

AMENDMENTS

Amendments are proposals for change to a piece of legislation as it is presented in committee or on the chamber floor. Authors have the privilege to alter their bill by filling out an Amendment form and submitting it to the Committee Chair before the end of the Committee.

There is a small "window of opportunity" when Amendments may be recognized by the chair, from the floor. This is during the first two rounds of con/pro debate. If recognized, the legislator would first address the chair, then say: "Motion to propose an amendment on the floor." The chair would then decide whether time permits an amendment process. If the chair decides to recognize the amendment, the amendment will be brought to the clerk and read to the chamber. There will be a brief period of con/pro debate on the proposed amendment and another minute for the bill's sponsors to make a statement.

A vote will then be taken on whether or not to adopt the amendment, with a simple majority being required for adoption. If the amendment is voted down, it will not be considered any further. If the appropriate number of votes approves the amendment, the amendment is incorporated within the bill. Regular con/pro debate will then resume.

AMENDMENT FORM

Bill number _____ Committee _____

Amendment proposed by _____ Friendly Amendment _____

Bill amended in (a) __ minor way (b) ____ in a major way

ADD _____ DELETE _____

Change to now read:

Motion to amend For ____ Against ____

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

This guide to parliamentary procedure has been prepared especially for use in the YMCA Youth & Government Program, but should be considered a valuable resource in any meeting or assembly where quick and efficient handling of business is desired.

These parliamentary rules make it possible for all action in the meeting to be understood. They guide the participants in discussion of the questions of the meeting in a way that allows them to be handled quickly and efficiently.

The Basic Rules of Parliamentary Procedure.

Committee Sessions: (Friday at the State Conference)

The Senate and two Assemblies (Liberty and Freedom) will arbitrarily be divided into committees. Each committee will have at least one Committee Chair. Each chair may select a clerk to assist the Chair.

The Committees have several purposes:

1. This is the last chance the sponsor(s) have to amend their bill before it is brought to the chamber floor.
2. As in the New York State legislature, the primary purpose of the committee is to improve the bills by group discussion and amendments.

Procedures

After the Chair calls the meeting to order, they will have the members of the committee introduce themselves. After all introductions are complete, it may be necessary for the Chair to explain any procedures (ranking...etc.)

- ◆ The chair will appoint one member of the committee to serve as clerk. The clerk is responsible for reading bills and recording the outcome on the bill. Amendments may be made at any time after the clerk reads the bill [THERE IS A LIMIT OF 2 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS PER BILL]
- ◆ The bill sponsor is asked to speak on the purpose and major provisions of their bill (OPENING STATEMENT)
- ◆ Committee members in turn question the bill sponsor about the bill, asking for specific information, background information and any other pertinent information necessary to make a decision. Delegates can ask two questions per recognition (TECHNICAL QUESTIONS)
- ◆ Chair asks if there is anyone present wishing to speak against (con) the bill and if there is, invite him or her to speak. Chair asks if there is anyone present wishing to speak for (pro) the bill. (This goes back and forth - for and against until all speakers wishing to speak have spoken or the Chair rules the time allotted has expired) Chair calls on bill sponsor to give a summation speech. (After author's summation, committee may consider the bill for Consent calendar) [CLOSING STATEMENT]
- ◆ If no one volunteers to offer a con speech, the chair will move on to a pro speech. If, after that pro speech there is still no one willing to speak in opposition, the chair will recognize a final pro speech. After that pro speech, there will be a final opportunity for a con speech.
- ◆ If no one volunteers a pro speech, then the chair will move immediately to the final Con speech.
- ◆ After its sponsors have presented each bill, committee members will go into a period of ranking the bill they have just heard. Once ranking is complete, the next bill will be presented
- ◆ PROCEDURE REPEATS ITSELF UNTIL EACH BILL HAS BEEN HEARD!

Flow of Committee Hearing

1. Bill intent (An Act To) is read by Clerk
 2. Sponsor's Opening Remarks
 3. Technical Questions
 4. Period of Con/Pro Debate [amendments can be made during the beginning of Con/Pro debate for a limited time]
 5. Sponsor's Closing Remarks
 6. Possible consideration for Consent Calendar
 7. Ranking sheets for this bill are distributed
 8. All ranking sheets are collected
- REPEAT STEPS 1-8 until all bills are heard

Consent Calendar

Any Bill that is received favorably by its committee but is completely lacking in opposition may be moved to the consent calendar with by the unanimous vote of the committee. The Consent Calendar means that the bill will be removed from the Docket and sent directly to the Cabinet. Sponsors will have 2 minutes to address the Cabinet, then another 5 minutes to answer their questions. At the end of that time the entire assembled Cabinet will vote on the passage or defeat of the bill. If it is unanimously passed by the Cabinet it will be sent to the Governor to be signed into law or vetoed.

