



**Presentation to the Legislative Process Reform Informational Meeting
November 27, 2018**

Introduction

Good evening. My name is Brenda Erickson. I am a program principal in the Legislative Management Program of the National Conference of State Legislatures. I have worked for NCSL for 34 years and have served as NCSL's expert on legislative process for 30 years. I also worked for the Minnesota House for 5-1/2 years before coming to NCSL.

My references throughout this presentation generally will be to "chambers" rather than "states," because most state senates and houses do not adopt identical rules of procedure. There are 99 legislative chambers within the 50 states; only Nebraska has a unicameral state legislature.

I have been asked to provide an overview of possible mechanisms to streamline or improve the legislative process.

The Legislative Institution.

Congratulations on your election or reelection. You are now part of the Minnesota's—and in truth, America's—rich legislative history.

What is an “institution”? “Institution” may be defined as “an established official organization having an important role in a society.”

So, what is the “legislative institution?” You—along with your colleagues and staff—ARE the legislative institution. When you were elected as a member of the Minnesota Legislature, you “joined” Minnesota's legislative institution. Because you are a part of Minnesota's legislative institution, you surrender some of your individual rights to the institution. All of your activities are in the public domain. Every decision that you make is subject to public praise or criticism—and reflects on the Minnesota Legislature and your district

Parliamentary Procedure

In general, parliamentary procedure is the rules governing group decision-making.

Parliamentary procedure is “tried and true.” The Minnesota Legislature has been forming its own legislative processes and traditions since the state entered into the Union in 1858. In fact, one might argue that Minnesota's parliamentary history started even earlier, while it was a territory.

Parliamentary procedure is not something that is imposed on a body. By constitution, each legislature—and in fact, each chamber—is granted the right to adopt its own rules. In Minnesota, this is set forth in Constitution Article 4, Section 7.

Indications that Rules May Need Changing

Edward Burdick, the former chief clerk of the Minnesota House, said, "The best parliamentary procedure is one that is simple. It should be in writing, be clearly stated to avoid conflicting interpretations and confusion, and be available to everyone—members, staff and the public."

Not all rules are good rules. Because a rule is old or new does not prove it good or bad. A rule is as good as it is helpful to the organization or its members. A rule is as bad as it impedes the accomplishments of the organization or its members.

Chamber rules should reflect your *actual* legislative practices. Some indications that your rules may need changing are:

- Frequent suspensions of a rule or rules
- Frequent points of order because a rule is confusing
- Multiple interpretations of a single rule
- Frequent references to precedents or custom and usage
- Frequent use of your chamber's parliamentary authority (such as Mason's Manual, Robert's Rules, etc.)

There are other reasons that a chamber changes its rule or procedures. Revisions may be triggered by:

- Changes in legislative structure
- Switches in party control
- Changes in leadership
- A desire to streamline or open the process
- Using technology to increase efficiency
- Public dissatisfaction

End-of-Session Logjam

End-of-session logjams are, in large part, a political reality of the legislative institution. As James R. Ruhl wrote, they are a phenomenon "recognized as one of the most predictable aspects of state legislative processes nationwide."

All legislatures, whether they meet for only 60 days or for more than six months, experience a crunch of activity as the session draws to a close. The reasons for logjams are not difficult to understand. The legislative process is based on freedom of expression, consensus building and compromise. Legislators need time to work toward agreement on controversial and complex legislation.

The availability of ample time is no guarantee that the time will be well spent, however.

It is important for legislatures to make optimum use of session time and to dispose of business in a prompt, organized manner. To accomplish this, it is recommended that legislatures:

- Manage the overall flow of work, so that use of early session time is maximized.
- Plan the time spent in floor debate to expedite each day's business.
- Minimize time spent on non-controversial matters.

In 1969, Delaware Senator Everette Hale prescribed the following improvements.

- Pre-session organization and orientation.
- Pre-session filing of bills.
- Consent calendars.
- Self-imposed deadlines at important points in the legislative process.

Deadlines are the most common mechanism for managing the overall work flow. However, they are not a panacea; cooperation between the chambers, direction on the part of leaders and discipline on the part of members are essential.

Mechanisms to Streamline the Legislative Process

Formal Organizational Sessions. A formal organizational session is an option that should be considered. Time is a scarce resource in legislative operations, especially for part-time legislatures. From the initial stages of the legislative cycle, time management has a rippling effect. Early organization of the legislature usually leads to more effective use of its session days. Some states believe that pre-session organization helps preserve short sessions and part-time schedules.

The following activities typically occur during a formal organizational session:

- Members are sworn in.
- Chamber and caucus leaders are elected.
- Other chamber officers are selected.
- If necessary, the hiring of other staff is approved.
- Chamber rules are adopted.
- Session schedules (deadlines) are set.
- The number of, the names (sometimes, jurisdictions) of and the meeting schedule for standing committees are established. If possible, committee chairs and members are appointed.

States with formal organizational sessions include Alabama, California, Florida, Idaho, Indiana, Louisiana, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oklahoma and South Carolina.

The Minnesota Legislature does not hold a formal organizational session. The creation of one would require a change to the Minnesota Constitution.

Veto Sessions. After the legislature passes legislation and sends it to the governor, the governor generally has three options:

1. To sign the bill.
2. To veto the legislation.
3. To do nothing.

The outcomes of the first two options are fairly clear cut. If the governor signs a bill, it becomes law. If the governor vetoes a bill, the legislature must decide whether to override the veto or let the measure die.

What happens, however, if a governor takes the third option—that is, does not act upon a bill within the requisite time frame? In many chambers, the measure becomes law without the governor's signature.

The governors in several states—including Minnesota—have "pocket veto" power, which is the ability to kill a bill by inaction. For example:

Alabama	A bill dies unless signed within 10 days after legislative adjournment.
Delaware	A bill dies unless signed within 30 days after final adjournment.
Massachusetts	A bill dies unless signed within 10 days after presentation to the governor.
Michigan	A bill dies unless signed within 14 days after presentation to the governor.
Minnesota	A bill dies unless signed within 14 days after legislative adjournment.
New Hampshire	A bill dies unless signed within five days after presentation to the governor.
New Mexico	A bill dies unless signed within 20 days after legislative adjournment.
New York	A bill dies unless signed within 30 days after legislative adjournment.
Oklahoma	A bill dies unless signed within 15 days after legislative adjournment.
Vermont	A bill dies unless signed if the legislature adjourns within three days of presentation of the bill to the governor.
Wisconsin	A bill dies unless signed within 60 days after presentation to the governor.

As you can see, pocket vetoes usually take place only after the legislative session has adjourned. While the legislature is convened, measures become law without the governor's signature.

Every legislature should have a reasonable opportunity to override every executive veto. A veto session is one solution. For several legislatures, the state constitution establishes a process by which the legislature reconvenes a set amount of time after a regular session to consider bills vetoed by the governor. The creation of veto session would help clarify a confusing bill enactment/veto process. It would require a change to the Minnesota Constitution.

Another option is to change constitutional language, so a bill not signed by the governor becomes law—rather than dying. For example, Louisiana Constitution Article 3, Sec. 18 states (in part):

If the governor does not approve a bill, he may veto it. A bill ... shall become law if the governor signs it or if he fails to sign or veto it within ten days after delivery to him if the legislature is in session on the tenth day after such delivery, or within twenty days after delivery if the tenth day after delivery occurs after the legislature is adjourned.

Ability to Call Special Session. There are two main types of legislative sessions—regular and special (sometimes known as extraordinary). A regular session is the annual or biennial gathering of legislators, the starting date (and often, the length) of which is set by constitution or statute.

Unlike regular sessions, there is no specific timing for special (or extraordinary) sessions. They occur intermittently to deal with the specific issues or topics. Usually, the scope of a special session—that is, the topics that may be taken up—is limited to the issues specified in the notice calling for the special session. Who may call a special session varies among the states.

In 36 states, a special session may be called by either the governor or the legislature. In the remaining 14 states, *only* the governor may call a special session, and Minnesota falls into this category.

A change to the Minnesota Constitution would be required for the Minnesota Legislature to obtain this power.

Committees and Committee Procedures

It is not possible for all legislative business to be conducted by the full membership. To divide workload, legislatures usually establish committees. Committees are the central vehicles through which legislation must pass for scrutiny, debate and modification. During committee consideration, members have an opportunity to:

- Hear from supporters and opponents of a bill;
- Look closely at the details of proposed legislation;
- Give thoughtful consideration to proposed amendments;
- Acquire considerable information about the subject; and
- Become knowledgeable enough to make an informed decision about whether to vote for or against a proposal.

There is no magic "correct" number of committees that a legislature should create. However, the number of standing committees should be manageable. There should be enough committees to enable each legislative body to develop some expertise in different subjects and to examine individual proposals in detail. However, there should not be so many committees that their jurisdictions become too narrow or overlap.

The number of committee assignments per member also should be reasonable. Lawmakers should not have so many committee assignments that they cannot do justice to any one of them. On average, legislators are assigned to three committees.

As noted above, a committee's purpose is to reduce the work of the full body, not increase it. Inadequate or incomplete work on bills in committee:

- Consumes valuable floor time; and
- Is one of the causes of to end-session-logjam.

The Sometime Governments expresses it well—"A legislature ...cannot function smoothly without an operative committee system."

Bills and Bill Processing. Bills are the main mechanism through which legislatures establish laws. An average legislature introduces about 2,192 bills per year. Minnesota's average is higher—at 3,513 per year

Deadline Systems. Proper planning is absolutely essential for the orderly flow of work and to control "end-of-session logjam." There is no reason that essential bargaining processes must be postponed until the end of the session. It can occur in stages according to a series of deadlines that offer a reasonable amount of time for both study and compromise.

More than three-fourths of legislative bodies use deadline systems. This means that work at critical stages throughout the process must be finished by set dates. The five most common deadlines are:

1. Introduction deadline—used by about 75 percent of legislative chambers.
2. Committee action deadline—about 50 percent.
3. First house action deadline—about 50 percent.
4. Second house action deadline—about 40 percent.
5. Conference committee deadline—about 33 percent.

