How a Bill Becomes a Law in the United States of America

Step-by-step list of how a bill becomes a law in the USA. Each term about 10% of the 25,000 bills introduced become law.

- [ ] 1. Bill is Drafted: Members of Congress, the Executive Branch, and even outside groups can draft (write or draw up) bills.
- [ ] 2. Introduced in House: Representative introduces the bill in the House. Only members can introduce bills.
- [ ] 3. Sent to Committee: The Speaker of the House sends the bill to a committee.
- [ ] 4. Committee Action: Most bills die here. The committee may pigeonhole, table, amend, or vote on the bill. If bill passes, it goes to Rules Committee.
- [ ] 5, Rules Committee: It decides the rules for debate, and when the bill will come up for debate.
- [ ] 6. Floor Action: House debates the bill, and may add amendments. If a majority votes in favor of the bill, it goes to the Senate.
- [ ] 7. Introduced in Senate: A Senator introduces the bill, which is sent to a committee.
- [ ] 8. Committee Action: Same procedure as in the House. If the committee majority votes for the bill, it goes to the whole Senate.
- [ ] 9. Bill Called Up: Majority floor leader decides when the whole Senate will consider the bill.
- [ ] 10. Floor Action: The Bill is debated, and amendments may be added. If a majority votes in favor of the bill, it is returned to the House.
- [ ] 11. Conference Committee: If the House rejects any of the changes, the bill goes to a conference committee of members from both houses. It works out a compromise.
- [ ] 12. Vote on Compromise: Both houses must approve changes made by the conference committee. If approved, the bill goes to the president.
- [ ] 13. Presidential Action: The president may sign (approve) the bill or veto (reject) it. If approved, it becomes law.
- [ ] 14. Vote to Override: If the president vetoes the bill, it can still become law if two thirds of both houses vote to override the veto.

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