Chambers

Formal parliamentary procedure will be followed at all times during the session. The following procedures apply within the Chamber

- * The presiding officer calls the chamber to order at the beginning of the first session and after every recess.
- * An Officer leads the Pledge of Allegiance at the beginning of Sunday's session.
- * The Bill's Clerk reads each bill aloud before it is debated.
- * The Bills are debated and voted on in the order that they appear on the docket.
- * Debate continues until session is adjourned.
- * Presiding officers through the Advisor Sgt. at Arms shall regulate movement in and out of the chambers. Only members of the Chamber and the presiding officers have the right to be admitted.
- * Formal parliamentary procedure will be followed at all times.
- * Procedures in the Assembly are the same as in the Senate, except that the Deputy Speaker will lead the Pledge of Allegiance.
- * Movement in and out of the chamber is left up to the Chair's discretion.

DEBATE PROCEDURE

This form of parliamentary procedure, adapted from *Robert's Rule of Order*, is to be followed at all formal legislative sessions. It is the responsibility of the legislature to maintain order and efficiency by following these forms. The following is a list and definitions of all possible motions, periods, and procedures.

➤ Addressing the Chair

All remarks to the legislature must be addressed through the Chair. Nothing you say at any time is really being said directly to the legislature. It is all being relayed through the Chair. This means that you must begin each question or statement with either "Chair" or "Thank You, Chair." You may be ruled out of order by the Chair if you fail to do so. This helps to maintain order and to cut down on **PERSONAL**

REFERENCES.

➤ Adjourning

When it is appropriate to adjourn the Chair will announce that they will entertain a motion to adjourn. This is done through making a motion to adjourn. You must be seconded as well as be recognized by the Chair. If the Chair rules the motion in order, it must pass a simple majority vote. The Chair will then announce the time for reconvening.

➤ Opening Statement

This is given by the Bill sponsor(s) from the podium. It is their chance to explain the purpose of their bill and to argue in favor of it. It is the legislature's first impression of the bill, so use it wisely to give your bill the best possible chance of passing. All the sponsors of the bill have the right to go to the podium at this time, and remain there until the end of debate. Sponsors have four minutes to divide between their opening and summation. Sponsors must yield the remainder of their time to their summation in order to have time for their closing.

➤ Closing Summation

This is given by the sponsor(s) at the podium. They will have the remainder of their four minutes to restate their position, rebut argument, or introduce new arguments in favor of their bill.

➤ Division

If the outcome of a voice vote is unclear, any member or the Chair can call division. If division is recognized, the Chair will then call for a standing count vote.

➤ Moving the Previous Question

This is used to end debate. This can be done on a con recognition, or after two consecutive pro recognitions. You must raise your placard and be recognized by the Chair. Your motion must be seconded before the Chair can call for a vote. If two-thirds or more vote for the motion, the legislature moves into the AUTHOR'S CLOSING STATEMENT. The Chair may call previous question if there is no debate on either side.

➤ Overriding a Gubernatorial Veto

A Governor's vetoations does not necessarily mean that the bill is dead. If the chamber disagrees with the Governor's veto, they can request a re-hearing of the bill (this would mean that the docket would be halted to allow the bill to come up again). The regular process of the docket will continue once the re-hearing is complete. The bill would have to go through three (3) rounds of pro-con debate once again. When the bill is up for a re-casting of votes, there must be a 2/3 majority of the chamber voting for the bill for it to be overridden. If a 2/3 vote is not attained, the bill remains vetoed.

➤ Personal Reference

At no time should you refer to another legislator by name or gesture toward them. Use phrases such as "the previous speaker," if you need to make references. This is to enforce the principle that a debate is a debate, not a personal attack.

➤ **Point of Information**

Used to ask a question to another member of the legislature. To ask a question, raise your placard and wait to be recognized by the Chair. When asked to do so, state your question. Be sure to **ADDRESS THE CHAIR** beginning your question with "Thank you, Chair."

Points of information are most often used during **TECHNICAL QUESTIONS**, but the Chair may allow other questions to be given to the sponsor(s) or other legislator during debate

➤ **Point of Inquiry**

Use this to ask questions directly to the Chair. You must raise your placard and wait to be recognized. This is most commonly used to ask about parliamentary procedure, the amount of time allowed by the Chair for statements, or the schedule.

➤ **Point of Order**

When someone violates parliamentary procedure, alert the chair through this point. You may interrupt a speaker to call a point of order, and the Chair must immediately recognize you. The Chair then decides whether your point is valid or not.

Sample points:

"Point of order! I believe the legislator is supposed to be speaking pro?"

"Point of order! That question seems debatable."

➤ **Point of Personal Privilege**

Use this if there is something in the chamber making you uncomfortable or distracted that the Chair can improve. You can interrupt a speaker for this point, and the Chair will decide if it is valid.

Sample points:

"Point of personal privilege! Would the sponsor speak up so I can hear him?"

