

Senate Legislative Procedure

Module 3 — Legislative Procedure

- Readings of bills (1st, 2nd, 3rd)
- Committee referrals
- Amendments & engrossment
- Reconsideration rules

Rule 15. The unfinished business in which the Senate was engaged at the last preceding adjournment shall have preference in the special orders of the day.

Rule 20. When a question has once been made and carried in the affirmative or negative, it shall be in order for any member of the majority to move for the reconsideration thereof; but no motion for reconsideration shall be in order after a bill, resolution, message, report, amendment, or motion upon which the vote was taken has gone out of the possession of the Senate announcing their decision; nor shall any motion for reconsideration be in order unless made on the same day on which the vote was taken or within the two next days of actual session of the Senate thereafter.

Rule 24. After the journal is read, the President shall first call for petitions, and then for reports from standing committees; and every petition, memorial, or other paper shall be referred, of course, without putting a question for that purpose, unless the reference is objected to by a member at the time such petition, memorial, or other paper is presented. And before any petition or memorial addressed to the Senate shall be received and read at the table, whether introduced by the President or a member, a brief statement of its contents shall verbally be made by the introducer.

Rule 25. One day's notice at least shall be given of an intended motion for leave to bring in a bill; and all bills reported by a committee shall, after the first reading, be printed for the use of the Senate. No other paper or document shall be printed for the use of the Senate without special order.

Rule 26. Every bill shall receive three readings previous to its being passed; and the President shall give notice at each reading whether it be the first, second, or third. These readings shall occur on three different days unless the Senate unanimously directs otherwise. All resolutions proposing amendments to the Constitution, requiring the approval and signature of the President, or granting money out of the contingent or any other fund, shall be treated in the same manner as bills. All other resolutions shall lie on the table one day for consideration, and so shall reports of committees.

Rule 27. No bill shall be committed or amended until it has been twice read, after which it may be referred to a committee.

Rule 28. All bills on a second reading shall first be considered by the Senate as if in Committee of the Whole, before they shall be taken up and proceeded on by the Senate according to the standing rules, unless otherwise ordered. When the Senate considers a treaty, bill, or resolution as in Committee of the Whole, the Vice President or President pro tempore may call a member to fill the chair during such time, who shall, during such time, have the powers of a President pro tempore.

Rule 29. The final question on the second reading of every bill, resolution, constitutional amendment, or motion originating in the Senate and requiring three readings shall be: "Shall it be engrossed and read a third time?" No amendment shall be received for discussion at the third reading unless by unanimous consent of the members present. But at all times before final passage, it shall be in order to move its commitment. If such commitment occurs and the committee reports an amendment, the matter shall again be read a second time and considered as in Committee of the Whole, and then the aforesaid question shall again be put.

Rule 30. The special orders of the day shall not be called by the Chair before one o'clock unless otherwise directed by the Senate.

Rule 31. The titles of bills and only such parts thereof as shall be affected by proposed amendments shall be inserted in the journals.

Rule 32. The proceedings of the Senate, when not acting as in Committee of the Whole, shall be entered on the journal as concisely as possible, care being taken to provide a true and accurate account. Every vote of the Senate shall be entered on the journal, and a brief statement of the contents of each petition, memorial, or paper presented to the Senate shall also be inserted on the journal.

Rule 34. In appointing Standing Committees, the Senate shall proceed by ballot to appoint the chairman of each committee, and then by one ballot appoint the remaining members. A majority of votes is necessary to choose a chairman. All other committees shall be appointed by ballot, and a plurality of votes shall make a choice. When any matter has been referred to a committee, any similar matter may also be referred to that committee upon motion.

Rule 35. When motions are made for referring the same subject to a select committee and to a standing committee, the question on referring to the standing committee shall be first put.

Rule 43. When an amendment to the Constitution is under consideration, two-thirds concurrence shall not be required for questions relating to amendments or matters short of the final question.

Rule 44. When any question requiring two-thirds concurrence has been decided, any member voting with the prevailing side may move reconsideration; such motion shall be decided by majority vote.