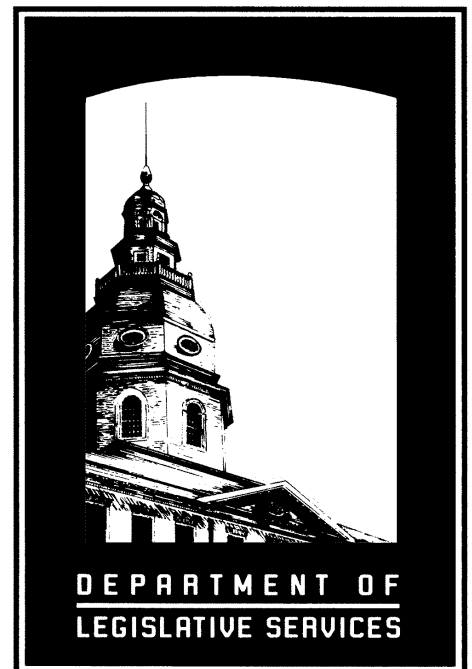


MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Legislative Lingo



This document was prepared by:

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LEGISLATIVE LINGO

Adopt

To approve an action (i.e., an amendment, committee report, motion).

Amend

To make a change in a bill or a law.

Attorney General's Bill Letters

The letters that examine the legal sufficiency of the bills passed by the General Assembly. The Attorney General's Office prepares the letters and submits them to the Governor before the approval or veto of bills.

Bill

A proposed law presented for approval to a legislative body.

Bill Number

The number the Secretary of the Senate or the Chief Clerk of the House assigns to a bill at the time of introduction. The bill retains the same number if it moves to the opposite chamber.

Bill Status

The current standing of a bill.

Blue Back

The original copy of a bill. House bills are printed on blue paper and Senate bills are printed on cream paper.

Calendar Day

The 24-hour day as denoted on the calendar.

Chapter Number

The number the Secretary of State assigns to a bill after the Governor signs the bill. Chapter numbers are issued in the numerical order in which the bills are signed.

Committee Report

The report a committee submits to the chambers listing actions taken on bills (i.e., favorable, favorable with amendments, unfavorable, re-referred, or referred for interim study).

Committee Reporting Courtesy Dates

Each chamber's committees report their own bills to the floor by this date.

Committee Reprint

The reprinting of a bill to include committee amendments.

Concur

One chamber approves an action taken by the other chamber.

Conference Committee

Three members from each chamber, five in the case of the budget conference committee (appointed by the presiding officers) who work to resolve the differences in a bill passed by both chambers. A bill does not pass the General Assembly unless each chamber passes the bill in identical form.

Conference Committee Report

The report the Conference Committee submits to the chambers for final passage of a bill. The report may consist of adopting, rejecting, or adding amendments. Each chamber must adopt the report and then vote for final passage of the bill.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND

Crossover Date

Each chamber sends to the other chamber those bills it passes favorably by this date.

Drop into the Hopper

A member files a bill with the Chief Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate for introduction.

Enacted

A bill is enacted when the bill becomes a law, i.e., is signed by the Governor and takes effect.

Enrolled (Passed Enrolled)

A bill is an enrolled bill if it was amended in the opposite chamber.

Failed

A bill does not receive a majority vote on the chamber floor.

First Reader

A bill as printed for the first time with its assigned bill number.

First Reading

A bill is introduced in a chamber, “read across the desk” for the first time, and assigned to a standing committee.

Fiscal and Policy Note

An analysis prepared by the Department of Legislative Services on the fiscal impact of a bill on State revenues and expenditures. It also identifies any mandate on local government; describes current law and outlines the background relevant to the proposal. The Note is revised if an adopted amendment changes the bill’s impact.

Fiscal Year

July 1 to June 30.

Goldenrod

A committee report printed on gold paper indicating the next day’s committee agenda on the Senate floor.

Green Bag

Proposed gubernatorial appointments, requiring legislative approval, are submitted to the General Assembly by the 40th day of the session (Art. II, Sec. 13, MD Constitution). The appointments are delivered to the floor of the chambers in a green bag.

Guarantee Date

A bill introduced by this date is guaranteed a committee hearing in the chamber of origin.

Interim

The nine months between legislative sessions.

Joint Resolution

A resolution both chambers pass making a statement on a public issue, a request of the Governor or a government office, or establishes a task force. With certain exceptions, Joint Resolutions do not have the effect of law.

Laid Over

Floor action on an amended bill is postponed for one legislative day.

