unlike legislative documents, however, treaties do not die at the end of a Congress, but remain “live” proposals until acted on by the Senate or withdrawn by the President.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION** Meeting of a Senate or House committee (or very rarely, of the entire chamber) which only the group’s members are privileged to attend. Frequently witnesses appear before committees meeting in executive session, and other congressmen may be invited, but the public and press are not allowed.

<b>FILIBUSTER</b>	A time-delaying tactic used by a minority in an effort to prevent a vote on a bill which probably would pass if brought to a vote. The most common method is to take advantage of the Senate's rules permitting unlimited debate, but other forms of parliamentary maneuvering may be used. The stricter rules in the House make filibusters more difficult, but they are attempted from time to time through devices such as repeated demands for quorum calls.
<b>FISCAL YEAR</b>	Financial operations of the government are carried out in a 12 month fiscal year, beginning October 1 <sup>st</sup> and ending on September 30 <sup>th</sup> . The fiscal year carries the date of the calendar year in which it ends.
<b>FLOOR MANAGER</b>	A Member, usually representing sponsors of a bill, who attempts to steer it through debate and revision to a final vote in the chamber. Floor managers are frequently chairmen or ranking members of the committee that reported the bill. Managers are responsible for apportioning the time granted supporters of the bill for debating it. The Minority Leader or the ranking minority member of the committee often apportions time for the opposition.
<b>GERMANE</b>	Pertaining to the subject matter of the measure at hand. All House amendments must be germane to the bill. The Senate requires that amendments be germane only when they are proposed to general appropriation bills, bills being considered under cloture, or often when proceeding under an agreement to limit debate.
<b>HEARINGS</b>	Committee sessions for hearing witnesses. At hearings on proposed legislation, witnesses usually include specialists, government officials, and spokesmen for persons affected by the bills under study. Hearings related to special investigations bring forth a variety of witnesses. The public and press may attend "open" hearings but are barred from "closed" or "executive" hearings. The committee announces its hearings from one day to many weeks in advance, and may invite certain persons to testify. Persons who request time to testify may be turned down by the committee but most requests are honored.
<b>HOUSE</b>	The House of Representatives as distinguished from the Senate, although each body is a "house" of Congress.
<b>JOINT COMMITTEE</b>	A specified number of members of both House and Senate are named to joint committees to consider many matters of importance. Usually a joint committee is investigative in nature. There are a few standing joint committees, such as the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy and the Joint committee on the Economic Report.
<b>JOINT RESOLUTION</b>	A joint resolution, designed <i>H J Res</i> or <i>S. J Res</i> , requires the approval of both houses and the signature of the President, just as a bill does, and has the force of law if approved. There is no real difference between a bill and a joint resolution. The latter is generally used in dealing with limited matters, such as

a single appropriation for a specific purpose. Joint resolutions also are used to propose amendments to the Constitution. These do not require the President's signature, but become a part of the Constitution when three-fourths of the states have ratified them.

**LAW**

An Act of Congress which has been signed by the President, or passed over his veto by the Congress. Laws are listed numerically by Congress; for example, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (HR 7152), became Public Law 88-352, during the 88<sup>th</sup> Congress.

**LOBBY**

A group seeking to influence the passage or defeat of legislation. Originally the term referred to persons frequenting the lobbies or corridors of legislative chambers in order to speak to lawmakers. The exact definition of a lobby and the activity of lobbying is a matter of opinion. By some definitions, lobbying is limited to attempts at direct influence by personal interview and persuasion. Under other definitions, lobbying includes attempts at direct influence, such as urging members of a group to write or visit Members or attempting to create a climate of opinion favorable to a desired legislative action.

**MAJORITY  
LEADER**

Chief strategist and floor leader for the party in nominal control in either chamber. The majority leader is elected by his/her party colleagues and is virtually program director for that chamber, since usually speaking for the majority.

**MAJORITY  
(MINORITY)  
WHIP**

In effect, the assistant majority (minority) leader whose job it is to help marshal the majority (minority) forces on matters of interest to the majority (minority).

**MARKING UP  
A BILL**

Going through a measure, usually in committee, taking it section by section, revising the language, pencilling in new phrases, etc. If the bill is extensively revised, the new version may be introduced as a separate bill, with a new number.

**MINORITY  
LEADER**

Floor Leader for the minority party.

**MOTION**

Request by a Member for any one of a wide array of parliamentary actions. He "moves" for a certain procedure, or the consideration of a measure or a vote, etc. The precedence of motions, and whether they are debatable, is set forth in the House and Senate Manuals.

**NOMINATIONS**

Appointments to office by the Executive Branch of the Government, subject to Senate confirmation. Although most nominations win quick Senate approval, some are controversial and become the topic of hearings and debate. Sometimes senators object to appointees for patronage reasons; for example, when a nomination to a local federal job is made without consulting the senator

or senators of the president's party from the state concerned. Then a senator may use the stock objection that the nominee is "personally obnoxious" to him. Usually other senators join in blocking such an appointment out of courtesy to their colleagues.

