

Tennessee Legislative Glossary

Act

A statute (law) enacted by the legislature and signed by the governor or after 10 days allowed to become law without his signature.

Private: Application to a limited area and subdivision of government.

Public: Application to the entire state or of a general nature with local application.

Adjournment

Termination of a session for that day, with the hour and day of the next meeting being set prior to adjournment.

Amendment

Modification of a bill or resolution by adding or deleting the language of proposed legislation.

Appropriations Act

An act which appropriates money from the state treasury during a fiscal year to implement the state operating budget. Money may be provided for other items of expenditure, such as local projects, through this act.

Appropriations Bill

A bill which appropriates money from the state treasury during a fiscal year to implement the state operating budget. Money may be provided for other items of expenditure, such as local projects, through amendments to this bill.

Bill

A bill is proposed legislation introduced to enact a new law or change or repeal an existing law.

Original: The bill introduced into the legislature and used throughout the legislative process until engrossed.

Engrossed: A bill as passed by a house with corrections or adjustments made for amendments.

Enrolled: A bill as finally passed by both houses and prepared for signature of the presiding officers of both houses and transmittal to the governor for signature or veto.

Prefiled: A bill filed between legislative sessions with the chief clerk of either house. Prefiled bills are numbered and printed in preparation for the session.

Budget

The budget is the recommended appropriations of state revenues presented by the Governor to the General Assembly in the form of a document for its consideration during the legislative session. It is filed with the chief clerks in the form of a bill and known during the budget process as the Appropriations Bill.

Calendar

Consent: A bill calendar used to allow rapid floor consideration for final passage of noncontroversial bills.

Regular: Written calendars (lists of bills to be considered for third reading) required to be posted in the Senate Chamber at least 24 hours prior to consideration by the Senate or in the House Chamber at least 48 hours prior to consideration by the House. Senate rules limit the Senate calendar to 14 general bills, plus holdovers, while House rules place the maximum at 25, including any bills held over from previous calendars or any bills set by special order and excluding only those bills "bumped" or objected to on a Consent Calendar.

Caption

Brief description of a bill's contents appearing on a bill and the bill's jacket. A bill's content cannot be any broader than its caption.

Chief Clerk

A non-member selected by the speaker of each house to serve as its administrative officer. Bills are filed with the chief of each house.

Committee

A group of legislators of one or both houses which conducts studies and/or makes recommendations to the Senate and/or House.

Conference: A committee composed of members of both houses created to propose to the two houses a means to resolve differences in a bill when the one house does not concur in amendments made by the opposite house which refuses to recede from its action. Members are appointed by the speakers of each house.

Joint: A committee composed of members of both houses.

Select: A committee established by the speaker of a house composed of members of that house for a designated purpose.

Standing: A permanent committee of the Senate or House with subject matter jurisdiction defined by rules of its house, which functions both during and between legislative sessions to conduct public hearings on proposed legislation, review proposed administrative rules, make its own studies of problems, make reports and recommendations to the house it serves.

Companion Bill

Identical copies of a bill introduced in both the Senate and House.

Executive Order

A written document issued by the governor to effectuate a purpose over which he has authority.

Fiscal Note

A statement prepared by the Fiscal Review Committee submitted in connection with a bill, resolution or amendment to indicate its fiscal effect or estimated dollar implications as to cost or revenue.

Fiscal Year

The twelve-month period for which appropriations, budgets and financial reports are made. The state's fiscal year commences on July and ends the following June 30.

Item Veto

Power exercised by the governor to veto specified items (single amounts of money) of an appropriation bill, while signing the remainder of the bill into law.

Journal

A daily published record of the proceedings of each house. The journal of the entire session is printed after the close of each session.

Legislative Intent

The purpose for which a measure is introduced and/or passed.

Majority

A constitutional majority in the Senate is 17 votes; in the House, 50 votes.

Resolution

Joint: Legislation requesting a study or expressing the views or sentiments of both houses but originating in one house. After passage, the joint resolution (e.g. House Joint Resolution 55 or Senate Joint Resolution 34) is signed by both speakers and the governor.

Simple: Legislation expressing the views of one house. After passage, a House Resolution or Senate Resolution is signed by the respective speaker of the house.

Session

Regular: The 90-legislative-day session held over a two-year general assembly. A general assembly will convene on the second Tuesday of January in an odd-numbered year, meet for an organizational session, and recess for about two weeks. Upon returning, the general assembly will typically meet until mid-to-late May when it adjourns. In an even-numbered year, no organizational session or recess will take place, and regular session will usually end around mid-to-late April depending upon the number of legislative days used.

Extraordinary: A session of the legislature held in the interim between regular sessions, called for a specific number of days by the governor or upon petition of two-thirds of the members elected to each house. It is restricted to matters specifically enumerated in the call. Frequently referred to as a *special* session.

Sine die Adjournment

Final adjournment at the completion of a session.

Suspension of the Rules

Parliamentary procedure whereby actions can be taken which would otherwise be out of order. A two-thirds vote of each body present and voting is required to adopt a motion to suspend the rules

Vote

Formal expression of will or decision by the legislative body.

Yield

The relinquishing of the floor to another member to speak or ask a question.