The implementation of deadlines creates a "domino effect" for the legislative process. Early introduction deadlines facilitate the referral of bills to committee. This, in turn, makes it easier and faster for committees to determine workload, establish agendas and begin working. Committee deadlines force committees to complete their work in a timely fashion, thus allowing their parent body (i.e., the Senate or House) to function more efficiently; and so on.

The Minnesota Legislature historically has operated with many of the above deadlines, but it has not used the most common one—a bill introduction deadline. As a result, Minnesota legislators may introduce bills at any time, and committees are never certain of their workloads.

Bill introduction limits for members. State legislators are faced with two conflicting pressures. On the one hand, lawmakers are asked to sponsor a great deal of legislation. On the other hand, legal provisions specify the length of time that most legislative bodies may remain in session. The ability to consider a steadily increasing volume of bills is not necessarily compatible with restricted session time. In response, many chambers have experimented with ways to curb the amount of legislation that enters the process. The most direct approach is to set a numerical limit on bill introductions.

Proponents of introduction limits feel that the limits help reduce the number of bills entering the legislative process. However, there are other views.

In support	In opposition
Reduce the number of bills	Restrict members' rights to propose bills
Reduce the amount of time spent on superfluous proposals	Restrict members' abilities to carry out their legislative responsibilities
Allow more time to process substantive legislation	Interfere with legislators' abilities to respond to emergencies or the problems of changing times
Give legislators more time to read and understand bills	Require additional staff time to monitor the number of bills introduced by each member
Reduce costs for staff, printing and paper	Lead to bills that are more general in nature and scope rather than ones targeted to specific problems

About 20 chambers historically have used bill introduction limits. Most often the limits are established by chamber rule. In Louisiana, the process is established in the state's constitution. Occasionally, limits are set forth in a memorandum by the chamber's presiding officer.

Omnibus Bills. Most state constitutions contain provisions that limit bills to one subject. Minnesota's single subject requirement is set forth in Constitution Art. 4, Sec. 17, which states "No law shall embrace more than one subject, which shall be expressed in its title."

Some constitutional single subject provisions are more restrictive, however. For example:

- *Michigan Constitution Art. 4, Sec. 24.* No law shall embrace more than one object, which shall be expressed in its title. No bill shall be altered or amended on its passage through either house so as to change its original purpose as determined by its total content and not alone by its title.
- *Mississippi Constitution, Sec. 60.* No bill shall be so amended in its passage through either house as to change its original purpose ...
- *Washington Constitution Art. 2, Sec. 38.* No amendment to any bill shall be allowed which shall change the scope and object of the bill.

Some state constitutions limit what may be included in appropriation or budget bills.

What is the purpose for a single subject requirement? The single subject requirement is designed to: (1) prevent "logrolling," the process of combining multiple proposals into an omnibus bill—especially when proposals have no proper relation to each other are intermixed into the bill; (2) eliminate "riders," unpopular provisions that are attached to otherwise popular bills; and (3) improve transparency.

In addition, at least three-fourths of the nation's legislative bodies have chamber rules on germaneness of amendments or motions. The word "germane" usually is defined as "in close relationship, appropriate, relative or pertinent to." According to Tilson's *Parliamentary Law and Procedure*, the basic principle of germaneness "lies in the need for orderly legislation."

There is no single test for determining when a proposed amendment or motion is germane. A sample checklist may include:

- Does the amendment deal with a different topic or subject?
- Does the amendment unreasonably or unduly expand the subject of the bill?
- Would the amendment introduce an independent question?
- Is the amendment relevant, appropriate, and in a natural and logical sequence to the subject matter of the original proposal?
- Would the amendment change the purpose, scope or object of the original bill?
- Would the amendment change one type of motion into another type?
- Would the amendment change a private (or local) bill into a general bill?
- Would the amendment require a change in the bill title?

Germaneness is set forth in Minnesota House Rule 3.21.

3.21 MOTIONS AND PROPOSITIONS MUST BE GERMANE. (a) A motion or proposition on a subject different from that under consideration must not be admitted under guise of its being an amendment. A motion, amendment, or other proposition offered to the House is out of order if it is not germane to the matter under consideration. Whether a proposition is germane to the matter under consideration is a question to be decided by the presiding officer, who may put the question to the House.

(b) An amendment to an amendment on the House floor must relate only to the primary amendment, without introducing any new subject.

Some germaneness rules are more restrictive

- *Mississippi House Rule 35*. No motion or proposition on a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted under color of an amendment; nor shall any amendment be adopted changing the original purpose of the bill.
- *Washington House Rule 11*. ... (D) AMENDMENTS TO BE GERMANE. No motion or proposition on a subject different from that under consideration shall be admitted under color of amendment; and no bill or resolution shall at any time be amended by annexing thereto or incorporating therein any other bill or resolution pending before the house

Defeated Bills or Issues. Given limited session lengths and the volume of legislation that must be processed, some legislatures prohibit bills that have been defeated (or bills that are substantially the same as ones defeated) from being reintroduced—either as a bill or as an amendment—during the same legislative biennium. For legislatures—especially those with short sessions, this practice is an efficiency mechanism. Why should a chamber spend valuable committee and floor time on an issue that has already been rejected?

Some chambers specifically prohibit the reintroduction of a rejected measure in the form of another bill or an amendment. For example:

- *North Carolina House Rule 42. Effect of a Defeated Bill.*
 - (a) Subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this rule, after a bill has:
 - (1) Been tabled,
 - (2) Been postponed indefinitely,
 - (3) Failed to pass on any of its readings, or
 - (4) Been placed on the unfavorable calendar, the contents of that bill or the principal provisions of its subject matter shall not be considered in any other measure originating in the Senate or originating thereafter in the House. Upon the point of order being raised and sustained by the Chair, that measure shall be laid upon the table, and shall not be taken therefrom except by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.
 - (b) No local bill shall be held by the Chair to embody the contents of or the principal provisions of the subject matter of any statewide measure which has been laid on the table, has failed to pass on any of its readings, or has been placed on the unfavorable calendar.

- *Ohio House Rule 117. (Reintroduction of bill prohibited.)*

If a House bill or resolution is defeated or indefinitely postponed in the House it shall not be reintroduced during either annual session of the same General Assembly.

In addition, some legislatures do not allow amendments to contain language that is substantially the same as a bill currently in process. For example, Kentucky House Rule 60 states in part:

“... Any amendment to a bill under consideration containing the substantial text of the language of any other bill introduced during the session shall require for its consideration the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the House. The commission staff shall cause those amendments to be identified when the bill proposed to be amended thereby is posted on the Orders of the Day. When a question is raised as to the identity of the proposed amendment containing the substantial text of any other bill introduced during the session, the Speaker shall rule thereon, subject to appeal to the House. ...”

In Closing

What I have expressed here today are ideas, suggestions, and theories that you might consider.

Parliamentary procedure is not an exact science. It is based on decisions or judgments made by human beings. As a result, parliamentary practices vary greatly from state to state and even from chamber to chamber. Each legislative assembly illustrates the unique character that is created by blending numerous individuals within different political environments. So, what may be right for one legislature, may not be right for another.

Finally, I want to leave you with another quote from Edward Burdick:

“The vitality of government flourishes when public officials continually seek to better the institutions they serve. What’s essential, however, is a willingness to look for weaknesses or to identify processes to be revamped. Otherwise, policymakers end up trying to operate modern legislatures with old rules and procedures.”

I commend you for taking the time to review your legislative processes. Good luck with this important endeavor.

Attachments

The following documents provide more detail on:

- Organizational sessions
- Veto sessions
- Who may call special sessions
- Bill introduction limits
- Subject limits on appropriations or budget bills



Organizational Sessions

The following activities typically occur during a formal organizational session:

- Members are sworn in.
- Chamber and caucus leaders are elected.
- Other chamber officers—such as the clerks of the Senate and House—are selected.
- If necessary, the hiring of other staff is approved.
- Chamber rules may be adopted.
- Session schedules (deadlines) may be set.
- The number of, the names (sometimes, jurisdictions) of and the meeting schedule for committees may be established. If possible, committee chairs and members may be appointed.

In addition, chambers often hold orientation programs for new members and new committee chairs. Sometimes, briefings on the budget, revenue outlook or other major policy issues are presented.

Examples of state constitutional provisions and statutes on formal organizational sessions are shown below.

Alabama

Constitutional Amendments 39 & 57

... The legislature shall convene on the second Tuesday in January next succeeding their election and shall remain in session for not longer than ten consecutive calendar days. No business can be transacted at such sessions except the organization of the legislature, the election of officers and the appointment of standing committees of the senate and the house of representatives for the ensuing four years, which election and appointment may, however, also be made at such other times as may be necessary, the opening and publication of the returns and the ascertainment and declaration of the results of the election for governor, lieutenant-governor, attorney-general, state auditor, secretary of state, state treasurer, superintendent of education and commissioner of agriculture and industries, the election of such officers in the event of a tie vote, the determination of contested elections for such offices, the judging of the election returns and qualification of the members of the legislature, and the inauguration of the governor and the other elected state officers whose terms of office are concurrent with that of the governor. At the beginning of each such organization session, and at such other times as may be necessary, the senate shall elect one of its members president pro tempore thereof, to preside over its deliberations in the absence of the lieutenant-governor, and the house of representatives shall elect one of its members as speaker, to preside over its deliberations. The president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives shall each hold his respective office until his successor has been elected and qualified ...

California

Constitution Article 4, Section 3. (a) The Legislature shall convene in regular session at noon on the first Monday in December of each even-numbered year and each house shall immediately organize ...

Government Code, Section 9020. The Legislature shall convene in regular session at the City of Sacramento at noon on the first Monday in December of each even-numbered year, and each house shall immediately organize.

Government Code, Section 9021. The certificate of election is prima facie evidence of the right to membership.

Government Code, Section 9022. At the day and hour appointed for the assembling of any regular session of the Legislature, the President of the Senate, or in case of his absence or inability, the senior member present, shall take the chair, call the members and members elect to order, and have the secretary call over the senatorial districts, in their order, from which members have been elected at the preceding election. As the districts are called the members elect shall present their certificates, take the constitutional oath of office, and assume their seats. If a quorum is present, the Senate may then elect its officers.