**OVERRIDE  
A VETO**

If the President disapproves a bill and sends it back to Congress with his objections, Congress may override his veto by a two-thirds vote in each chamber. The Constitution requires a yea and nay roll call. The question put to each house is "Shall the bill pass, the objections of the President to the contrary notwithstanding?"

**PAIR**

An agreement between two lawmakers on opposite sides to withhold their votes on roll calls so their absence from Congress will not affect the outcome of record voting. If passage of the measure requires a two-thirds majority, a pair would require two Members favoring the action to one opposed to it.

Two kinds of pairs – special and general – are used; neither is counted in vote totals. The names of lawmakers pairing on a given vote and their stands, if known, are printed in the Congressional Record. The special pair applies to one or a series of roll-call votes on the same subject. On special pairs, lawmakers usually specify how they would have voted.

A general pair in the Senate, now rarely used in the chamber, applies to all votes on which the Members pairing are on opposite sides, and it lasts for the length of time pairing senators agree on. It usually does not specify a senator's stand on a given vote.

The general pair in the House differs from the other pairs. No agreement is involved and the pair does not tie up votes. A representative expecting to be absent may notify the House Clerk he/she wishes to make a "general" pair. His/her name then is paired arbitrarily with that of another Member taking the opposite position. General pairs in the House give no indication of how a representative would have voted.

**PETITION**

A request or plea sent to one or both chambers from an organization or private citizens' group asking support of particular legislation or favorable consideration of a matter not yet receiving congressional attention. They are referred to appropriate committees and considered or not, according to committee decision.

**POINT OF  
ORDER**

An objection raised by a Member of Congress that the chamber is departing from rules governing its conduct of business. The objector cites the rule violated, the chair sustaining the objection if correctly made. Order is restored by the chair suspending proceedings of the chamber until it conforms to the prescribed "order of Business". Members sometimes raise a "point of no order" when there is noise and disorderly conduct in the chamber.

**PREVIOUS QUESTION**

In this sense, a “question” is an “issue” before the House for a vote and the issue is “previous” when some other topic has superseded it in the attention of the chamber. A motion for the previous question, when carried, has the effect of cutting off all debate and forcing a vote on the subject originally at hand. If however, the previous question is moved and carried before there has been any debate on the subject at hand and the subject is debatable, then 40 minutes of debate is allowed before the vote. The previous question is sometimes moved in order to prevent amendments. The motion for the previous question is a debate limiting device and is not in order in the Senate.

**QUORUM**

The number of Members whose presence is necessary for the transaction of business. In the Senate and House it is a majority of the membership (when there are no vacancies, this is 51 in the Senate and 218 in the House). A quorum is 100 in the committee of the Whole House. If a point of order is made that a quorum is not present, the only business in order is either a motion to adjourn or a motion to direct the Sergeant-At-Arms to request the attendance of absentees.

**READING OF BILLS**

A bill is considered to have its first reading when it is introduced and printed, by title, in the Congressional Record. Its second reading comes when floor consideration begins. (This is the most likely point at which there is actual reading of the bill, if there is any.) The third reading (usually by title) takes place when action has been completed on amendments.

**RECESS**

distinguished from adjournment in that a recess does not end a legislative day and therefore does not interfere with unfinished business. The rules in each house set forth certain matters to be taken up and disposed of at the beginning of each legislative day. The House, which operates under much stricter rules than the Senate, usually adjourns from day to day. The Senate often recesses.

**RECOMMIT TO COMMITTEE**

A simple motion, made on the floor after deliberation on a bill, to return it to the committee which reported it. “Recommittal” is considered a death blow to a bill if approved. In the House, a motion to recommit can be made only by a Member opposed to the bill, and in recognizing a Member to make the motion, the Speaker gives the minority party preference over the majority. A motion to recommit may include instructions to the committee to report the bill again with specific amendments or by a certain date. Or the instructions may be to make a particular study, with no definite deadline for the final action.

**REPORT**

Both a verb and a noun, as a congressional term. A committee which has been examining a bill referred to it by the parent chamber “reports” its finding and recommendations to the chamber when the committee returns the measure. The process is called “reporting” a bill.

A “report” is the document setting forth the committee’s explanation of its action. House and Senate reports are numbered separately and are designated

S Rept or H Rept. Conference reports are numbered and designated in the same way as regular House reports.

Most reports favor a bill's passage. Adverse reports are occasionally submitted, but more often, when a committee disapproves a bill, it simply fails to report it at all. When a committee report is not unanimous, the dissenting committee members may file a statement of their views, called Minority Views and referred to as a Minority Report. Sometimes a bill is reported without recommendation.

