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## LEGISLATIVE BRANCH: SENATE & ASSEMBLY

Please print this packet and use the resources to prepare Legislative Delegates for the Model Government Conference.

Legislative delegates work to create laws that are important and will benefit the citizens of our state.

### THINGS LEGISLATIVE DELEGATES WILL ACCOMPLISH

- Research and author a bill - Due Jan 19, 2024
- Debate and defend your bill
- Meet all deadlines
  - Bill submission link - <https://bit.ly/wiyiqbill>
- Be aware and informed of legislative rules and procedures
- Attend Pre-Gov
- Present your bill at Model Gov and work to get it passed
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct

The Legislative program gives delegates the ability to make their voices heard on important issues, which affect the people of your state. Delegates will research and write bills on topics that are important to them, to their schools, to their family or to the community – the possibilities of topics are limitless.

Delegates will present their bills in a committee hearing at Pre-Gov. Those bills, which have the strongest topics or the greatest possibilities for debate, will be higher on the docket. Bills will be heard on the floor of the Assembly or Senate during the Model Government Conference. Then a bill may even find its way through to the Executive Branch, where it might be signed into law or vetoed.

### WRITING A BILL

A bill is a proposal to change the laws of a state – or “draft legislation.” Legislators use a special format for writing the draft so that it fits with existing laws. The laws are called statutes, and states have a lot of them! When you put them all together, officially they are called the Wisconsin Revised Statutes. Nevertheless, since our lives are always changing, the laws need to adjust, too. So, legislative delegates are required to write one bill that either:

- Changes a law that already exists;
- Deletes a law that already exists; or
- Makes a new law to address an issue



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The most important part of writing a legislative bill is that delegates choose a topic that is meaningful to

them. The strength of commitment felt toward a bill will undoubtedly influence the overall experience at Model Gov. Whether your interests lie in the environment, business, education, or social programs, your bill should be about something that you believe in.

Writing a bill is simple if you know a few secrets. The next few pages will reveal some of those secrets. A GREAT BILL IS THE RESULT OF SIX SIMPLE STEPS:

- Step 1:** Choose a Topic
- Step 2:** Research It
- Step 3:** Fill Out Topic Analysis Form
- Step 4:** Write First Draft and Get Feedback
- Step 5:** Write Final Draft and Send In
- Step 6:** Debate It

### Step 1 – Choose a topic

There are many topics out there that delegates can choose to address. The first step is to come up with a fantastic idea for changing life, as we know it. What you really want to do is find a problem you see in society that you would like to fix. Talk to the Delegation Director, friends, teachers, YMCA staff, coaches, parents, and your legislator – anybody who might be helpful. Have members of the delegation look around the community and see what needs to be done. Develop a list of suggestions. What areas do you think can be improved with legislation? Which affects the quality of people's lives? Which endanger the growth and enrichment of the human condition?

On the next page is a list of only A FEW topics.

Abortion Issues	Camping	Confidentiality/Privileged information
Abuse	Campaign Finance Reform	Consumer Rights
Adoption	Cancer Research	Corporate Fraud
Advertisements	Capital punishment	Court System
Aged persons	Change of name	Crime
Agriculture	Charities	Criminal Justice
AIDS	Child care services	Deadly weapons
Alcoholic beverages	Child welfare and placement	Discrimination
Animals	Civil Law	Domestic violence
Assault	Compensation and salaries	Drivers licenses
Bias		Drug laws
Building Codes		



