2021 Fire Chiefs Leadership Seminar

Wednesday
Dec. 8, 2021

UNDERSTANDING THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

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Legislative Affairs, Lobbyist

Agenda

• Three Types of Measures (Bills, Constitutional Amendments, and Resolutions)
• Overview of California’s Legislative Process
• How to Read a Bill
• Tips on Writing Letters and Testifying in Committee
• Resources
• Legislative Update
• Questions
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Glossary of Legislative Terms

These are the different types of measures that legislators can introduce in the Assembly or Senate.

- AB – Assembly Bill
- SB – Senate Bill
- ACA – Assembly Constitutional Amendment
- SCA – Senate Constitutional Amendment
- AJR – Assembly Joint Resolution
- SJR – Senate Joint Resolution
- ACR – Assembly Concurrent Resolution
- SCR – Senate Concurrent Resolution
- HR – House Resolution (Assembly)
- SR – Senate Resolution
Glossary of Legislative Terms

• Bills (AB and SB)
  ▪ A proposed law introduced in the Assembly or Senate and identified with a number. Can be majority or 2/3 vote. Requires Governor’s signature

• Constitutional Amendments (ACA and SCA)
  ▪ A resolution affecting the Constitution, adopted by the Legislature or presented by initiative, requiring an affirmative vote of the electorate to become effective. Needs 2/3 vote and does not require Governor’s signature

• Joint Resolutions (AJR and SJR)
  ▪ Expresses an opinion about an issue pertaining to the federal government; forwarded to Congress for its information. Requires the majority approval of both Assembly and Senate but does not require the signature of the Governor to take effect

• Concurrent Resolutions (ACR and SCR)
  ▪ A measure introduced in one house which, if approved by majority vote, must be sent to the other house for approval. The Governor’s signature is not required. These measures usually involve the business of the Legislature

• Resolutions (HR and SR)
  ▪ An opinion expressed by one or both houses which does not have the force of law. Concurrent resolutions and joint resolutions are voted on by majority of both houses but does not require the Governor’s signature
Glossary of Legislative Terms

These are some commonly referred to legislative terms. There are many more!

- **Legislative Session** – period during which the Legislature meets:
  - Regular - the biennial session (2021-22) at which all classes of legislation may be considered;
  - Extraordinary - special session, called by and limited to matters specified by the Governor;
  - Daily - each day’s meetings;
  - Joint – meeting of the two houses together.

- **Two-Year Bill** – A bill that has been held in a committee for the first year of a two-year session for further study and debate. Can be acted on to leave the house of origin in January of the second year of the two-year session.

- **Spot Bill** – A measure introduced without substance, to be amended later.

- **House of Origin** – The legislative house (Assembly or Senate) that the bill was introduced in.

- **Second House** – The other legislative house; not the legislative house where the bill was introduced.

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Our State Legislature

In California, the legislative body is called the State Legislature and is divided into two houses (bicameral) - the State Assembly and the State Senate.

There are 40 members of the State Senate and 80 members of the State Assembly, for a total of 120 legislators.

Assembly Members are elected or re-elected every two years, and one-half of Senators are elected or re-elected every two years. Term limits apply.

Our State Legislature

The Assembly has 33 standing committees, the Senate has 22. They range from agriculture to labor, public employment and retirement, and everything in between!

Both houses have budget subcommittees and a litany of special, select, joint and other committees.

Committees play a critical role in the fate of a bill and how it is analyzed.
List of Assembly and Senate Standing Committees

Assembly Committees

Standing Committees

- Appropriations
- Budget
- Business and Professions
- Communications and Concessions
- Education
- Elections
- Emergency Management
- Environmental Quality and Toxic Materials
- Governmental Reorganization
- Health
- Higher Education
- History and Community Development
- Human Services
- Housing
- Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy
- Judiciary
- Labor
- Local Government
- Mines and Mining Affairs
- Natural Resources
- Privacy and Consumer Protection
- Public Safety
- Revenue and Taxation
- Rules
- Taxes
- Transportation
- Utilities and Energy
- Water, Parks, and Wildlife

Senate Standing Committees

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Rooms are in the State Capitol unless otherwise indicated, and subject to change.

Appropriations Committees

Both the Assembly and the Senate have Appropriations Committees, which if the bill has a fiscal impact or a state cost, it will be heard in either committees.

If the estimated cost of a bill exceeds $50,000, the bill can be placed on the “Suspense File.”

A vote-only Suspense Hearing will be held prior to the deadlines for fiscal committees to hear and report bills to the Assembly/Senate Floor. Bills will either move on to the Assembly/Senate Floor for further consideration or be held in committee and under submission.
How Does a Bill Become a Law in California?

CAUTION: PROCESS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE!

'Typical' Process for a Bill – SB 277 (Archuleta)

1. SB 277 is introduced on 1/29 by Sen. Archuleta;
2. Is referred to the Senate Governmental Organization Committee on 2/10;
3. Is set for a hearing in Senate GO on 4/20;
4. Passed out of Senate GO and referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee;
5. Placed on the "Suspense File" then passed out of Senate Appropriations on 5/20;
6. Voted on by full Senate on 5/28 – passes; Then sent to the Assembly
7. Referred to the Assembly Governmental Organization Committee on 6/3
8. Made a "two-year bill" and was not set for a hearing in Assembly GO; Must be acted on between Jan 1-31, 2022, or is dead
‘Typical’ Process for a Bill – SB 109 (Dodd)

1. SB 109 is introduced on 1/6 by Senator Dodd;

2. Referred to the Senate Governmental Organization committee on 1/28;

3. Set for a hearing in Senate GO on 3/9; Passed and referred to Senate Appropriations Committee

4. Placed on the ‘Suspense file,’ then passed out of Senate Appropriations on 5/20

5. Voted on by full Senate on 6/1 – passes; Then sent to the Assembly

6. Referred to the Assembly Emergency Management on 6/10; set for hearing on 7/5; passes and referred to Assembly Appropriations; referred to suspense file, then passed on 8/28

7. Voted on by full Assembly on 9/1 - passed; then back to Senate for concurrence vote on 9/2 – passed

8. Presented to the Governor on 9/9 and signed by Governor on 9/23; Becomes law Jan 1., 2022

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How to Read a Bill

• Enacting Clause – At the start of the bill and says what code section is being affected or added, and regarding what.