Government Code, Section 9023. At the day and hour appointed for the assembling of any regular session of the Legislature, the Chief Clerk of the Assembly, or in case of his absence or inability, the senior member elect present, shall take the chair, call the members elect to order, and call over the roll of counties in alphabetical order. As the counties are called the members elect shall present their certificates, take the constitutional oath of office, and assume their seats. If there is more than one senior member elect present and the senior members are unable to agree as to who shall call the session to order, the Attorney General or one of his deputies shall call the session to order.

If a quorum is present, the Assembly shall then elect its officers, and there shall be no other business, motion or resolution considered before the election of the Speaker, save and except a motion to adjourn or a motion for a call of the house.

Government Code, Section 9024. Members of the Legislature who did not take the oath of office at the assembling of the Legislature may take the oath at any time during the term for which they were elected.

Government Code, Section 9025. An entry of the oath taken by members of the Legislature shall be made on the journals of the proper house.

Government Code, Section 9026. All standing committees of either the Senate or Assembly shall be appointed by the presiding officer of their respective house if the house by resolution or its rules does not direct otherwise.

Government Code, Section 9026.5. (a) No television signal generated by the Assembly shall be used for any political or commercial purpose, including, but not limited to, any campaign for elective public office or any campaign supporting or opposing a ballot proposition submitted to the electors.

As used in this section, "commercial purpose" does not include either of the following:

- (1) The use of any television signal generated by the Assembly by an accredited news organization or any nonprofit organization for educational or public affairs programming.
 - (2) As authorized by the Assembly, the transmission by a third party to paid subscribers of an unedited video feed of the television signal generated by the Assembly.
- (b) Any person or organization who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Florida

Constitution Article 3, Section 3. (a) ORGANIZATION SESSIONS. On the fourteenth day following each general election the legislature shall convene for the exclusive purpose of organization and selection of officers.

Idaho

Statute 67-404a. On the first Thursday of December in general election years, the members-elect of the house of representatives and senate shall meet at the state capitol in Boise for the purpose of organizing their respective houses. Members-elect shall each receive the sum of \$25.00 per day not to exceed three (3) days for general expenses, and shall also be reimbursed for actual and necessary travel and lodging expenses in attending such meetings. The members-elect attending such meetings shall file with the legislative council a duly verified claim,

together with paid vouchers for travel and lodging expenses actually incurred. The legislative council shall file all such claims with the appropriate state office for examination and payment of all just claims.

Indiana

Statute 2-2.1-1-2. Sec. 2. (a) The first regular session of each term of the general assembly shall convene on the third Tuesday after the first Monday of November of each even-numbered year to do the following:

- (1) Organize itself.
 - (2) Elect its officers.
 - (3) Receive the oath of office.
- (b) If a special session is called before the date set in subsection (a), then the organization, election, and receiving the oath of office shall be held on the first day of the special session.
- (c) The general assembly shall then adjourn until a day:
- (1) certain fixed by a concurrent resolution; or
 - (2) when the gavel of each house falls in the presence of a quorum whether or not a day certain to reconvene in session has been fixed.
- (d) The general assembly shall reconvene in session no later than the second Monday in January of the following year.
- (e) The first regular session of each term of the general assembly shall adjourn sine die not later than April 29 in any odd-numbered year.

Kansas

Statute 46-142. (a) Persons elected to the house of representatives in 1976 for terms to commence in 1977, shall meet at the state capitol in Topeka on the first Monday in December in 1976, and such members-elect shall convene at 10 o'clock a.m. in the house of representatives. The secretary of state or an assistant or deputy assistant designated by the secretary of state shall call the meeting to order, and shall call the roll of the members-elect from the list certified by the state board of canvassers as provided in K.S.A. 25-3206 *et seq.* and shall thereupon appoint one of the members-elect to be temporary chairperson of the meeting. Upon adjournment, on the same day, the members-elect of the majority and minority parties of the house of representatives shall caucus and nominate, respectively, their candidates for speaker and speaker pro tem of the house of representatives for the next ensuing biennium, and select, respectively, their majority leader, minority leader, and other caucus or party officers. Such bodies of members-elect may determine such other matters as their parties shall deem necessary and proper and as will aid the legislature in organizing and performing its functions as soon as possible after the legislature is convened. In each even-numbered year thereafter, the members-elect of the house of representatives shall meet and caucus in the same manner and take such actions as hereinbefore indicated.

(b) Persons elected to the senate in 1976 for terms to commence in 1977 shall meet at the state capitol in Topeka on the first Monday in December in 1976, and such members-elect shall convene at 10 o'clock a.m. in the senate chamber. The secretary of state or an assistant or deputy assistant designated by the secretary of state shall call the meeting to order, and shall call the roll of the members-elect from the list certified by the state board of canvassers and shall thereupon appoint one of the members-elect to be temporary chairperson of the meeting. Upon adjournment, on the same day, the members-elect of the majority and minority parties of the senate shall caucus and nominate their candidates, respectively, for president and vice-president of the senate for the next ensuing four years and select, respectively, their majority leader, minority leader, and other caucus or party officers. Such bodies of members-elect may determine such other matters as their parties shall deem necessary and proper and as will aid the legislature in organizing and performing its functions as soon as possible after the legislature is convened. In each fourth year after 1976, the members-elect of the senate shall meet and caucus in the same manner and take such actions as hereinbefore indicated.

(c) The secretary of state, or an assistant or deputy assistant designated by the secretary of state, shall serve as temporary chairperson of the house of representatives from the moment of convening of the house of representatives until the speaker of the house of representatives has been duly elected and has taken his or her oath of office. The election of the speaker shall be the first order of business following the administration of oaths to the members.

(d) The secretary of state, or an assistant or deputy assistant designated by the secretary of state, shall serve as temporary chairperson of the senate from the moment of convening of the senate until the president of the senate has been duly elected and has taken his or her oath of office. The election of the president shall be the first order of business following the administration of oaths to the senators.

Kentucky

Constitution Section 36. (1) The General Assembly, in odd-numbered years, shall meet in regular session for a period not to exceed a total of thirty (30) legislative days divided as follows: The General Assembly shall convene for the first part of the session on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January in odd-numbered years for the purposes of electing legislative leaders, adopting rules of procedure, organizing committees, and introducing and considering legislation. The General Assembly shall then adjourn. The General Assembly shall convene for the second part of the session on the first Tuesday in February of that year. Any legislation introduced but not enacted in the first part of the session shall be carried over into the second part of the session. In any part of the session in an odd-numbered year, no bill raising revenue or appropriating funds shall become a law unless it shall be agreed to by three-fifths of all the members elected to each House. ...

Louisiana

Constitution Article 3, Section 2. (D) Organizational Session. The legislature shall meet in an organizational session in the state capitol to be convened at ten o'clock in the morning on the day the members are required to take office. No such session shall exceed three legislative days. The session shall be for the primary purpose of judging the qualifications and elections of the members, taking the oath of office, organizing the two houses, and selecting officers. No matter intended to have the effect of law shall be introduced at an organizational session.

Constitution Article 3, Section 5.(A) Full Term. Members of the legislature shall take office on the same day as the governor and other officials elected statewide.

(B) Filling Vacancy. A person elected to fill the remainder of an unexpired legislative term shall take office within thirty days after the secretary of state promulgates the election returns.

Constitution Article 4, Section 3. (A) Election. Except as provided in Section 20 of this Article, the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer, commissioner of agriculture, commissioner of insurance, superintendent of education, and commissioner of elections each shall be elected for a term of four years by the electors of the state at the time and place of voting for members of the legislature. The term of each such official shall begin at noon on the second Monday in January next following the election.

Maine

Constitution Article 4, Part 3, Section 1. The Legislature shall convene on the first Wednesday of December following the general election in what shall be designated the first regular session of the Legislature ...

Statute Title 3, Chapter 1, Subchapter 2, Section 21. The Secretary of the preceding Senate, at the time and place appointed for the meeting of the Legislature, shall call the Senators-elect present to order, and from the certified roll furnished him call their names, and if a quorum respond, he shall preside until they are qualified and a President is elected. If no quorum appear he shall preside, and the Senators-elect present shall adjourn from day to day, but shall transact no business, except to go into convention to fill vacancies, until a quorum appear and are qualified and a President is elected. After the election of the President, the Senate shall proceed to elect by ballot a secretary and an assistant secretary.

In case of vacancy in the office of such secretary or his absence or inability to perform the duties, the said duties shall be performed by his assistant.

If the Secretary of the Senate and his assistant are absent at the time set for convening the Senate, their duties shall be performed by the Secretary of State or his deputy.

Statute Title 3, Chapter 1, Subchapter 3, Section 41. The Clerk of the preceding House of Representatives in the same manner as provided for the Senate shall call the Representatives-elect to order and preside until they are qualified and elect a Speaker. If no quorum appear he shall preside, and the Representatives-elect present shall adjourn from day to day until a quorum appear and are qualified and a Speaker is elected. After the election of the Speaker, the House of Representatives shall proceed to elect by ballot a clerk and an assistant clerk. All revenues received by the document clerk in the performance of his duties shall be credited to the General Fund.

In case of vacancy in the office of such clerk, or his absence or inability to perform the duties aforesaid, the said duties shall be performed by his assistant.

If the Clerk of the House and his assistant are absent at the time set for convening the House, their duties shall be performed by the Secretary of State or his deputy.

New Hampshire

Constitution Part 2, Article 3. The senate and house shall assemble biennially on the first Wednesday of December for organizational purposes in even numbered years, ...

Statute 14:2-b. Organizational Convening. – Pursuant to the constitution, the general court shall assemble biennially on the first Wednesday of December following the biennial election for organizational purposes. At such assembly, the senate and the house shall take the oath of office, elect the secretary of state, the state treasurer and such other officers and employees, adopt such organizational procedures and rules and perform such other organizational business as they deem necessary. The nomination of the secretary of state and the state treasurer may be by any member of the general court and shall be without regard to the party affiliation of the candidate. The election of the secretary of state or of the state treasurer shall be conducted without regard to the party affiliation of the candidates and by secret ballots, if more than one person is nominated for election to such position.