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Drugs and medicine	Jails	Racial profiling
Education	Judges	Recycling
Elections	Jurisdiction	Redevelopment areas
Employee rights	Jury duty	Rest homes
Fireworks	Juvenile delinquents	Responsible parties
Fire arms	Kidnapping	Restaurants
Fires	Labor and employment	Retirement funds
Food	Landlords and tenants	Roads
Gambling	Liabilities	Safety
Gay & Lesbian rights	Liberty	School
Genetic tests	Licenses	Senior citizen issues
Government operations	Liens	Self defense
Guardians	Literacy	Shoplifting
Gun control	Lobbying	Social services
Handicapped persons	Marriage	State and local government
Harassment	Medical information rights	State guard affairs
Health care	Natural resources	Taxation
Highways	Pardons and parole	Teenage pregnancy
Historic preservation	Perjury	Telecommunications
Holidays	Personal injury	Tobacco sales and regulation
Homeless	Personal property	Traffic
Homicide	Pesticides	Transportation
Hospitals	Population	Unemployment
House arrest	Pollution	Unicameral legislature
Housing	Prescription drugs	Water supply
Hunger	Protective services	Welfare reform
Imprisonment	Public health	
Income	Public lands	
Insurance	Public safety	
Investments	Public spending	
	Public transit	

### **OTHER SOURCES OF CURRENT ISSUES:**

- One of the simplest and most accessible sources of current information is the newspaper. Whether it's the hometown daily or the *New York Times*, a newspaper can give a good idea of what people want, don't want, like, or don't like.
- Internet, internet, internet! Plug some issues into any search engine and see what comes up. You will find a variety of related issues that can make for a well-rounded bill.



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- Podcasts – lots of topics are discussed in podcasts. If you hear an interesting one, research the topic to see if it could become a bill.
- See what is trending on your favorite social media platform. There are many causes that leverage social media as a platform to boost their voice, so there is a wide variety of topics represented there.
- Ask around! Your friends, family, teachers, and peers all have things that matter to them. See if any of their thoughts line up and would be a good bill idea.
- Consider any condition, which exists in your school, family or community. Then propose a solution to end the problem or resolve the issue. It's that simple!

### **WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT PICKING A TOPIC, KEEP A FEW THINGS IN MIND:**

- It needs to be a STATE issue and not FEDERAL. You also want it to address a statewide problem and not an issue that is specific to one location.
- It should be something that could really work and not just a daydream. Sometimes great ideas do not make great bills because they are not practical.
- It should be something you believe in and can passionately defend.

### **OTHER PLACES YOU MIGHT FIND VALUABLE INFORMATION ARE:**

- Library, Internet, books, magazines
- Associations and organizations that your bill affects
- Professionals, attorneys, educators

Delegates should have some statistics, some facts, and even some informed testimonies by people who are well informed. The more facts delegates can find now, the better the bill will be and the easier it will be to squash any opposition in debate! People who have done their work write the best bills! Once delegates have gotten their basic information, the next step will help make sure that they have hit all the major hot spots.

### **Step 2 – Research it**

Now that you have the beginnings of an idea, you need to do some looking around to be able to develop it fully. If you only have a general topic, you may want help coming up with a more specific application. Some things that might help are:

- Media sources- *Time*, Internet, nightly news, radio, online sources, etc.
- Thinking of things that have personally affected you or someone you know.
- Discussions with local leaders, teachers, family and friends.

### **STATE SEARCHES**

Once you come up with your specific idea, you need to figure out how to make it work. First, you need to check and see if there is already a law that deals with your issue. Best place to start is the website of the state legislature –



Wisconsin: <https://legis.wisconsin.gov/>

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Make sure you do a REALLY GOOD search for your topic. Pick several words or ideas that are related to yours. You don't want to write your whole bill and get up to debate it, only to find out that the same law is already on the books!

If you search well, most of the time you will find a law that deals with your issue, but it needs to be better. OR, you may find a bad law that needs to be removed. You can write a bill to change or delete a current law, and sometimes the best debates come from tweaking a current statute.

### **CONSTITUTIONALITY**

Determine the constitutionality of your proposed law by referring to a copy of the State and Federal Constitutions. When a law is unconstitutional, it means that it goes against the constitution and the Courts will veto it. If you want to write a bill that would invite a court challenge, great – but be prepared to defend that at Model Government.

