

STUDENT LEGISLATIVE SESSION

TEXAS STATE CAPITOL

EST. 2003

STUDENT LEGISLATIVE SESSION | INSPIRING THE LEADERS OF TOMORROW

PRESENTED BY STATE REPRESENTATIVE RYAN GUILLEN

REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- Wi-Fi accessible phone or iPad
- All Forms Submitted
- Paper Notebooks
- Writing Utensil

DRESS CODE

THE STUDENT LEGISLATIVE SESSION WILL TAKE PLACE IN THE CAPITOL IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE CHAMBERS. THE OFFICIAL DRESS CODE IS LISTED BELOW:

FOR LADIES:

- School uniforms are acceptable
- Professional dress, such as a suit, is best
- Skirts should be knee-length
- Shoes should be closed-toed
- Pants or slacks may not be tightly fitted
- Pants or slacks may not be low cut so the midriff is exposed upon bending or sitting
- Blouses must cover shoulders, midriff and chest
- No tube tops, spaghetti straps or low-cut shirts
- T-shirts and jeans are not appropriate

FOR GENTLEMEN:

- School uniforms are acceptable
- A suit with a dress shirt, sports jacket and tie is preferred
- Long-sleeved button-up shirts are acceptable
- Polo shirts, or a shirt of similar style is acceptable
- Khaki pants, or a similar style of pant is acceptable
- T-shirts and jeans are not appropriate.

THE LIFE OF A BILL

A bill must be passed by both houses of the legislature in order to be sent to the governor for approval or acceptance as a law. It can be introduced in either chamber first or both simultaneously to speed the process.

A bill can be introduced only by a member of the legislature. This member is known as the author of the bill. But the author typically is not the originator of the proposed legislation.

More commonly, bills begin as twinkles in the eyes of organized interest groups, private corporations, lobbying organizations, and law firms. These organizations offer considerable expertise in the specific subject areas and in the formal requirements (style, organization and content) of proposed legislation.

After a bill has been introduced, a short description of the bill, called a caption, is read aloud while the chamber is in session so that all of the members are aware of the bill and its subject. This is called the First Reading, and it is the point in the process where the presiding officer assigns the bill to a committee. This assignment is announced on the chamber floor during the First Reading of the bill.

After the bill has been referred to committee but before any action by members, the committee staff must produce and distribute an analysis of the various provisions in the bill. After the committee approves or recommends changes, the committee votes on whether it should be considered by the whole chamber. By simple majority vote the committee decides whether to report the bill favorably, unfavorably, or not report it for floor consideration at all. An unfavorable report or no report will kill the bill.

When the bill comes up for consideration on the floor as scheduled, it is given the Second Reading (usually limited to reading only the caption). After debate (typically limited to ten minutes for each speaker) and amendment, a vote is taken for tentative approval.

After all the debate and amendments, the bill is ready for its Third Reading. Amendments may still be offered, but these require a two-thirds majority approval at this point. A simple majority is needed to pass the final version of the bill. Then the bill goes to the senate for action.

The chief executive (the governor) must approve or reject all proposed legislation passed by both houses. The state Constitution gives the governor ten days after receiving a bill (not counting Sundays) to take action. If the legislature has adjourned this period is extended to twenty days.

THE LIFE OF A BILL

The governor can take one of three actions:

1. Sign the bill into law.
2. Take no action, which allows the bill to become law after the veto period expires.
3. Veto the bill by sending a formal message of rejection to the legislature.

The opportunities and challenges for proper representation are more evident in the legislative branch than in any other branch of government. With 150 seats in the House and 31 in the Senate representing geographic districts that cover the entire state, the Texas legislature is the single most broadly representative governmental body in the state.

Legislators need to know what their constituents think about public policies so that they have a broader view of the alignment of forces supporting and opposing specific proposals. If they don't hear from citizens, they are left assuming that the issue has little importance for the people back home. Merely expressing your opinion, then, can make a major difference. This is the reason why today, millions of Texans remain involved in trying to influence the legislative process.