North Carolina

Excerpt from Senate Bill 847—enacted by Legislature, signed by Governor 7/17/2012, Ch. SL 2012-194
SECTION 66.5.(a) G.S. 120-11.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 120-11.1. Time of meeting.

The regular session of the Senate and House of Representatives shall be held biennially beginning at 9:00 A.M. on the second Wednesday in January next after their election, and on that day they shall meet solely to elect officers, adopt rules, and otherwise organize the session. When they adjourn that day, they stand adjourned until 12:00 noon on the third Wednesday after the second Monday in January next after their election."

North Dakota

Constitution Article 4, Section 7. ... The legislative assembly shall meet at the seat of government in the month of December following the election of members thereof for organizational and orientation purposes as provided by law and shall thereafter recess until twelve noon on the first Tuesday after the third day in January ...

Statute 54-03.1-02. Time and place of meeting - Who must attend. In each even-numbered year on the first Monday in the month of December or on a date selected by the legislative council but not earlier than December first nor later than December fifteenth, all persons elected at the previous November general election as members of the succeeding legislative session, and members whose terms do not expire until the first day of December following the next November general election, shall meet in the state capitol in the city of Bismarck, or at such other place as may be designated, at a time designated by the legislative council for the purpose of conducting an organizational session. The legislative council shall call the organizational session and make such arrangements as may be necessary for its operation.

Statute 54-03.1-03. Agenda. The agenda of the organizational session must include the following:

1. Orientation classes upon legislative rules and procedure for new legislators;
2. Presentation of reports by legislative interim committees or commissions;
3. Party caucuses to review proposed legislative rules and committee assignments, as appropriate;
4. Appointment of procedural committees;
5. Presentation of the budget and revenue proposals recommended by the governor as provided in section 54-44.1-07; and
6. All other similar matters, in order that the legislative assembly be fully organized and ready to begin its business by the first day of the regular session.

Ohio

Constitution Article 2, Section 7. Organization of the House of Representatives. The mode of organizing each House of the general assembly shall be prescribed by law. Each House, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution, shall choose its own officers. The presiding officer in the Senate shall be designated as president of the Senate and in the House of Representatives as speaker of the House of Representatives. Each House shall determine its own rules of proceeding.

Statute 101.01. Commencement of regular legislative sessions; senate called to order; oath of office.

(A) The first regular session of each general assembly shall convene on the first Monday of January in the odd-numbered year, or on the succeeding day if the first Monday of January is a legal holiday, and in second regular session on the same date of the following year. The second regular session of each general assembly shall be in a continuum of the first regular session. At the second regular session, the general assembly shall consider matters held over from the first regular session, revenue and appropriation bills, and other measures agreed to by a majority of the members elected to either house or recommended by the governor in a public proclamation or a message to the general assembly.

(B) At one-thirty p.m. of the day specified for the beginning of the first regular session of the general assembly, the president of the senate during the preceding biennium or in the case of his absence or inability to act, the president pro tempore of the senate during the preceding biennium shall take the chair and call the senate to order. He shall also call the senatorial districts in their numerical order, and as they are called the persons claiming to be senators-elect therefrom shall present their certificates and take the oath of office. If neither the president nor the president pro tempore designated in this division is available to preside at the beginning of the first regular session, the senators and senators-elect shall designate by party caucus the person who shall preside over the organization of the senate

Statute 101.1. House called to order; appointment of clerk pro tempore; presentation of certificates; oath of office. At two p.m. of the day appointed for the beginning of the first regular session of the general assembly, the speaker of the house of representatives during the preceding biennium or in his absence, the speaker pro tempore of the house of representatives during the preceding biennium shall take the chair, call the representatives-elect to order, and appoint one of them clerk pro tempore. He also shall call the districts in numerical order and, as they are called, the representatives-elect therefrom shall present their certificates and take the oath of office.

Oklahoma

Constitution Article 5, Section 26. Regular sessions. The Legislature shall meet in regular session at the seat of government at twelve o'clock noon on the first Monday in February of each year and the regular session shall be finally adjourned sine die not later than five o'clock p.m. on the last Friday in May of each year.

The Legislature shall also meet in regular session at the seat of government on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in January of each odd numbered year, beginning at twelve o'clock noon for the purposes only of performing the duties as required by Section 5 of Article VI of the Constitution and organizing pursuant to the provisions of this Article and shall recess not later than five o'clock p.m. of that same day until the following first Monday in February of the same year, beginning at twelve o'clock noon.

Oregon

Constitution Article 4, Section 10. Annual regular sessions of the Legislative Assembly; organizational session; extension of regular sessions. (1) The Legislative Assembly shall hold annual sessions at the Capitol of the State. Each session must begin on the day designated by law as the first day of the session. Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section:

(a) A session beginning in an odd-numbered year may not exceed 160 calendar days in duration; and

(b) A session beginning in an even-numbered year may not exceed 35 calendar days in duration.

(2) The Legislative Assembly may hold an organizational session that is not subject to the limits of subsection (1) of this section for the purposes of introducing measures and performing the duties and effecting the organization described in sections 11 and 12 of this Article. The Legislative Assembly may not undertake final consideration of a measure or reconsideration of a measure following a gubernatorial veto when convened in an organizational session.

(3) A regular session, as described in subsection (1) of this section, may be extended for a period of five calendar days by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of each house. A session may be extended more than once. An extension must begin on the first calendar day after the end of the immediately preceding session or

extension except that if the first calendar day is a Sunday, the extension may begin on the next Monday.
[Constitution of 1859; Amendment proposed by S.J.R. 41, 2010, and adopted by the people Nov. 2, 2010]

Constitution Article 4, Section 11. Legislative officers; rules of proceedings; adjournments. Each house when assembled, shall choose its own officers, judge of the election, qualifications, and returns of its own members; determine its own rules of proceeding, and sit upon its own adjournments; but neither house shall without the concurrence of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other place than that in which it may be sitting.—

Constitution Article 4, Section 12. Quorum; failure to effect organization. Two thirds of each house shall constitute a quorum to do business, but a smaller number may meet; adjourn from day to day, and compel the attendance of absent members. A quorum being in attendance, if either house fail to effect an organization within the first five days thereafter, the members of the house so failing shall be entitled to no compensation from the end of the said five days until an organization shall have been effected.—

South Carolina

Constitution Article 3, Section 9. ... Provided, That the House of Representatives shall meet on the first Tuesday following the certification of the election of its members for not more than three days following the general election in even-numbered years for the purpose of organizing. ...

Tennessee

Constitution Article 2, Section 8. ... the General Assembly shall meet in organizational session on the second Tuesday in January next succeeding the election of the members of the House of Representatives, at which session, if in order, the governor shall be inaugurated. The General Assembly shall remain in session for organizational purposes not longer than fifteen consecutive calendar days, during which session no legislation shall be passed on third and final consideration. Thereafter, the General Assembly shall meet on the first Tuesday next following the conclusion of the organizational session unless the General Assembly by joint resolution of both houses sets an earlier date. ...

West Virginia

Constitution Article 6, Section 18. Time and place of assembly of Legislature. The Legislature shall assemble annually at the seat of government, and not oftener unless convened by the governor. Regular sessions of the Legislature shall commence on the second Wednesday of January of each year. Upon the convening of the Legislature in each odd-numbered year, each house shall proceed to organize by the election of its officers for two-year terms and both houses shall then in joint assembly open and publish the election returns delivered to the Legislature as prescribed by other provisions of this constitution and by general law. When all of these matters have been completed in the year one thousand nine hundred seventy-three and every fourth year thereafter, the Legislature shall adjourn until the second Wednesday of February following. Notwithstanding the provisions of section fifty-one of this article and any other provisions of this constitution, on and after the effective date hereof, there shall be submitted by the governor to the Legislature, on the second Wednesday of February in the year one thousand nine hundred seventy-three and every fourth year thereafter, and on the second Wednesday of January of all other years, unless a later time in any year be fixed by the Legislature, a budget for the next ensuing fiscal year and a bill for the proposed appropriations of such budget.

Wisconsin

Statute 13.02. (1) The legislature shall convene in the capitol on the first Monday of January in each odd-numbered year, at 2 p.m., to take the oath of office, select officers, and do all other things necessary to organize itself for the conduct of its business, but if the first Monday of January falls on January 1 or 2, the actions here required shall be taken on January 3.

(2) The regular session of the legislature shall commence at 2 p.m. on the first Tuesday after the 8th day of January in each year unless otherwise provided under [sub. \(3\)](#).

(3) Early in each biennial session period, the joint committee on legislative organization shall meet and develop a work schedule for the legislative session, which shall include at least one meeting in January of each year, to be submitted to the legislature as a joint resolution.

(4) Any measures introduced in the regular annual session of the odd-numbered year which do not receive final action shall carry over to the regular annual session held in the even-numbered year.



Veto Sessions

Alaska

Article II, Section 16

... Bills vetoed after adjournment of the first regular session of the legislature shall be reconsidered by the legislature sitting as one body no later than the fifth day of the next regular or special session of that legislature. Bills vetoed after adjournment of the second regular session shall be reconsidered by the legislature sitting as one body no later than the fifth day of a special session of that legislature, if one is called. The vote on reconsideration of a vetoed bill shall be entered on the journals of both houses.

Connecticut

Article 3, Section 2

...If any bill passed by any regular or special session or any appropriation item described in Section 16 of Article Fourth has been disapproved by the governor prior to its adjournment, and has not been reconsidered by the assembly, or is so disapproved after such adjournment, the secretary of the state shall reconvene the general assembly on the second Monday after the last day on which the governor is authorized to transmit or has transmitted every bill to the secretary with his objections pursuant to Section 15 of Article Fourth of this constitution, whichever occurs first; provided if such Monday falls on a legal holiday the general assembly shall be reconvened on the next following day. The reconvened session shall be for the sole purpose of reconsidering and, if the assembly so desires, repassing such bills. The general assembly shall adjourn sine die not later than three days following its reconvening.