### **ADDITIONAL RESEARCH**

Once you've checked the statutes, you need to move on to the next step - RESEARCH. Try to collect as many facts as you can about your issue. Go back to the state legislature websites and other web sources to get full background.

### **Step 3 – Analyze the Topic**

Use these analysis points to see if the bill is checking all the boxes.

Create a copy of these questions and type in the answers with this link: <https://bit.ly/wiyig6>

1. Why is this bill necessary? Why is it important?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. How much will this bill cost? Where will the money come from?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Who will enforce this bill?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Is this in conflict with the State Constitution, Federal Constitution, or Federal Law?



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5. Do other states do this?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Has this been tried before in Wisconsin?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. Who will this bill affect?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. When will it take effect?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. Who might be against this and why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
10. Is this a responsibility of the government or could it be taken care of in another way?

#### **Step 4 – Write a first draft & get feedback**

Next, put the bill in the correct format for publication. This means actually wording it the specific way it will appear at Model Gov. Remember to address all the issues on the Analysis Form. Drafting a bill in the proper form is crucial to getting it passed by the legislature. It's also a lot easier than you might think!

Each bill in Youth in Government must contain the following sections:

**TITLE** - This is the part of the bill that will be read in committee and in the legislative bodies when the bill is up for consideration. A good title is concise and states what the bill is about. Make sure to start with the words: An act to...

**PURPOSE** - This section states why this bill is being written. What is the aim or what does this bill hope to accomplish?



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**ANALYSIS** - This section is short (two sentences) and completely objective. The first sentence shall begin

“Under current law...” and list the facts as they are now. The second sentence shall begin “This bill requires...” and list what specific changes this bill will make.

**DEFINITIONS** - In this section, you define any terms which are key to the bill. This is a law and will need to be interpreted by law enforcement so the more clear the language of the bill, the better.

**PROPOSAL FOR ACTION** - This is the real content of your bill – it explains HOW your bill will work to solve the problem at hand. Be sure that your bill’s goal is clearly stated and well-thought-out. Be careful not to list justification in this section; the proposal for action should be actionable text and allowances/ exceptions. It is appropriate to include relevant statistics in the proposal for action, but justification should be relegated to the author’s opening statement. Keep a separate list of all fact sources.

**FINANCING** - If your bill requires the spending of any money, in this section you need to explain exactly where that money will come from such as new taxes, the sale of bonds, fees etc. (Do not include info in this section if your bill does not call for any specific funding).

**PENALTIES/ENFORCEMENT** - In this section, you state what penalty would be applied to someone who is in violation of your new law. Penalties can take many forms and are often related to the intent of the bill.

If you’ve made something illegal or told someone to do something, who will make sure it gets done? If something is illegal because of your bill, the police will probably be the enforcement. If you are making a change with your bill that doesn’t make something illegal, then there is probably a state agency that deals with it. *Do not include this section if your bill does not call for any specific penalties.*

**EFFECTIVE DATE** - Your bill takes effect on this date. Some can go into effect immediately (“upon passage”) others take time to set up so be logical. If you decide that you want to have a specific effective date for your bill, note that that date should be after the Model Government conference.

### **TIPS TO MAKE YOUR BILL SPECTACULAR**

- Language. Use respectful language reflecting YMCA values.
- Singular Terms. Use singular terms, such as he, she, the Governor, applicant, etc. Avoid plurals where possible – they can confuse people.
- Be careful with pronoun usage. Two or more “he’s” in one sentence can get confusing.
- Watch for others your act may apply to. If you use the term “cities,” make sure you don’t also want it to apply to towns, counties or school districts.
- Watch “shall” versus “may.” One little word may force something to happen, instead of giving it the option to happen.