THE LIFE OF A BILL

LEGISLATORS GUIDE

Read carefully and think about the real-world practicality of each proposal. These questions may help guide your thinking process:

- Will this proposal work in real life?
- Does this proposal disenfranchise (strip civil rights or liberties from) any person or group?
- Does this proposal solve the problem it claims to solve?
- What are the possible economic effects of this proposal?
- What are the underlying political implications of this proposal?
- Is this proposal democratic?
- Is this proposal "fair?" Should it be?

IN COMMITTEE

STANDING IN COMMITTEE

Every student that will serve as a legislator will be placed on a committee. The purpose of the committee is to pass along the best bills to their legislative chambers. The Committee Chair is in charge, where he/she oversees testimony and calls for votes on bills. During a committee hearing, committee members hear testimony about bills and ask as many questions as they like.

Each committee is assigned bills and will pass only certain bills out of committee. The Chairman of the committee will call upon legislators to present and lobbyist to testify about bills. Each school's legislators will present their bill before a committee, and then that school's lobbyist will testify on behalf of the bill. Journalists will write updates about their school's bills and take pictures of the committee hearing.

When presenting before a committee, the speaker must give announce his/her name and where they are from, and their title if they are a legislators. After that the committee will then open up for questions, where the committee members will ask the speakers questions. Then the committee members will discuss the bill, and then the Chairman will call for a vote to decide the bill's fate.

LOBBYING

WELCOMING EVERYONE

Lunch is being presented by the lobbyists, and it is there job to help set up lunch for all the legislators and members of the press. During this hour, lobbyists get face to face contact with every legislator, and should use this time to talk them about their school's bill. Also during the lunch, lobbyists are required to give a short speech welcoming everybody, and hope to get support for their bill's passage.

PRESS CONFERENCE

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

The Governor, Lt. Governor, and Speaker of the House will hold three 15 minute press conferences each, which will begin at 11 AM. Each elected leader will be introduced with their title and name. The elected leader will begin the press conference with a prepared speech for what their goals are for the Student Legislative Session. After that the room will open up for questions from each school's journalist. The three elected leaders are required to give a response to each question.

Journalists will be called upon at random, and are required to ask at least one question to one of the three elected leaders. Journalist can use information they learned from watching the committee rooms, or from what elected leaders have talked about on the Student Legislative Session Facebook page. After the journalist's questions has been answered, journalists are required to post updates on the Student Legislative Session Facebook page.

A GUIDE FOR CONSIDERATION OF BILLS

HOW TO READ A BILL

1. Bill Authors -- the bill author explains the bill to the legislature before voting, and has the opportunity to express approval or disapproval for any suggested amendments.

2. Bill Number: House Bill Number 741

3. Bill summary

4. A bill takes a piece of existing law and simply adds, deletes, or changes its language. #4 shows that this bill changes Section 54.204 of Texas' Education Code.

5.Anything underlined is language added to existing law.

6. Anything [bracketed] or with a line through it, is language being deleted. Here, the eligible firefighter or law enforcement officer is being added and the original word [he] is being deleted.

*Bills usually begin by specifying the section of the law that will be changed.

*If a legislator wants to change a bill, he or she writes an amendment. An amendment to a bill simply adds/deletes/ or changes sections of the bill. For example, a representative may prefer in section (g) the word: employee rather than: firefighter or law enforcement officer, an amendment in this case would simply state the bill number, amendment number, amendment author, and section of the bill to be changed.

By: Guillen

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

relating to an exemption from tuition and fees at public institutions of higher education for children of certain volunteer peace officers who are killed or disabled in the line of duty.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. The heading to Section 54.204, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 54.204. CHILDREN OF DISABLED FIREFIGHTERS [FIREMEN] AND LAW ENFORCEMENT [PEACE] OFFICERS.