Hawaii

Article 3, Section 16

The governor shall have forty-five days, after the adjournment of the legislature sine die, to consider bills presented to the governor less than ten days before such adjournment, or presented after adjournment, and any such bill shall become law on the forty-fifth day unless the governor by proclamation shall have given ten days' notice to the legislature that the governor plans to return such bill with the governor's objections on that day. The legislature may convene at or before noon on the forty-fifth day in special session, without call, for the sole purpose of acting upon any such bill returned by the governor. In case the legislature shall fail to so convene, such bill shall not become law. Any such bill may be amended to meet the governor's objections and, if so amended and passed, only one reading being required in each house for such passage, it shall be presented again to the governor, but shall become law only if the governor shall sign it within ten days after presentation.

In computing the number of days designated in this section, the following days shall be excluded: Saturdays, Sundays, holidays and any days in which the legislature is in recess prior to its adjournment as provided in section 10 of this article.

Louisiana

Article 3, Section 18

(C) Veto Session. (1) A bill vetoed and returned and subsequently approved by two-thirds of the elected members of each house shall become law. The legislature shall meet in veto session in the state capital at noon on the fortieth day following final adjournment of the most recent session, to consider all bills vetoed by the governor. If the fortieth day falls on Sunday, the session shall convene at noon on the succeeding Monday. No veto session shall exceed five calendar days, and any veto session may be finally adjourned prior to the end of the fifth day upon a vote of two-thirds of the elected members of each house.

(2) No veto session shall be held if a majority of the elected members of either house declare in writing that a veto session is unnecessary. The declaration must be received by the presiding officer of the respective houses at least five days prior to the day on which the veto session is to convene.

Missouri

Article 3, Section 32

Every bill presented to the governor and returned with his objections shall stand as reconsidered in the house to which it is returned. If the governor returns any bill with his objections on or after the fifth day before the last day upon which a session of the general assembly may consider bills, the general assembly shall automatically reconvene on the first Wednesday following the second Monday in September for a period not to exceed ten calendar days for the sole purpose of considering bills returned by the governor. The objections of the governor shall be entered upon the journal and the house shall proceed to consider the question pending, which shall be in this form: "Shall the bill pass, the objections of the governor thereto notwithstanding?" The vote upon this question shall be taken by yeas and nays and if two-thirds of the elected members of the house vote in the affirmative the presiding officer of that house shall certify that fact on the roll, attesting the same by his signature, and send the bill with the objections of the governor to the other house, in which like proceedings shall be had in relation thereto. The bill thus certified shall be deposited in the office of the secretary of state as an authentic act and shall become a law.

Montana

Article VI, Sec 10.

(4) (a) If the legislature is not in session when the governor vetoes a bill approved by two-thirds of the members present, he shall return the bill with his reasons therefor to the secretary of state. The secretary of state shall poll the members of the legislature by mail and shall send each member a copy of the governor's veto message. If two-thirds or more of the members of each house vote to override the veto, the bill shall become law.

(b) The legislature may reconvene as provided by law to reconsider any bill vetoed by the governor when the legislature is not in session.

New Jersey

Article 5, Section 1, Paragraph 14

(c) The period allowed for the Governor's consideration of a passed bill shall be from the date of presentation until noon of the forty-fifth day next following or, if the house of origin be in temporary adjournment on that day, the first day subsequent upon which the house reconvenes; except that:

(1) if on the said forty-fifth day the Legislature is in adjournment sine die, any bill then pending the Governor's approval shall be returned, if he objects to it, at a special session held pursuant to subparagraph (d) of this paragraph;

(2) any bill passed between the forty-fifth day and the tenth day preceding the expiration of the second legislative year shall be returned by the Governor, if he objects to it, not later than noon of the day next preceding the expiration of the second legislative year;

(3) any bill passed within 10 days preceding the expiration of the second legislative year shall become law only if the Governor signs it prior to noon of the seventh day following such expiration, or the Governor returns it to the House of origin, with a statement of his objections, and two-thirds of all members of each House agree to pass the bill prior to such expiration.

(d) For the purpose of permitting the return of bills pursuant to this paragraph, a special session of the Legislature shall convene, without petition or call, for the sole purpose of acting upon bills returned by the Governor, on the forty-fifth day next following adjournment sine die of the regular session; or, if the second legislative year of a 2-year Legislature will expire before said forty-fifth day, then the day next preceding the expiration of the legislative year.

North Carolina

Article II, Sec. 22

(7) Time for action by Governor; reconvening of session. If any bill shall not be returned by the Governor within 10 days after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the General Assembly shall have adjourned:

(a) For more than 30 days jointly as provided under Section 20 of Article II of this Constitution; or

(b) Sine die

in which case it shall become a law unless, within 30 days after such adjournment, it is returned by the Governor with objections and veto message to that house in which it shall have originated. When the General Assembly has adjourned sine die or for more than 30 days jointly as provided under Section 20 of Article II of this Constitution, the Governor shall reconvene that session as provided by Section 5(11) of Article III of this Constitution for reconsideration of the bill, and if the Governor does not reconvene the session, the bill shall become law on the

fortieth day after such adjournment. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, if the Governor prior to reconvening the session receives written requests dated no earlier than 30 days after such adjournment, signed by a majority of the members of each house that a reconvened session to reconsider vetoed legislation is unnecessary, the Governor shall not reconvene the session for that purpose and any legislation vetoed in accordance with this section after adjournment shall not become law.

(8) Return of bills after adjournment. For purposes of return of bills not approved by the Governor, each house shall designate an officer to receive returned bills during its adjournment.

Utah

Article 7, Section 8

(4) If the governor disapproves any bill or item of appropriation after the adjournment sine die of any session of the Legislature, the presiding officer of each house shall poll the members of that house on the matter of reconvening the Legislature. If two-thirds of the members of each house are in favor of reconvening, the Legislature shall be convened in a session that shall begin within 60 days after the adjournment of the session at which the disapproved bill or item of appropriation passed. This session may not exceed five calendar days and shall be convened at a time set jointly by the presiding officer of each house solely for the purpose of reconsidering the bill or item of appropriation disapproved. If upon reconsideration, the bill or item of appropriation again passes both houses of the Legislature by a ye and nay vote of two-thirds of the members elected to each house, the bill shall become law or the item of appropriation shall take effect on the original effective date of the law or item of appropriation.

Virginia

Article IV, Section 6

... The General Assembly shall reconvene on the sixth Wednesday after adjournment of each regular or special session for the purpose of considering bills which may have been returned by the Governor with recommendations for their amendment and bills and items of appropriation bills which may have been returned by the Governor with his objections. No other business shall be considered at a reconvened session. Such reconvened session shall not continue longer than three days unless the session be extended, for a period not exceeding seven additional days, upon the vote of the majority of the members elected to each house. The General Assembly may provide, by a joint resolution approved during a regular or special session by the vote of the majority of the members elected to each house, that it shall reconvene on a date after the sixth Wednesday after adjournment of the regular or special session but no later than the seventh Wednesday after adjournment.

Washington

Article III, Section 12

... Provided, That within forty-five days next after the adjournment, Sundays excepted, the legislature may, upon petition by a two-thirds majority or more of the membership of each house, reconvene in extraordinary session, not to exceed five days duration, solely to reconsider any bills vetoed. ...



Who May Call Special Sessions
(as of November 20, 2018)

There are two main types of legislative sessions—regular and special (sometimes known as extraordinary). A regular session is the annual or biennial gathering of legislators, the starting date (and often, the length) of which is set by constitution or statute.

Unlike regular sessions, there is no specific timing for special (or extraordinary) sessions. They occur intermittently to deal with the specific issues or topics. Usually, the scope of a special session—that is, the topics that may be taken up—is limited to the issues specified in the notice calling for the special session. Who may call a special session varies among the states.

In the following 14 states, *only* the governor may call a special session.

Alabama	Kentucky	Rhode Island
Arkansas	Michigan	South Carolina
California	Minnesota	Texas
Idaho	Mississippi	Vermont
Indiana	North Dakota	

In the following 36 states, a special session may be called by either the governor or the legislature.

Alaska	Maine	Ohio
Arizona	Maryland	Oklahoma
Colorado	Massachusetts	Oregon
Connecticut	Missouri	Pennsylvania
Delaware	Montana	South Dakota
Florida	Nebraska	Tennessee
Georgia	Nevada	Utah
Hawaii	New Hampshire	Virginia
Illinois	New Jersey	Washington
Iowa	New Mexico	West Virginia
Kansas	New York	Wisconsin
Louisiana	North Carolina	Wyoming

There are no limits on the number of special session that may be called. Many factors can influence the number of special legislative sessions that occur in any year, including:

- * Court decisions
- * Federal government actions
- * Length of or scope limits on regular legislative sessions
- * Length of or scope limits on special sessions
- * Natural or other disasters
- * Party control of the legislature and governor's office
- * Political culture of the state
- * Redistricting
- * State economy



Bill Introduction Limits

Updated information about limits on bill introductions was requested in March 2017. The specific questions were:

1. Does your legislature or chamber currently limit **the number** of bills that an individual member may introduce—whether in total or a limited number only after session begins? If yes, what is the limit?
2. If yes, is the limit set by constitution, statute, chamber rule, leader’s memorandum or other mechanism? May I get a citation or a copy of the text of the authority setting the limit?

Shown below is a summary of the responses and additional research by NCSL staff.

The following chambers reported that they do not limit the number of bills that an individual member may introduce.

Arkansas House
Connecticut Senate
Florida Senate
Idaho Senate
Illinois Senate and House
Kansas Senate and House
Kentucky House
Massachusetts House
Missouri Senate and House

New Hampshire House
New Mexico Senate
North Carolina Senate
Oregon House
Pennsylvania Senate and House
South Carolina Senate
Texas Senate and House
West Virginia House
Wisconsin Senate and Assembly

The following chambers limit the number of bills that an individual member may introduce.

Arizona House

1. Yes. After the fourth day of session, members can only introduce seven more bills.
2. Limit is set by rule. Here is the text of House Rule 8(C).
C. Bills, resolutions and memorials may be introduced during the first 33 days of a regular session and during the first 10 days of a special session. Thereafter, with the exception of death resolutions, introduction may be allowed only with the permission of the Rules Committee. Every bill, resolution or memorial shall have at least one prime sponsor. A member may not be the prime sponsor of more than seven bills introduced after 5:00 p.m. on the fourth day of each regular session. For purposes of this Rule the first name on a bill shall be considered the prime sponsor.

