

SOUTH CAROLINA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Path from Bill to Law in South Carolina

A guide to each legislative stage, beginning with drafting and chamber readings and concluding at the Governor's desk.

Frank Gunther
GCRP Legislative Committee

CULTURAL REFERENCE

Schoolhouse Rock: "I'm Just a Bill"



Classic ABC Educational Animation

Watch "I'm Just a Bill"

Click to play video on YouTube

Civics Education Icon

Written by Dave Frishberg and performed by Jack Sh
1975 animation breaks down the legislative path into
musical steps.

- Traces a proposal's journey
- Explains committee hearings

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OVERVIEW

6 Key Stages of SC Legislation

1

Drafting & Filing

LSA drafts legal text; sponsor files bill in House or Senate.

2

Assigned to Committee

Legislative branch head assigns to appropriate committee. Murrell Smith Speaker of the House, Thomas C. Alexendar President of the Senate

SC Legislative Manual

3

Committee Review

Public hearings, testimony, fiscal impact notes, and voting.

4

Floor Debate

Second & Third Readings, amendments, roll call votes.

5

Second Chamber

Repeats entire process; Conference Committee resolves diffs.

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STAGE 01

Idea, Drafting & First Reading

Originating Ideas

Proposals originate from citizens, legislators, executive agencies, or study committees.

LSA Formal Drafting

Legislative Services Agency (LSA) formats ideas into proper statutory legal language. Also Known **South Carolina Legislative Council**.
Ashley Harwell-Beach Code Commissioner and Director

First Reading

Bill title read aloud on chamber floor and assigned to appropriate standing committee.



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STAGE 02

Committee Review & Public Hearings

Subcommittee Review

Detailed line-by-line examination. Members take public testimony from citizens and experts.

Fiscal Impact Notes

SC Revenue and Fiscal Affairs (RFA) Office determines exact cost and revenue implications.

Commi

Reports bill favorably, wi
unfavorably (which effec

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STAGE 03

Floor Readings & Legislative Voting

PRIMARY DEBATE STAGE

Second Reading

Substantive floor debate occurs. Legislators propose and vote on floor amendments. Passage requires a majority roll-call vote.

FINAL CHAMBER APPROVAL

Third Readin

Final formal reading, usually held on a subsequ day. Approval officially passes the bill to the op

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STAGE 04

Cross-Chamber Action & Reconciliation

A

Second Chamber Process

The bill repeats First, Second, and Third Readings in the opposite body (House or Senate).

B

Conference Committee (If Differences Exist)

If amended, a joint committee of 3 Representatives & 3 Senators negotiates a compromise report.

C

Enrollment & Ratification

Once identical text passes both bodies, presiding officers officially ratify the Act in Columbia.

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STAGE 05

Executive Action by the Governor



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1. Sign Into Law

Governor signs bill; becomes effective on stated date or u

2. Five-Day Window

If unacted upon after 5 days (excluding Sundays), it auto
law.

3. Veto / Line-Item

Veto returned to General Assembly with governor's writte
in both chambers required to override.
Governor can only utilize line-item veto when the item ap
the Treasury.

LEGISLATIVE RULES

Critical SC Legislative Deadlines

April 10

Crossover Deadline

Bills must pass originating chamber by this date to ensure consideration.

2 Years

Biennial Session

SC sessions run in two-year cycles starting in odd-numbered years.

2/

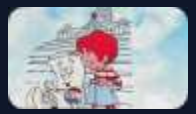
Veto Ove

Supermajority vote required in b
override a Gover

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Track & Engage with SC Legislation
Follow bills, view committee schedules, and contact your local South Carolina representatives online.
scstatehouse.gov
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Image Sources



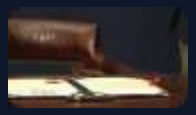
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