**RESOLUTION**

A simple resolution, designated H Res or S Res, deals with matters entirely within the prerogatives of one house or the other. It requires neither passage by the other house nor approval by the President, and does not have the force of law. Most resolutions deal with rules of one house or the other. They also are used to express the sentiments of a single house, as condolences to the family of a deceased member or, in the Senate, to give "advice" on foreign policy.

**RIDER**

A provision, usually not germane, tacked on to an unrelated bill because its sponsor sees little chance of getting it through otherwise. Riders become law if the bills embodying them do. Riders providing for legislation in appropriation bills are outstanding examples, though technically they are banned.

**SPEAKER**

The presiding officer of the House of Representatives, elected by its members.

**SPECIAL SESSION**

A session of Congress after it has adjourned sine die, completing its regular session. Special sessions are convened by the President of the United States under his constitutional powers.

**STANDING COMMITTEE**

A group permanently provided for by House or Senate rules. The standing committees at present are specified by the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, which broadly defines their respective jurisdictions.

**STANDING VOTE**

A non-record vote used in both House and Senate. A standing vote, also called a division vote, is taken as follows: members in favor of a proposal stand and are counted by the presiding officer; then Members opposed stand and are counted. There is no record of how individual Members voted. In the House, the presiding officer announces the number of Members for and against. In the Senate, usually only the result is announced.

**SUSPEND THE RULES**

Often a time-saving procedure for passing bills in the House. The wording of the motion, which may be made by any Member recognized by the Speaker, is: "I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill...". A favorable vote by two-thirds of those present is required for passage. Debate is limited to 40 minutes and no amendments from the floor are permitted. If a two-thirds favorable vote is not attained, the bill may be considered later under regular procedures.

**TABLE THE  
BILL**

The motion to “lay on the table” is not debatable in either house, and is usually a method of making a final, adverse disposition of a matter. In the Senate, however, different language is sometimes used. The motion is worded to let a bill “lie on the table,” perhaps for subsequent “picking up”. This motion is more flexible, merely keeping the bill pending for later action, if desired.

**VETO**

Disapproval by the President of a bill or joint resolution, other than one proposing an amendment to the Constitution. When Congress is in session, the President must veto a bill within ten days, excluding Sundays, after he has received it; otherwise it becomes law with or without his signature. When the President vetoes a bill, he returns it to the House of its origin with a message stating his objections. The veto then becomes a question of high privilege. When Congress has adjourned, the President may pocket-veto a bill by failing to sign it.

**WITHOUT  
OBJECTION**

Used in lieu of a vote on non-controversial motions, amendments, or bills, which may be passed in either the House or Senate if no Member voices an objection.

## APPENDIX 2 Legislative References

[http://www.access.gpo.gov/su\\_docs/aces/aces140.html](http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html) – federal register site which contains all proposed rules and regulations from the varied departments of government, allows you to file comments electronically, and research such items as code of federal regs, public laws, U.S. government manual, Presidential documents, U.S. Congress information, and contains a search feature for all.

<http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas2.html> – Federal legislative site where you can search for bills pending by name, number or obtain House or Senate Directories with email addresses, phone numbers, etc. You can also obtain a complete text copy of a bill, its status and current disposition, committee members and their schedules for meetings and a wealth of additional information on federal matters.

<http://www.legis.state.il.us/> - Illinois General Assembly site which allows search by name, topic or bill number. Also contains Illinois Compiled Statutes and the Illinois Constitution as well as Public Acts and directories of all legislators to include any email addresses available and the house and senate schedules.

<http://www.bpwusa.org/> - BPW/USA home page which contains much information which is free; however, does allow for ordering (for a fee) certain documents from the Publications Section. Has a Public Policy page which contains current info on pending legislation, the national legislative platform and fact sheets. Also has many very informative state links containing much additional information.

<http://www.state.il.us/> - State of Illinois Home page which contains listings for all state agencies, departments, commissions, constitutional officers and means to contact them. Many have email addresses and are very accessible with modern technology. Also contains services available information and information on education and many other topics of interest.

[http://www.state.il.us/dhr/laws/act\\_intr.htm](http://www.state.il.us/dhr/laws/act_intr.htm) – **Illinois Department of Human Rights site which contains downloadable copy of act and current laws. For additional information, you may contact the department at:**

### **Chicago**

Switchboard: (312) 814-6200  
Fax: (312) 814-1436 (Administration)

### **Springfield**

Main Number: (217) 785-5100  
Fax: (217) 785-5110

<http://www.sos.state.il.us/> - Illinois Secretary of State site where much information from that office is available to include the ordering of many free pamphlets to include the *Handbook of Illinois Government*. For those without internet capability, contact the Secretary of State at: **Springfield:** (217) 782-2201 or (800) 252-8980 **Chicago:** (312) 814-2262 Jesse White, 213 State Capitol, Springfield, IL. 62706.

**Email:** [secwhite@ccgate.sos.state.il.us](mailto:secwhite@ccgate.sos.state.il.us).