California Senate

[Note: California’s regular session runs from December 5, 2016 until November 30, 2018.]

1. Yes, not more than 40 bills in the regular session—with some exceptions.
2. Limit is set by rule.
Senate Rule 22.5. Bill Introduction Limitation.
(a) A Member of the Senate may introduce or subsequently author not more than 40 bills in the regular session.
(b) This rule may be suspended with respect to a particular bill by approval of the Committee on Rules.
(c) This rule does not apply to a constitutional amendment, any type of resolution, or a bill introduced by a committee.

California Assembly

[Note: California's regular session runs from December 5, 2016 until November 30, 2018.]

1. Yes, for the entire two-year session.
2. Limit is set by rule.

Assembly Rule 49. Limitation on the Introduction of Bills

- (a) A Member may introduce not more than 50 bills in the regular session. As used in this rule, "bill" includes a constitutional amendment, but does not include a concurrent or joint resolution.
- (b) This rule may be suspended with respect to a particular bill by approval of the Committee on Rules.

Colorado Senate and House

Colorado has a bill limit of five bills per member per year; however, there are exceptions. Also, the Senate and House Delayed Bills Committees (mentioned in the rule below) are made up of leadership.

Joint Rule 24(b)(1)(A)

(b) (1) (A) A member of the General Assembly may not introduce more than five bills in a regular session of the General Assembly, excluding bills for appropriations and excluding the bills specified in subparagraph (D) of this paragraph (1). Permission to exceed the limits established by this rule may be given by the Senate Committee on Delayed Bills for members of the Senate and the House Committee on Delayed Bills for members of the House of Representatives. Of the bills which are subject to the five-bill limit under this subparagraph (A), not more than two bills may be requested after the December 1 which precedes the convening of the regular session; except that any member who will serve in the regular session in an odd-numbered year but who is not a member of the current General Assembly may not introduce more than two bills requested after the December 15 which precedes the convening of said odd-year session. Bills requested on or before said December 1 or December 15, as the case may be, shall be treated as if requested to be prefiled bills, unless the member making the request specifies otherwise.

(C) Nothing in this subsection (b) shall limit the number of bills originating in the other house which a member may introduce in the second house.

(D) In addition to the bills which may be introduced in accordance with subparagraph (A) of this paragraph (1), a member may introduce the bills permitted under this subparagraph (D). Such bills shall be from among those recommended by committees that meet during the interim and are created by statute, by executive committee resolution, or pursuant to section 2-3-303.3, Colorado Revised Statutes. If the number of allowable bills for such a committee has not been otherwise set, the committee may recommend no more than five bills to the Legislative Council for consideration as an approved interim committee bill. In order for an interim committee bill to be designated as one of the additional bills which may be introduced by a member under this subparagraph (D), the Legislative Council shall approve it no later than October 15 in even-numbered years and no later than November 15 in odd-numbered years. Bills or other measures recommended by an interim committee need not be sponsored by a member of the committee making the recommendation. Upon written request of a committee, the Executive Committee of Legislative Council may waive the limit imposed by this subparagraph (D) on the number of bills that a committee may recommend. Such a request shall be made to the Executive Committee no later than thirty days before the applicable October 15 or November 15 approval date. In addition to any bills recommended for approval as interim committee bills, the legislative committees created in article 3 of title 2, Colorado Revised Statutes, and the committees of reference performing the duties required in section 24-1-136 and 24-34-104, Colorado Revised Statutes, may, in accordance with their statutory authority, recommend any additional bills for introduction during a legislative session. Such additional bills shall be exempt from the five-bill limitation set out in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph (1).

Florida House

House Rule 5.3—Limitation on Member Bills Filed

- (a) A member may not file more than six bills for a regular session. For purposes of this rule, the member considered to have filed a bill is the firstnamed sponsor of the bill.
- (1) Of the six bills for the 2017 Regular Session, at least two must be approved for filing with the Clerk no later than noon of the 6th Tuesday before the first day of the regular session.

(2) Of the six bills for the 2018 Regular Session, at least two must be approved for filing with the Clerk no later than noon of the 7th Tuesday before the first day of the regular session.

(b) Bills not counted toward these limits include:

- (1) Local bills.
- (2) Ceremonial House resolutions.
- (3) Memorials.
- (4) Concurrent resolutions relating to extension of a session or legislative organization or procedures.
- (5) Trust fund bills adhering to another bill.
- (6) Public records or public meetings exemption bills adhering to another bill.
- (7) General bills adhering to a joint resolution.
- (8) Bills that only repeal or delete, without substantive replacement, any provision of the Florida Statutes or Laws of Florida.
- (9) Bills withdrawn from further consideration prior to the applicable filing deadline.
- (10) Claim bills, whether general or local.
- (11) Appropriations project bills.

Indiana Senate

Senate Rule 48

(a) First regular session. During the first regular session, there shall be no limitation on the total number of bills or joint resolutions each Senator shall be permitted to file for introduction. Before January 10, each Senator may present an unlimited number of bills and joint resolutions to the Secretary's Office for filing; however, beginning January 10 and continuing until the filing deadline at 4:00 p.m. January 12, no Senator shall file more than two (2) bills or joint resolutions per business day.

(b) Second regular session. During the second regular session, each Senator shall be permitted to file for introduction no more than a total of ten (10) bills or joint resolutions, none of which may be vehicle bills. In addition, each Senator shall also be permitted to file two (2) bills recommended by interim study committees or statutory commissions and committees that shall not be counted toward the Senator's ten (10) bill filing limit. The President Pro Tempore shall be permitted to file twenty-five (25) vehicle bills and seven (7) vehicle joint resolutions. The Minority Leader shall be permitted to file fifteen (15) vehicle bills and three (3) vehicle joint resolutions. When reassigned, vehicle bills and vehicle joint resolutions shall not be counted toward a Senator's ten (10) bill filing limit. Beginning January 3 and continuing until the filing deadline at 4:00 p.m. January 5, no Senator shall file more than two (2) bills or joint resolutions per business day. During the two (2) per day limited filing period, each Senator shall be allowed to yield, in writing, the Senator's right of bill or joint resolution filing to another Senator. However, yields may not be used to increase the maximum aggregate number of bills an individual Senator may file.

Indiana House

House Rule 108

1 During the first regular session, each member shall be permitted to file for introduction no more than ten (10) bills.

2 During the second regular session, each member shall be permitted to file for introduction no more than five (5) bills.

3 This rule does not apply to bills filed in the name of the Committee on Rules and Legislative Procedures under Rule 106.

Louisiana Senate and House

Constitution Article 3, Sec. 2(A)

... (2)(a) No member of the legislature may introduce more than five bills that were not prefiled, except as provided in the joint rules of the legislature.

(b) Except as provided in Subsubparagraph (c) of this Subparagraph, any bill that is to be prefiled for introduction in either house shall be prefiled no later than five o'clock in the evening of the tenth calendar day prior to the first day of a regular session.

(c) Any bill to effect any change in laws relating to any retirement system for public employees that is to be prefiled for introduction in either house shall be prefiled no later than five o'clock in the evening of the forty-fifth calendar day prior to the first day of a regular session.

(d) The legislature is authorized to provide by joint rule for the procedures for passage of duplicate or companion instruments. ...

Joint Rule 18 Limit on bill introductions; exceptions

The following bills shall not be counted against the five-bill limit on bill introductions after pre-filing, as provided in Article III, Section 2(A) of the Louisiana Constitution, for the authors of these bills:

- (1) The general appropriation bill.
- (2) The bill appropriating funds for the judicial branch.
- (3) The bill appropriating funds for the legislative branch.
- (4) The capital outlay bill.
- (5) The omnibus bond authorization bill.
- (6) Appropriation bills supplementing the General Appropriation Act.
- (7) The bill appropriating funds from the Revenue Sharing Fund pursuant to Article VII, Section 26.
- (8) The bill establishing and reestablishing agency ancillary funds.

North Carolina House

1. Yes. 15 public bills.
2. House Rule 31.1(g)
 1. (g) No member may introduce more than 15 public bills. For the purpose of this subsection, the introducer is the member who is listed as the first sponsor. A member may assign a portion of this limit to another member electronically using the procedures established and published by the Principal Clerk. This subsection does not apply to bills or resolutions recommended by commissions or committees authorized or directed by act or resolution of the General Assembly (i) to report to the 2017 Regular Session of the General Assembly, or to report prior to convening of that session, or (ii) that are recommended to the Regular Session of the General Assembly by a commission or committee established directly by Chapter 120 of the General Statutes. This subsection does not apply to joint resolutions or House resolutions.

North Dakota Senate

Senate Rule 402. When introduced.

1. No member other than the Majority and Minority Leaders may introduce more than three bills as prime sponsor after the eighth legislative day. A bill containing an appropriation clause may not be introduced after the eighth legislative day. No bill may be introduced after the thirteenth legislative day, and no resolution, except those resolutions described in subsection 3, may be introduced after the sixteenth legislative day, except upon approval of a majority of the Delayed Bills Committee or upon two-thirds vote of the members of the Senate present and voting.
2. No bill introduced at the request of an executive agency or the Supreme Court may be introduced after the close of business on the day after the adjournment of the organizational session, except upon approval of a majority of the Delayed Bills Committee.
3. Resolutions that propose amendments to the Constitution of North Dakota and resolutions directing the Legislative Management to carry out a study may not be introduced after the thirty-fourth legislative day.

North Dakota House

House Rule 402. When introduced.

1. No member other than the Majority and Minority Leaders may introduce more than five bills as prime sponsor after the third legislative day. No bill may be introduced after the eighth legislative day, and no resolution, except those resolutions described in subsection 3, may be introduced after the sixteenth legislative day, except upon approval of a majority of the Delayed Bills Committee or upon two-thirds vote of the members of the House present and voting.
2. No member of the Legislative Assembly on April first of the year before a regular legislative session may submit a bill mandating health insurance coverage of services or payment for specified providers as described in North Dakota Century Code Section 54-03-28 for consideration by the Employee Benefits Programs Committee after April first of the year before a regular legislative session. No member of the Legislative Assembly taking legislative office for the first time after November thirtieth of the year before a regular legislative session may submit a bill mandating health insurance coverage of services or payment for specified providers as described in North Dakota Century Code Section 54-03-28 for consideration by the Employee Benefits Programs Committee after the first Wednesday following adjournment of the organizational session.