SECTION 2. Sections 54.204(a), (b), (g), and (h), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) In this section:

(1) "Eligible firefighter or law enforcement officer[employee]" means:

(A) a full-paid or volunteer firefighter;

(B) [, or] a full-paid or volunteer municipal, county, or state peace officer, including[or a custodial employee of the Texas Department of Corrections, or] a game warden; or

(C) a custodial officer of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

(2) "Disability" means inability to engage in any substantial gainful activity by reason of a [any] medically determinable physical or mental impairment that [which] can be expected to result in death or to be of long-continued and indefinite duration. A person is [An individual shall] not [be] considered to be under a disability unless the person provides any[he furnishes such] proof of the [its] existence of the disability as may be required.

(b) The governing board of each institution of higher education shall exempt from the payment of all dues, fees, and charges any person whose parent is an eligible firefighter or law enforcement officer [employee] who has suffered an injury, resulting in death or disability, sustained in the line of duty according to the regulations and criteria then in effect governing the department or agency in which the eligible firefighter or law enforcement officer volunteered or [he] was employed. The exemption does not apply to general property deposits

ON THE FLOOR

Debates are a form of communication where people with opposing viewpoints speak back and forth with one another, defending their point of view. Debates can often get heated when people feel very strongly about something. Convincing people or "making your case" can bring out strong feelings and sometimes loud voices.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

The House & Senate Chambers are set up with two microphones. If Representatives or Senators want to speak, they ask the Speaker of the House or the Lt. Governor for permission.

The Representative/Senator that wants to add something to a discussion asks from the Back Microphone: "Ms./Mr. Speaker (House Chamber) Ms./Mr. President (Senate Chamber), will the lady/gentleman yield?"

The Representative/Senator who was speaking at the Front Microphone can either accept or refuse the request to interrupt. Representatives/Senators have a ten-minute time limit when they come to the microphone.

This includes the time for rebuttal* questions from other Representatives/Senators at the back microphone.

*A rebuttal is the speech act of refuting one person's statement or opinion by offering a contrary contention or argument. The intent is to show fault in the opposition' position.



AGENDA

Time	Event	Positions	Location
8:30-9:00 AM	Student Check-In & Bill Distribution; Breakfast	All Students	LCC (E2.002)
9:00-10:00 AM	Opening Remarks & Welcome by The Honorable Ryan Guillen; Overview Explanation, Social Media Dialogue	All Students	Capitol Auditorium (E1.002)
10:00-11:30 AM	1st Session of Committees; Bill Planning, Presentation and Selection	Legislators, Lobbyists, Journalists	Committee Hearing Rooms
11:30-1:00 PM	2nd Session of Committees: Bill Planning, Presentation and Selection	Legislators, Lobbyists, Journalists	Committee Hearing Rooms
10:00-12:00 PM	Elected Leadership Tour of Capitol	Elected Leadership	Capitol Building
12:00-1:00 PM	Press Conference	Elected Leadership Journalists	Lt. Governor's Press Conference room (2E.7)
12:00-1:15 PM	Calendars Meets	Calendars Committee	Committee Hearing Room
1:00-2:00 PM	Complimentary Lunch	All Students	LCC (E2.002)
2:00-2:05 PM	Move to Chamber Floors and Prepare for Roll Call	Legislators	House Floor (2W.5) Senate Floor (2E.5)
2:15 -4:00 PM	Presentation of Bills on Debate Legislation; Amendments and Votes	Legislators	House Floor (2W.5) Senate Floor (2E.5)
2:00-3:30 PM	Governor's Meetings	Governor, Lobbyists	Member’s Lounge (E2.0001)
2:00-4:00 PM	Live Posting of Session	Journalists	Senate Gallery (3E.5) House Gallery (3W.5)
4:00PM -4:45 PM	Bill Signing Ceremony	All Students	House Floor (2W.5)
4:45 PM	Closing Remarks *The Honorable Ryan Guillen*	All Students	House Floor (2W.5)
4:45 -5:00 PM	Group Photograph	All Students	House Floor (2W.5)