• Legislative Digest – Summary of the bill prepared by the Legislative Counsel’s Office. Gives an overview of relevant existing law and what changes the bill will make.

• Body or Bill Language – The actual language that adds, amends, or repeals the law. This is the language that will be codified. Strikeout language means words being deleted, and italic language means words being added.

The Committee Analysis

• Summary – Briefly describes what the bill does.

• Background and Staff Comments – Includes relevant existing law, regulations, or court cases, and poses questions or concerns from the committee staff.

• Support and Opposition – Most committee analyses list the support and opposition to a bill. You must send in a formal position letter in advance of the committee to be listed in the analysis.
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Sample Position Letter

1. Include the bill number, title, and your position in the subject line
2. One bill per letter
3. State the facts
4. Think about the message
5. Check for amendments
6. Send follow-up letters to appropriate committees as a bill Moves Along
7. Provide a contact
8. Know the committees on which your legislator serves
9. Copy the correct people
10. Submit your letter to the California Legislative Position Letter Portal
10 Tips for Cities Lobbying the California Legislature

1. Become engaged in the state level political process by appointing a legislative liaison within your city to track key legislation and work with your regional public affairs manager. Visit the Cal Cities regional division webpage to locate contact information for your regional public affairs manager.

2. Use Cal Cities as a resource. Visit the Cal Cities advocacy page to access Cal Cities priority bills, city sample support and opposition letters, legislative contacts, and use our online bill search feature to track bills' progress.

3. Read and subscribe to the Cal Cities Advocate, Cal Cities’ online newsletter, to stay current on important legislation and stories.

4. Develop relationships with your Senate and Assembly representatives as well as their Capitol and district office staff. Make sure to look up who your local state elected official is.

5. Get to know members of your local press and educate them on legislative issues affecting your city.

6. Understand how state decisions impact your city’s budget by attending Cal Cities educational conferences, policy committee meetings, and regional division events.

7. Build networks and collaborate with other stakeholders, such as non-profits, businesses, or your county, in your community on key legislative issues.

8. Organize an internal process within your city for developing and proposing changes to both state and federal laws that will help your city.

9. Adopt local policies on legislation that enable your city to react quickly to the legislative process and respond to Cal Cities action alerts.

10. Write letters on legislation featured in the Cal Cities Advocate. City sample support and opposition letters can be found using the Cal Cities bill search feature and entering the bill number or bill author.
Testimony Tips

- Be prepared
- Be flexible
- Be concise
- Be polite and respectful
- Speak to the facts and how the bill will affect your community/job responsibilities
- Be prepared to answer questions about your testimony
- Communicate with author’s office and Cal Cities staff

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Helpful Legislative Resources

• California Legislative Information
  ▪ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/

• California Legislature – Position Letter Portal
  ▪ https://calegislation.lc.ca.gov/Advocates/faces/index.xhtml

• The Legislative Analyst’s Office
  ▪ https://lao.ca.gov/

• Office of Governor Gavin Newsom
  ▪ https://www.gov.ca.gov/

Helpful Legislative Resources

• Assembly:
  ▪ Daily File: https://www.assembly.ca.gov/dailyfile
  ▪ Legislative Deadlines: https://www.assembly.ca.gov/legislativedeadlines
  ▪ Office of the Chief Clerk: https://clerk.assembly.ca.gov/content/process

• Senate:
  ▪ Daily File: https://www.senate.ca.gov/calendar
  ▪ Media Archive: https://www.senate.ca.gov/media-archive
  ▪ Office of Secretary of the Senate: https://secretary.senate.ca.gov/home
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Legislative Update

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Environmental Quality; and Community Services
League of California Cities
[Email]
2022 Cal Cities Action Agenda

Secure funding to increase the supply and affordability of housing and reform state housing laws to retain local authority.

Secure adequate and sustainable funding for cities to increase construction of housing at all income levels, particularly affordable housing and workforce housing. Reform state housing laws to ensure cities retain local decision-making to meet the needs of their communities.
Secure increased funding and resources to prevent homelessness and assist individuals experiencing homelessness.

Secure additional ongoing, flexible resources to provide navigation assistance, emergency shelters, and permanent supportive housing. Enhance city and county coordination and strengthen partnerships with stakeholders to ensure adequate wraparound services are available for adults and youth at risk of, or already experiencing, homelessness in our communities, and effectively address mental health and substance use disorders.

Attain investments to strengthen and sustain critical infrastructure.

Advocate for policies that strengthen the conditions of local streets, highways, bridges, public transit, and broadband to improve workforce and economic development. Secure support for the modernization and expansion of the statewide water grid, including infrastructure, storage, and conveyance. Work with stakeholders to provide cities with access to the tools needed to ensure projects are delivered efficiently and cost-effectively to meet current and future needs.
Strengthen disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery from climate change impacts through improved collaboration and resources.

Secure additional resources and support to mitigate the effects of climate change, including catastrophic wildfires, drought, and sea level rise. Promote collaboration with other city, state, and federal governments, to strengthen disaster preparedness, resiliency, and recovery.

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QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!

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