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- Avoid “and/or.” It makes the statute difficult to read and interpret. If you must use both, consider writing two different sections.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD BILLS**

### **CONTENT**

- Written on a topic that is of interest to you and thoroughly researched before Model Government.
- Should relate to a state specific issue - not an issue controlled by the federal government or another state.
- Clearly and succinctly, state the objective of the bill in the title.
- Should contain definitions of specialized terms contained in the bill.
- Should contain provisions for enforcement (who will enforce, how and under what circumstances) only if needed. If a bill does not require enforcement, do not even mention enforcement in the bill.
- Should contain an effective date for when the bill will come into force. The date should be realistic for the provisions of the bill.

### **FORMATTING STYLE POINTS**

- **STATE STATUTE.** If you are amending a statute, you should reference the statute and detail the changes you wish to make to it.
  - If changing a current statute, copy the existing statute in its entirety, strike out any ~~deleted text~~, and put any new text in **BOLD AND CAPITALS**. If numbering or lettering changes mess up the organization of the statute, you can suggest, “renumbering the sections to conform” in the bill. Keep the same statute number.
- **LONG TITLE.** Give your bill a specific “Long Title.” This goes at the very top of the bill. Example “An Act to Provide Stability of Foster Care.”

**HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** - Once the first draft is completed, pass it along to some peers, the Delegation Director, and/or advisors. Ask them to edit it and give feedback. The more people who can read the bill and give suggestions, the clearer it will be for Model Government!

## **Step 5 – Write final draft & submit online**

After delegates passed their bills around for feedback and made any necessary changes, they should write the final draft. Remember:

- Each bill cannot be more than 2 pages in length.
- If the bill is changing or deleting a current state statute, you should include the text of the actual statute being changed in the body of the bill.
- Each bill should include all the info in the template shown above.





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**Due Date: Jan 19, 2024** - Submission link:

<https://bit.ly/wiyiqbill>

It is strongly encouraged to bring a printed and digital version of the bill with you to Model Gov, just in case something goes wrong.

## Step 6 – Final Research & Debate

The next step is for delegates to convince all the other legislators at Model Gov that the bill should pass. Delegates will have to speak in front of a committee and in front of the whole Assembly (if you are a Representative) or the whole Senate (if you are a Senator).

To prepare for bill presentation, here are a few things delegates can do before Model Gov:

- Interview a senator, representative, or lawyer who can help with the final preparation of the bill and in organizing debate concerning it.
- Ask these people to attend a meeting of your delegation to critique and comment on the bills of all the delegates.
- Seek out opposing views on the subject and take notes.

Give time during a delegation meeting to debate. When delegates debate the topic, keep a few things in mind:

- Looking for weak points in each bill, so be open to arguments against it.
- Debating it with peers can help clean up any last messy sections.
- Write down areas that need to be addressed.

When you present your bill (either in committee or on the floor), you will have time for an opening statement, response to questions, and a closing statement.

## OPENING STATEMENT

Let's start with the opening statement first. You'll have about 2 minutes to WOW the crowd with this.

- **PROBLEM** – First off, you want to make them aware of the HUGE PROBLEM you are trying to fix in your bill. For example: pet safety in moving vehicles. Your opening argument should start out with a bang. A great story or good fact will catch their attention and make them realize that the issue you're discussing is VITALLY IMPORTANT!! Then it's your job to make them think clearly but QUICKLY, "I can't believe I never realized pets don't have to be secured when a vehicle is being operated! We need to cancel all the other bills until we solve *this* issue!" Give them a couple of facts or tell them a story to make them aware of the problem.
- **YOUR PLAN** – Next, you want to lay out the basic steps of your plan that will deal with this earth-shattering issue. Make a clear statement: "My bill will solve the problem of animals jumping out or distracting a driver while the vehicle is being



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operated". Then try to pick about 3-5 things that the audience needs to know to understand how your bill will do what it says it will. Where will the money come from? Who will this affect? How will you enforce it? This is where you need some solid facts as to why your bill should become a law.

- **HEAD THEM OFF AT THE PASS** – You know that the other legislators are just waiting to try to bust up your bill, so think of some common arguments that people have had about your bill. [Here is where your practice debates come in handy!] Address them right now before they get a chance to say anything! Example: You may think that it is necessary that pets be secured in a car while it is being operated, but you may find that is not the reason for many car accidents.