3. No bill introduced at the request of an executive agency or the Supreme Court may be introduced after the close of business on the day after the adjournment of the organizational session, except upon approval of a majority of the Delayed Bills Committee.

4. Resolutions that propose amendments to the Constitution of North Dakota and resolutions directing the Legislative Management to carry out a study may not be introduced after the thirty-fourth legislative day.

Tennessee Senate

Senate Rule 25. Filing of Bills for Introduction

(A) Pre-filing of Bills. After the regular November election, each member of the Senate may pre-file as many bills and resolutions as that member desires prior to the convening of the organizational session of the General Assembly in January. Requests for the drafting of pre-filed bills and resolutions must be received by the Office of Legislative Services by the second Tuesday of December of such year.

Any member of the Senate pre-filing a bill or resolution for introduction in the next session shall follow the procedure as follows:

(1) The bill or resolution shall be filed with the Chief Clerk of the Senate by the member in the number and form prescribed by the Rules of the Senate.

(2) The Chief Clerk shall number the bill or resolution and note thereon the date of the first day of the next session, on which the bill or resolution will be introduced and, in the case of bills, will pass first consideration.

(3) All general bills or resolutions of general interest shall be printed and distributed in the same manner as bills and resolutions introduced during a session.

(4) After written request of the sponsor of a pre-filed bill or resolution, the Speaker of the Senate may in his discretion refer the bill or resolution to the appropriate committee to be studied and considered by the committee, or a subcommittee thereof, during the interim between sessions.

(5) Legal Analyses of bills shall be prepared and distributed in the same manner as during sessions.

(6) Fiscal notes shall be prepared for pre-filed bills in the same manner as during sessions.

(B) Filing of General Bills for Introduction During Session.

After Thursday of the second week of each annual session, each member of the Senate shall be limited to nine (9) general bill introductions until final adjournment of the General Assembly for that session or year. On such Thursday, bills may be introduced on the same day as filed.

This rule shall not apply to administration bills of the Governor, but each such administration bill shall be designated as such at the bottom of the front page of the bill and all administration bills shall be filed by the tenth legislative day.

This rule shall not apply to bills introduced by a committee chairman at the direction of a standing, select or joint committee.

All bills for introduction shall be filed with the Chief Clerk no later than four (4) o'clock p.m. on the day preceding the date of introduction.

Requests for the drafting of bills shall be submitted to the Office of Legal Services for the General Assembly, War Memorial Building, Nashville, Tennessee, 37243-0059.

Tennessee House

1. Yes. Members are limited to filing 15 bills per year.
2. The limit is set by the House Rules of Order.

House Rule 44. Filing of Bills for Introduction

... (d) (1) No member may file more than fifteen (15) bills during each annual session of a General Assembly.
(2) For the purposes of this Rule 44(d), "bill" means general bills and resolutions, except as provided in subdivision (3).

(3) The following general bills and resolutions are excluded from the limits imposed by this Rule 44(d):

(A) General bills of local application as specified in their captions and local bills;

(B) Administration bills and resolutions, limited to seventy-five (75) per annual session exclusive of bills and resolutions otherwise exempt from the limitation in this subsection;

(C) Resolutions approving amendments and revisions to rules of procedure promulgated by the Supreme Court and the annual codification act;

(D) Annual appropriations bills, supplemental appropriations bills, bond bills, index bills and bills that contain in their caption the following language, "relative to statutory revisions required for implementation of the annual appropriations act";

(E) General bills sponsored and designated by an officer of the Government Operations Committee concerning extensions and terminations of entities or rules;

(F) Resolutions that are memorializing or congratulatory in nature and are not referred to a standing committee;

(G) Resolutions confirming appointments or authorizing annual charitable events; and

(H) Resolutions that are procedural in nature and are not referred to a standing committee.

(e) Notwithstanding the bill filing limitation in Rule 44(d), any member may petition the rules committee for an exception to exceed the limitation on or before the tenth (10th) legislative day the House convenes for the transaction of business in any regular legislative session. Any such petition shall include the reasons for the exception and the jacketed copy of the bill or resolution for which the exception is sought. If approved by a majority vote of the total membership of the rules committee, the bill or resolution shall be introduced.

Virginia Senate and House

2016 House Joint Resolution 37

RESOLVED FINALLY, That the 2016 Regular Session of the General Assembly shall be governed by the following procedural rules, which establish introduction limits and time limitations for elections and for all legislation prefiled and introduced for the 2016 Regular Session except:

... Rule 1. After the deadline for filing prefiled legislation established by House Joint Resolution No. 524 (2015), no member of the House of Delegates shall introduce more than a combined total of five bills and joint resolutions and no member of the Senate shall introduce more than a combined total of eight bills and joint resolutions. ...

House Rule 37

... No member may introduce more than 15 bills during the Regular Session of an odd-numbered year. ...

Wyoming Senate

Senate Rule 4-3. 4-3 Limit on Number of Bills Sponsored.

Except for a Budget Session, no member shall sponsor more than seven (7) bills in any session. This limitation shall not apply to joint interim committees, the Management Audit Committee, the Management Council, the Select Water Committee and any other committee designated by the Management Council, nor shall this limitation include any bill the sole purpose of which is to repeal existing statutes.

Senate Rule 13-3. Limit on Sponsorship.

No member shall sponsor more than three (3) bills in any Budget Session. This limitation shall not apply to joint interim committees, the Management Audit Committee, the Management Council, the Select Water committee and any other Committee designated by the Management Council.

Wyoming House

House Rule 13-3 Limit on Sponsorship.

No member shall sponsor more than five (5) bills in any Budget Session. This limitation shall not apply to joint interim committees, the Management Audit Committee, the Management Council, the Select Water committee and any other Committee designated by the Management Council.

Other responses

Arkansas Senate. We don't not have any limits right now but looking at possibly considering changing our Senate rules concerning bill filing and limits.

Hawaii Senate

1. No overall limit, but members are limited to five bills per day for the last three days of bill introduction.
2. Set by President's memorandum.

Nebraska Unicameral. No limits on individual members. Committees are allowed eight bill introductions. Our source is Rule 5 Section 4 (d).

Oklahoma House. Not specifically. The House limits the number of bill draft requests, so bill introductions are self-limiting based on limitation on number of drafts allowed. A member may be the principal author of only eight (8) bills during a session; the Appropriations & Budget Chair can be the principal author on budget-related bills without limitation; the Speaker is not limited by this rule. This limit is set by Section 6.4 (b) and (c) of House Rules.



Examples of Constitutional Provisions Setting Subject Limits on Appropriations Bills

Alabama

Article 4, Section 71

The general appropriation bill shall embrace nothing but appropriations for the ordinary expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the state, for interest on the public debt, and for the public schools. The salary of no officer or employee shall be increased in such bill, nor shall any appropriation be made therein for any officer or employee unless his employment and the amount of his salary have already been provided for by law. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject.

Alaska

Article 2, Section 13

Every bill shall be confined to one subject unless it is an appropriation bill or one codifying, revising, or rearranging existing laws. Bills for appropriations shall be confined to appropriations. The subject of each bill shall be expressed in the title. The enacting clause shall be: "Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Alaska."

Arizona

Article 4, Part 2, Section 20

The general appropriation bill shall embrace nothing but appropriations for the different departments of the state, for state institutions, for public schools, and for interest on the public debt. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject.

Arkansas

Article 5, Section 30

The general appropriation bill shall embrace nothing but appropriations for the ordinary expense of the executive, legislative and judicial departments of the State; all other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject.

California

Article 4, Section 12

(a) Within the first 10 days of each calendar year, the Governor shall submit to the Legislature, with an explanatory message, a budget for the ensuing fiscal year containing itemized statements for recommended state expenditures and estimated state revenues. If recommended expenditures exceed estimated revenues, the Governor shall recommend the sources from which the additional revenues should be provided.

(b) The Governor and the Governor-elect may require a state agency, officer, or employee to furnish whatever information is deemed necessary to prepare the budget.

(c) (1) The budget shall be accompanied by a budget bill itemizing recommended expenditures.

(2) The budget bill shall be introduced immediately in each house by the persons chairing the committees that consider the budget.

(3) The Legislature shall pass the budget bill by midnight on June 15 of each year.

(4) Until the budget bill has been enacted, the Legislature shall not send to the Governor for consideration any bill appropriating funds for expenditure during the fiscal year for which the budget bill is to be enacted, except emergency bills recommended by the Governor or appropriations for the salaries and expenses of the Legislature.

(d) No bill except the budget bill may contain more than one item of appropriation, and that for one certain, expressed purpose. Appropriations from the General Fund of the State, except appropriations for the public schools, are void unless passed in each house by rollcall vote entered in the journal, two-thirds of the membership concurring.

(e) The Legislature may control the submission, approval, and enforcement of budgets and the filing of claims for all state agencies.

(f) For the 2004-05 fiscal year, or any subsequent fiscal year, the Legislature may not send to the Governor for consideration, nor may the Governor sign into law, a budget bill that would appropriate from the General Fund, for that fiscal year, a total amount that, when combined with all appropriations from the General Fund for that fiscal year made as of the date of the budget bill's passage, and the amount of any General Fund moneys transferred to the Budget Stabilization Account for that fiscal year pursuant to Section 20 of Article XVI, exceeds General Fund revenues for that fiscal year estimated as of the date of the budget bill's passage. That estimate of General Fund revenues shall be set forth in the budget bill passed by the Legislature.

Colorado

Article 5, Section 32

The general appropriation bill shall embrace nothing but appropriations for the expense of the executive, legislative and judicial departments of the state, state institutions, interest on the public debt and for public schools. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject.