"Point of personal privilege! There is too much talking in the back of the room."

The Chair may also require you to rise to a point of personal privilege if you want to leave the room.

➤ **Tabling or Removing from the Table**

This is used to postpone debate on a bill until a later time. It can be done at any time during the debate and requires a simple majority vote either to table or remove from the table.

➤ **Technical Questions**

The sponsors at the podium receive questions on their bill. All questions must be purely technical, not debatable. "What does 'felony' mean?" and "Why did you choose December 1st as the effective date?" are both technical. "Won't this cause an increase in drunk driving?" is not technical, and should be ruled out of order by the Chair. Two technical questions per recognition. If asking a series of technical questions(maximum 2) during debate the sponsors must yield to your questions and you can speak after the questions if you reserve your right to do so.

➤ **Voting Procedure**

During all voting, whether it is on a procedural motion or an actual bill, the Chair must ask that the doors be barred and no further notes be passed. The delegates must be silent during a vote, or a re-vote may be called.

The Chair decides whether the legislature shall vote by voice, raising placards, or rising in place. If there is a question as to the outcome of a vote, **DIVISION** may be called to ask for a placard count.

The results of all votes are final. An issue cannot be brought to a vote again unless it is reintroduced once the Chair has declared the result.

Quick Reference Outline of Debate

Remember to address all comments through the Chair.

Period

1. Opening Statement given by sponsor, time allotted by Chair

Motions Allowed

Point of Order
Point of personal privilege

2. Technical Questions
Questions asked and immediately responded to by the Sponsor

Point of order
Point of personal privilege
Point of Information
Point of inquiry

3. Con/Pro Debate
alternates between pro and con, must end on a con by moving the previous question.

Point of order
Point of personal privilege
Point of inquiry
Point of information
* Other motions permitted by the Chair.

The Chair may choose to allow more complicated motions such as **TABLING** and **AMENDING**, or may choose not to allow them because of time restraints.

4. Closing remarks
Given by sponsor, time allotted by the Chair

Point of Order
Point of personal privilege

5. Voting Procedure
Silence must be maintained and doors barred
Division

Point of order
Point of personal privilege

NOTE: This section is intended as a guide to those participating in the debate. The presiding officers and chairpersons are expected to be more familiar with parliamentary procedure and how to deal with many different motions that may be brought up.

AWARDS

Outstanding Bill- 1 Per Chamber

A committee consisting of the Presiding Officers and Adult Chamber Leaders will choose the Bills to be considered for Best Bill. The following factors will be considered: form, topic, overall appearance, and the sponsor's presentation. A bill need not pass to be considered for Best Bill. The Bill with the most votes generated by chamber members will be awarded Best Bill at the closing Banquet.

Outstanding Debater / Speaker-2 Per Chamber

The nomination and election procedures are the same as for the Best Bill. The following factors should be considered: speaker's remarks, the relevance of the speaker's remarks, the speaker's remarks on the debate, and the presence of the speaker. The number of times a person spoke should be considered, only when the quality of what is said, is taken into consideration.

BILL RANKING SYSTEM

The committees of the state conference will rank the bills and thus decide the order of the docket. Due to the volume of Bills being introduced similar to our State Legislature only the top Bills may be heard at the conference. All delegates will have an opportunity to present their Bill in committee where ranking becomes integral with the committee resolving which issues they want to advance as key issues. After each Bill has been presented, committee members will rank that bills with advisors tabulating out the score (to the fourth decimal rounding up the fifth) where committee chairs put their bills into sequential order top to bottom. The top ranked Assembly bills will be presented on Friday evening in two separate chambers that will include a balanced distribution of Senate chamber delegates who will also debate and vote on the passage of these bills. The Assembly Presiding Officers will preside at these two Legislative sessions.

Other Bill Ranking information

1. Bill Sponsors may not rank their own bill.
2. An envelope for each bill will be prepared in advance.
3. Bills will be ranked based on the criteria listed on the ranking sheet. Committee members must give each criterion a score and then add all scores together for the total. The total score number must be placed in the total box.
4. Once all members have completed ranking the bill, the Committee Chairperson or designated clerk will collect all of the sheets and return them to their envelope. The completed ranking sheets on the particular bill will then be given to the adult advisor in the room for tabulation.
5. The adult advisor will add all of the total scores from the ranking sheets in the envelope. An average will be taken to determine the bills average-final score. (tabulated out to 4 places rounding up the fifth place)
6. Once the average-final rank is tabulated, that score will be place on the front of the envelope. The adult advisor will help the committee chair define the committee's bill ranking.
7. Committee ranking sheets and the applied modifier will be used to determine the Chamber docket.
8. The committee chair committee advisor(s) will return all forms, bills and ranking sheet to the designated room.
9. Any bills that are moved to the Senate for Sunday morning presentation will be announced Saturday evening.