### OPENING STATEMENT ACTIVITY

**Think about:**

**What is your bill topic?**

**Why is this overall topic important?**

**Why is your specific bill important?**

**How will the state benefit if your bill should pass?**

**What makes your bill "special" or unique?**

**What are the selling points?**

**Is there anything you'd like to emphasize/was left out of the text of your bill?**

**Why are you "in the right?"**

**Key points**

**Be positive...positivity makes the listeners feel good about your bill even before reading it.**

**A little bit of a "scare" tactic can be effective, but tread carefully.**

**Don't take this time to talk about the opposition to your bill...Save it for your closing statement.**

**It's OK to be dramatic...preferably not in a "we're all going to die!" kind of way, but rather overemphasizing your strengths for "the common good."**

**It's OK to be brief...you don't need a long, exhausting opening statement...if all else fails, just say "I wrote this bill because \_\_\_\_\_ and I think that you should support it**



because \_\_\_\_\_.”

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## RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS – DEBATE

After you’ve given your opening speech, the legislators will be allowed to ask you questions and make pro and con statements.

- **BE READY** – Have a fact sheet with lots of information in an easy-to-read format so that you can be prepared to answer any questions they shoot at you, like: How many car accidents are caused by an animal who was not secure in a vehicle?
- **THINK ABOUT IT** – Before you are put on the spot, do your homework and find the answers to any questions that you were asked in practice debate. Then strain your brain to try to think of any other questions you might be asked.
- **WRITE IT DOWN** – You also want some paper and a pencil to jot down any con statements that other legislators make – that way you can address those statements in your closing speech. It does not need to be long but just enough to summarize the idea. For example, they may say: Requiring animals to be secured while a vehicle is being operated will reduce animal injuries!

## CLOSING STATEMENT

When everyone has asked their questions and made their statements, you will get a chance to finish the discussion. You’ll have 2 minutes to leave the audience with no doubt about passing your bill.

- **ADDRESS CON STATEMENTS** – Since you do not get to speak during debate except to answer questions, you will want to take a minute and address the con statements brought up by other legislators. *Hopefully* you jotted them down during debate. Pick a couple of the biggest arguments you heard and take a minute and give rebuttal statements that are short but to the point. If there were no real objections to your bill, try to respond to the debate somehow. Say something like, “I would like to thank the House for its tremendous support of this bill.” It lets everyone know you were at least awake for the last ten minutes.
- **CLOSING THOUGHT** – The last thing you say to the audience is what they will remember the most, so you need to decide what is *most important* for them to think about. It’s best to restate the problem and then your solution, just to recap. Don’t introduce any new ideas – it just confuses people. Then you can add a dramatic closing thought. Have a conclusion you wrote beforehand that you can go right into if you run out of time.

## HELPFUL HINTS

**Try to use many types of information in your speech:**

- **Factual Knowledge** – Information that is verifiable and agreed upon by almost everyone.



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- Statistical Inferences – Interpretation and examples of an accumulation of facts.
- Informed Opinion – Opinion developed through research and/or expertise of the claim. Citing an impressive source can be helpful.
- Personal Testimony – Personal experience related by a knowledgeable party.

**Think about:**

- Who is your audience?
- What do they believe?
- Where do they stand on the issue?
- How are their interests involved?
- What evidence is likely to be effective with them?

**Practice Your Arguments**

- Give your opening and closing statements to your delegation, your parents, or just to a mirror.
- Consider creating visual aids (handouts or note cards) to help present any points that may be complex or confusing rather than trying to explain verbally.
- The more calm, prepared, and concise you are, the better chance you have of convincing others to support your bill.

**Quality, not quantity**

- You have two minutes for opening and closing, but you don't have to use them all.
- Be wise about how much you say and don't confuse the issue with too much information.
- Select the best stuff for your speeches and hold the rest in case you need it during debate time.