(However, see *Colo. General Assembly v. Lamm*, 704 P.2d 1371 (Colo. 1985) which found:

- It is essential to the legislative power to raise revenue and appropriate funds that it be able to designate the source of funds to satisfy an appropriation
- Designation of the source of cash fund appropriation does not constitute prohibited substantive legislation in the general appropriation bill)

Florida

Article 3, Section 12

Laws making appropriations for salaries of public officers and other current expenses of the state shall contain provisions on no other subject.

(Article 3, Section 19 sets out the budget and appropriations process)

Georgia

Article 3, Section 9, Paragraph 3

The general appropriations bill shall embrace nothing except appropriations fixed by previous laws; the ordinary expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the government; payment of the public debt and interest thereon; and for support of the public institutions and educational interests of the state. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject.

(Article 3, Section 9 sets forth the budget and appropriations process)

Illinois

Article IV, Section 8

(d) ... Bills, except bills for appropriations and for the codification, revision or rearrangement of laws, shall be confined to one subject. Appropriation bills shall be limited to the subject of appropriations. ...

Louisiana

Article III, Section 16

(A) Specific Appropriation for One Year. Except as otherwise provided by this constitution, no money shall be withdrawn from the state treasury except through specific appropriation, and no appropriation shall be made under the heading of contingencies or for longer than one year.

(B) Origin in House of Representatives. All bills for raising revenue or appropriating money shall originate in the House of Representatives, but the Senate may propose or concur in amendments, as in other bills.

(C) General Appropriation Bill; Limitations. The general appropriation bill shall be itemized and shall contain only appropriations for the ordinary operating expenses of government, public charities, pensions, and the public debt or interest thereon.

(D) Specific Purpose and Amount. All other bills for appropriating money shall be for a specific purpose and amount.

(E) Extraordinary Session. Except for expenses of the legislature, a bill appropriating money in an extraordinary session convened after final adjournment of the regular session in the last year of the term of office of a governor shall require the favorable vote of three-fourths of the elected members of each house.

Maryland

Article III, Section 52

... (4) Each Budget shall embrace an estimate of all appropriations in such form and detail as the Governor shall determine or as may be prescribed by law, as follows: (a) for the General Assembly as certified to the Governor in the manner hereinafter provided; (b) for the Executive Department; (c) for the Judiciary Department, as provided by law, as certified to the Governor; (d) to pay and discharge the principal and interest of the debt of the State in conformity with Section 34 of Article III of the Constitution, and all laws enacted in pursuance thereof; (e) for the salaries payable by the State and under the Constitution and laws of the State; (f) for the establishment and maintenance throughout the State of a thorough and efficient system of public schools in conformity with Article 8 of the Constitution and with the laws of the State; and (g) for such other purposes as are set forth in the Constitution or laws of the State.

(5) The Governor shall deliver to the presiding officer of each House the Budget and a bill for all the proposed appropriations of the Budget classified and in such form and detail as he shall determine or as may be prescribed by law; and the presiding officer of each House shall promptly cause said bill to be introduced therein, and such bill shall be known as the "Budget Bill." The Governor may, with the consent of the General Assembly, before final action thereon by the General Assembly, amend or supplement said Budget to correct an oversight, provide funds contingent on passage of pending legislation or, in case of an emergency, by delivering such an amendment or supplement to the presiding officers of both Houses; and such amendment or supplement shall thereby become a part of said Budget Bill as an addition to the items of said bill or as a modification of or a substitute for any item of said bill such amendment or supplement may affect .

(5a) The Budget and the Budget Bill as submitted by the Governor to the General Assembly shall have a figure for the total of all proposed appropriations and a figure for the total of all estimated revenues available to pay the appropriations, and the figure for total proposed appropriations shall not exceed the figure for total estimated revenues. Neither the Governor in submitting an amendment or supplement to the Budget Bill nor the General Assembly in amending the Budget Bill shall thereby cause the figure for total proposed appropriations to exceed the figure for total estimated revenues, including any revisions, and in the Budget Bill as enacted the figure for total estimated revenues always shall be equal to or exceed the figure for total appropriations

(6) The General Assembly shall not amend the Budget Bill so as to affect either the obligations of the State under Section 34 of Article III of the Constitution, or the provisions made by the laws of the State for the establishment and maintenance of a system of public schools or the payment of any salaries required to be paid by the State of Maryland by the Constitution thereof; and the General Assembly may amend the bill by increasing or diminishing the items therein relating to the General Assembly, and by increasing or diminishing the items therein relating to the judiciary, but except as hereinbefore specified, may not alter the said bill except to strike out or reduce items therein, provided, however, that the salary or compensation of any public officer shall not be decreased during his term of office; and such bill, when and as passed by both Houses, shall be a law immediately without further action by the Governor.

(8) Supplementary Appropriation Bill. Either House may consider other appropriations but both Houses shall not finally act upon such appropriations until after the Budget Bill has been finally acted upon by both Houses, and no such other appropriation shall be valid except in accordance with the provisions following: (a) Every such appropriation shall be embodied in a separate bill limited to some single work, object or purpose therein stated and called herein a Supplementary Appropriation Bill; (b) Each Supplementary Appropriation Bill shall provide the revenue necessary to pay the appropriation thereby made by a tax, direct or indirect, to be levied and collected as shall be directed in said bill; (c) No Supplementary Appropriation Bill shall become a law unless it be passed in each House by a vote of a majority of the whole number of the members elected, and the yeas and nays recorded on its final passage; (d) Each Supplementary Appropriation Bill shall be presented to the Governor of the State as provided in Section 17 of Article 2 of the Constitution and thereafter all the provisions of said section shall apply.

Mississippi

Article IV, Section 69

General appropriation bills shall contain only the appropriations to defray the ordinary expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the government; to pay interest on state bonds, and to support the common schools. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject. Legislation shall not be engrafted on the appropriations bills, but the same may prescribe the conditions on which the money may be drawn, and for what purposes paid.

Missouri

Article 3, Section 23

No bill shall contain more than one subject which shall be clearly expressed in its title, except bills enacted under the third exception in section 37 of this article and general appropriation bills, which may embrace the various subjects and accounts for which moneys are appropriated.

Montana

Article V, Section 11

(1) A law shall be passed by bill which shall not be so altered or amended on its passage through the legislature as to change its original purpose. No bill shall become law except by a vote of the majority of all members present and voting.

(2) Every vote of each member of the legislature on each substantive question in the legislature, in any committee, or in committee of the whole shall be recorded and made public. On final passage, the vote shall be taken by ayes and noes and the names entered on the journal.

(3) Each bill, except general appropriation bills and bills for the codification and general revision of the laws, shall contain only one subject, clearly expressed in its title. If any subject is embraced in any act and is not expressed in the title, only so much of the act not so expressed is void.

(4) A general appropriation bill shall contain only appropriations for the ordinary expenses of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, for interest on the public debt, and for public schools. Every other appropriation shall be made by a separate bill, containing but one subject.

(5) No appropriation shall be made for religious, charitable, industrial, educational, or benevolent purposes to any private individual, private association, or private corporation not under control of the state.

(6) A law may be challenged on the ground of noncompliance with this section only within two years after its effective date.

Nebraska

Article 3, Section 22

Each Legislature shall make appropriations for the expenses of the Government. And whenever it is deemed necessary to make further appropriations for deficiencies, the same shall require a two-thirds vote of all the members elected to the Legislature. Bills making appropriations for the pay of members and officers of the Legislature, and for the salaries of the officers of the government, shall contain no provision on any other subject.

New Hampshire

Part II, Article 18-a

All sections of all budget bills before the general court shall contain only the operating and capital expenses for the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government. No section or footnote of any such budget bill shall contain any provision which establishes, amends or repeals statutory law, other than provisions establishing, amending or repealing operating and capital expenses for the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government.

New Mexico

Article IV, Section 16

The subject of every bill shall be clearly expressed in its title, and no bill embracing more than one subject shall be passed except general appropriation bills and bills for the codification or revision of the laws; but if any subject is embraced in any act which is not expressed in its title, only so much of the act as is not so expressed shall be void. General appropriation bills shall embrace nothing but appropriations for the expense of the executive, legislative and judiciary departments, interest, sinking fund, payments on the public debt, public schools and other expenses

required by existing laws; but if any such bill contain any other matter, only so much thereof as is hereby forbidden to be placed therein shall be void. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills.

Oklahoma

Article V, Section 55

No money shall ever be paid out of the treasury of this State, nor any of its funds, nor any of the funds under its management, except in pursuance of an appropriation by law, nor unless such payments be made within two and one-half years after the passage of such appropriation act, and every such law making a new appropriation, or continuing or reviving an appropriation, shall distinctly specify the sum appropriated and the object to which it is to be applied, and it shall not be sufficient for such law to refer to any other law to fix such sum

Article V, Section 56

The general appropriation bill shall embrace nothing but appropriations for the expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the State, and for interest on the public debt. The salary of no officer or employee of the State, or any subdivision thereof, shall be increased in such bill, nor shall any appropriation be made therein for any such officer or employee, unless his employment and the amount of his salary, shall have been already provided for by law. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject.

Oregon

Article 9, Section 7

Laws making appropriations, for the salaries of public officers, and other current expenses of the State, shall contain provisions upon no other subject.

Pennsylvania

Article III, Section 11

The general appropriation bill shall embrace nothing but appropriations for the executive, legislative and judicial departments of the Commonwealth, for the public debt and for public schools. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject.

South Dakota

Article 12, Section 2

The general appropriation bill shall embrace nothing but appropriations for ordinary expenses of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the state, the current expenses of state institutions, interest on the public debt, and for common schools. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one object, and shall require a two-thirds vote of all the members of each branch of the Legislature.

Texas

Article 3, Section 35

(a) No bill, (except general appropriation bills, which may embrace the various subjects and accounts, for and on account of which moneys are appropriated) shall contain more than one subject.

West Virginia

Article 6, Section 42

Bills making appropriations for the pay of members and officers of the Legislature, and for salaries for the officers of the government, shall contain no provision on any other subject.

(Article 6, Section 51 sets out the budget and appropriations process)

Wyoming

Article III, Section 34

The general appropriation bills shall embrace nothing but appropriations for the ordinary expenses of the legislative, executive and judicial departments of the state, interest on the public debt, and for public schools. All other appropriations shall be made by separate bills, each embracing but one subject.