Legislative Day

Length of time from convening a session in the chamber until adjournment; may be longer or shorter than a calendar day i.e., a session that continues into a second calendar day without adjourning is one legislative day. If a chamber adjourns and reconvenes on the same day, that constitutes two legislative days.

LR

An identifying number the Department of Legislative Services gives to a bill request until the bill is introduced and assigned a bill number. A bill becomes public only when assigned a bill number.

Motion

To propose an action.

Move the Previous Question

To end debate and return to the question on the floor.

Passed

When a bill is voted on favorably by the majority of the elected members.

Prefiled

A bill the Department of Legislative Services drafts, by request, prior to a legislative session for introduction in that session. Prefiling dates are set by law.

Quorum

Minimum number of members of a chamber (or committee) required for the transaction of business.

Quorum Call

Action used to establish the presence of the majority required to transact business.

Reassigned

Assignment of a bill(s) from one committee to another

Referred

The action of assigning a legislative measure to a committee or committees

Referred for Interim Study

The action a committee takes to refer a bill for committee study during the nine-month interim.

Re-referred

The reassignment of a bill to a different committee after the original referral..

Referendum

The power of the registered voters, under certain conditions, to petition an act of the last General Assembly (with certain exceptions) for approval or disapproval at the next General Election.

Reject

The failure of an action (i.e., an amendment).

Returned Passed

A bill passed in its chamber of origin is returned by the opposite chamber without amendments.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND

Roll Call

Names of members present in the Chamber are recorded; used to establish a quorum or to take a vote on an issue before the body.

Second Reading

When a bill is reported out of committee and brought to the chamber floor for preliminary approval, or second reading. Committee and floor amendments may be added to the bill at this time. (The bill is not reprinted for second reading.)

Simple Resolution

A form of legislative measure introduced in only one chamber of the General Assembly and used for the regulation of business only within the chamber of origin.

Sine Die

The final adjournment of a session, without adjourning to a specific time or date.

Session Laws

The compilation of all the Chapters, the bills the Governor signs, from a legislative session.

Special Order

Postpones floor action on a bill until a definite date or time.

Suspend the Rules

To set aside the rules temporarily, by a 2/3 vote, to allow a certain action.

Sunset Provision

Provides that a provision of the law is automatically repealed on a specific date, unless the General Assembly reenacts the law.

The Chair

Refers to the presiding officer of a chamber or of a committee.

The City

Baltimore City.

The Code

The *Annotated Code of Maryland*, the codified statutory laws of Maryland.

The Floor

That portion of the chamber reserved for members and officers of the assembly or other persons granted access.

The Shore

The Eastern Shore of Maryland.

Third Reader

A bill that is printed after second reading in the chamber of origin, including adopted amendments.

Third Reading

A bill is voted on for the final time in each chamber. The third reading vote is recorded.

Veto

Action the Governor takes to prevent enactment of a bill passed by the General Assembly. At the next session the General Assembly may override the Governor's veto with a 3/5 vote in each chamber (except in an election year when overrides are not feasible).

TYPES OF BILLS

Administration Bill

A bill introduced at the request of the Governor.

Bond Bill

A bill for a local capital project which after consideration by the General Assembly can be included in the capital budget bill. In general, bond bills are not individually adopted by the General Assembly.

Budget Bill

A bill that consists of the Governor's proposed operating budget for the State for the next fiscal year. The Budget Bill becomes law on approval by both chambers. The Governor's signature is not required. The bill must be passed by both chambers seven days before the end of a session or the Governor must extend the session. (Art. III, Sec. 52(10), MD Constitution)

Capital Budget Bill

A general construction loan or bond bill that finances construction of State-owned buildings ("bricks and mortar"). This bill states the amount of State debt to be incurred and the projects to be funded. The Capital Budget Bill may not be acted on until the Budget Bill has been passed by the General Assembly.

Constitutional Amendment

A bill that amends the Maryland Constitution. A Constitutional Amendment requires a 3/5 vote in each chamber and approval by the voters at the next General Election.

Cross-filed Bill

An identical bill that is introduced in both chambers.

Departmental Bill

A bill introduced by a committee chairman at the request of the Executive Branch of State government.

Emergency Bill

A bill that takes effect immediately upon the Governor's approval. A bill marked as "emergency bill" must pass third reading with a 3/5 vote in each chamber.

Reintroduction Bill

A bill that was unsuccessful in a previous session and is reintroduced in the present session. In the upper left corner the bill is identified as a reintroduction.

Snake

A bill or provision that has a hidden purpose.