**PRE GOVERNMENT**

**COMMITTEE PROCEDURES**

The normal committee proceedings of the State Legislature cover many more days than our program has. In committee, bills are discussed at length, changed and discussed, made public through news reports and hearings, reviewed and revised thoroughly and finally, if they survive this long, are sent to the floor to be placed on the calendar for debate.

The committee hearings at Pre-Gov are one of the most important events of the program. Committees have the power to decide which bills will be higher on the docket of the legislature for debate. The position of Committee Chair is an important one because of their responsibility to lead this process and make sure it is carried out effectively.

Committee assignments are made by the State Office. Typically, committees will be formed with like-topics together. Factors also considered in committee assignments include relative size of each committee and diversity in terms of local delegations.



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### **General Rules of Legislative Committees**

- Committees will meet and function at times listed on the printed schedule.
- All delegates will report to their assigned committee and be present at all sessions.
- One of the two chairpersons will serve as secretary to keep a written record of all actions that the committee takes.
- An advisor or program volunteer will be assigned to oversee each committee cluster.
- Each delegation is asked to submit names of students for committee chairs.
- All elected officers of the legislature may serve as voting members of a committee except the Governor, Lt. Governor, the Senate President, and Speaker of the Assembly.
- The Chair may be a voting member of the committee.
- The Governor, Lt. Governor, Senate President and Speaker of the Assembly may attend any committee as spectators, but cannot participate in discussion or be called upon by a Chair.
- A roll call will be taken when the committee is called to order. This list will become the official list of voting members in the committee.
- Bills will be discussed in numerical order. The only exception to this will be the chair's bill - the chair may elect to present his or her own bill first (as an example for the other delegates) or last (so as to not disrupt proceedings).
- The chair must pass the gavel for discussion of his/her own bill.
- Discussion on each bill should total no more than 15 minutes and follow the outline.

### **Introductory Procedures**

- Roll call & attendance.
- Introductions - each delegate gives their name, delegation, years in the program.
- Call to order - chair accepts a motion to call the session to order.
- Distribute ranking sheets.
- Review bill ranking criteria (found below).
- Review scoring (1 to 5 for each criteria, 1 being the best possible ranking).
- Instruct the committee to wait until debate has closed on a bill before ranking it.
- Reiterate for the committee that rankings here are not relative to the passing/failing of the bill - bills are simply being ranked on the five criteria (originality, structure, debatability, feasibility, importance) and not on whether or not the delegate would like to see the bill enacted.
- Review parliamentary procedure as it relates to Pre-Gov:
  - How to be recognized to speak
  - How to introduce yourself as a speaker



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- Yielding time
- All remarks must be addressed to the chair
- Point of personal privilege

### **Bill Readings**

- Bills will be ranked in numerical order.
- The chair will ask each author to read the bill's title and purpose aloud.
- Committee members should be allowed two minutes to read the bill silently.
- The author is given one minute for an opening speech on the bill's merits in relation to the ranking criteria.
- Debate is then opened on the bills. Each of the following sections will follow the pattern of one pro speech, one con speech, and open debate totalling no more than three minutes.
  - Originality
  - Debatability
  - Feasibility
- After time for debate has elapsed, the author is invited to make a closing speech on behalf of their bill to emphasize its importance (1 minute).

### **Bill Ranking Criteria**

Before each bill is ranked, the committee chair should review both the bill number in question and the ranking system with the committee, to ensure that no mistakes are made. Each ballot will have spaces for bill numbers and the following categories:

- Originality - Is the idea behind the bill unique or innovative?
- Structure - Is the bill clearly written, easy to understand, and does it contain everything necessary to make it complete? Is it objective and free of justification?
- Debatability - Is there controversy or good arguments for both sides of the issue? Would there be a good debate on the floor?
- Feasibility - Will the bill be enforceable and effective?
- Importance - Is this bill vital to the state? Does it concern a pressing issue?

### **Bill Ranking Scoring System**

Ranking is done in secret according to the following point values:

- 1=excellent
- 2=good
- 3=average
- 4=insufficient
- 5=poor

Delegates will repeat this process until all bills have been ranked. After the committee finishes ranking, delegates will total up their scores for each bill, recording the total in the given box. Additionally, delegates should rank each bill numerically to break any ties - for



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example, the bill with the best score (lowest number of points) shall be ranked 1, followed by the bill with the second best score. In the event that two bills have identical ranking totals, the delegate must prioritize them.

After committee hearings adjourn, the chair will submit the rank order sheets and other paperwork to the State Director or his/her designee. Bills from each committee will be merged together, in order, on the docket, first by committee positioning and then by point total. Bills will also be separated by legislative house. After the dockets have been prepared, no bill can be removed from its order without approval of the State Office.

### **Time Recommendations**

Opening - 10 Minutes

- Roll Call
- Icebreaker - Each person introduces themselves
- Parliamentary Procedure Review
- Review Committee Procedures

Merit – 15 Minutes for each bill

- Title & Purpose of Bill
- Reading Time - 2 Minutes
- Author Presentation - 1 Minute Maximum
- Discussion of Merit - 10 Minute Maximum
- Author Summation - 1 Minute Maximum
- Complete Bill Ranking Sheet

### **Breaks**

Committees are encouraged to not take breaks during debate times, as the schedule at Pre-Gov does not allow for much flexibility. When it is time to break for lunch, the chair will select an appropriate time between bills to ask for a motion to take a recess.

If the committee is done early, students stay in committee hearing rooms until excused by an advisor. Chairs should return all committee info packets to the State Director

immediately after the **PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE (PARLI PRO)**  
Parli pro is the body of rules, ethics, and customs which govern legislative bodies.

### **INTRODUCING YOURSELF TO SPEAK**

- "Delegate [last name], [delegation] delegation. Thank you, Chair."
- Example: Delegate Jones, Wausau delegation. Thank you, Chair.

### **GETTING RECOGNIZED TO SPEAK**

- The Chair will call for a pro or con speaker
- Raise your placard and wait for the chair to recognize you by name
- Go up to the front and introduce yourself (guide above)
- Speak your piece, pro or con



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- If you are speaking PRO, or FOR, the author's bill:  
When you are done, say "I yield my time to the author's closing summation."
- If you are speaking CON, or AGAINST, the author's bill: When you are done speaking and if time remains, say "I yield my time to the Chair."

#### ASKING THE BILL AUTHOR A QUESTION

- After being recognized by the Chair, go to the front and introduce yourself (guide above)
- Address the author, saying "Would the author yield to a series of questions?"
  - They should respond "Yes."
- If you would like to speak after you are done with your questions, say "I reserve my right to speak after."
- Ask your question or questions. Comment afterwards if you reserved the right to do so.
- If time remains, say "I yield my time to the Chair."

#### GIVING AN AUTHOR'S SPEECH

- After being recognized by the Chair, introduce yourself (guide above)
- Give your speech.
- Opening summation - when done, say "I reserve the rest of my time for my closing summation."

#### IMMEDIATELY MOVE INTO A VOTE ON THE ISSUE AT HAND

- If debate is one-sided or comes to a stand-still, you can request a vote by raising your placard.
- Once recognized by the Chair, say "I call the question." (Chair may accept or decline your request)

#### CALLING FOR A STANDING VOTE

- If you feel that a voice vote is too close, you may call a standing vote.
- Loudly call out the word "Division!" before the Chair pounds the gavel, ending bill consideration.
- Stand up for aye/nay vote and sit down after you are counted.

#### GETTING PERMISSION TO LEAVE THE CHAMBERS

- Raise your placard and get recognized by the Chair.
- Say "Point of Personal Privilege."
- Speaker will ask you to state your point - you say, "Permission to leave the chamber?"
- Speaker will grant you permission to leave the chambers

#### OTHER NOTES

- Always refer to the bill's author as "the author"
- Always refer to other speakers as "previous delegates" (not by name!)

### ADDRESSING THE CHAIR

When you speak on the floor or in committee, you must talk to the chairperson. This means that all statements and requests must begin by saying "Chair," then stating what you intend to do. You can be ruled out of order by the chair if you fail to do so.





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- When you are called on the general script to follow is:
  - “Delegate [lastname], [name of delegation] Delegation,  
Thank you Chair”
    - Example: “Delegate Jones, Wausau Delegation, Thank you, Chair”

## **ADJOURNING**

Adjournment is usually done at the end of the day or the end of the session and is done through making a motion to adjourn. You may ask the Chair to consider adjourning or the Chair may ask for a member to make the motion. You need to be recognized by the Chair to make the motion. A majority of the members in the chamber (50% + 1) is required for the motion to prevail. If an adjourning motion is approved, the Chair will announce the time to reconvene.

- To make a motion to adjourn:
  - “Thank you Chair. I move that we adjourn until tomorrow at 9am.”

## **PREVIOUS QUESTION/ENDING DEBATE**

If you feel that debate is one-sided or just particularly boring, you can help bring it to an end. Any member may call for the question by saying “I move the Previous Question” in between speakers during debate. After the Previous Question has been called, the Chair will ask for a vote on the Motion of Previous Question. 2/3 of the people in the chamber need to agree with you for the motion to pass. If the motion prevails, the Chair will move directly to closing statements and voting. Moving Previous Question isn’t considered to be nice because it cuts off verbal debate. Consider this when thinking about making this motion.

## **CLOSING STATEMENT**

This is your LAST opportunity to convince the other members to vote for your bill. You also give this speech from your desk. The Chair determines the time you have for this and they should tell you before you begin. You will want to cover the following in your statement: restate their position, rebut points made during debate, and introduce new points in favor of their bill. Many sponsors will end their closing statement by moving the bill again, but it is not required.

## **MOTION**

Motions are what moves the process forward during debate sessions. A motion can be made in committee or on the floor of the House, Assembly or Senate. Every bill must be moved both in Committee and in floor sessions (please see Opening Statement for the official motion). You need to be recognized to make any motion.

- To make a motion: “Chair, I would like to move...” or “Chair, I move that...”
- To make an amendment: In committee, “Chair, I move to amend Senate File XXX as follows...” or, on the floor, “Chair, I move my amendment.”

## **OPENING STATEMENT**

This is your chance to tell everyone what your bill is about and why he or she should pass it. As the bill sponsor, you would give the statement from your desk. During Committee is



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the FIRST time everyone will be hearing your speech, so make it count! When you finish making your opening statement, you must move the bill.

- To move a bill: "I move my bill."

## **POINT OF INFORMATION**

If you have information that is important to the current debate, you can say "Point of Information" in between speakers during debate. When you've been recognized, you'll give the information to the Chair. This is especially useful if you have a statistic that the author was not able to give during questions. The Chair has the right to refuse to recognize any point of information if he/she believes that debate is being impeded by the abuse of this procedure.

## **POINT OF ORDER**

During the debate, if a colleague has not stated their name/delegation/intent or otherwise violates parliamentary procedure, you could shout out "Point of Order." The Chair must recognize the motion. Once recognized, you would state your point. If the Chair determines the point to be valid, they will tell the delegate sit down, apologize, or whatever disciplinary action must take place.

- "Point of Order!" Then wait to be recognized by the Chair: "Isn't the speaker supposed to be speaking for the bill instead of against?"
- "Point of Order!" Then wait to be recognized by the Chair: "My colleague did not state his/her name."

## **POINT OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE**

Let's say your parents came to visit you during Model Government and you'd like to introduce them to the chamber. You can do this during debate without interrupting the debate in progress. You would call out "Point of Personal Privilege" between speakers. Once recognized by the Chair, you would make your statement of introduction. You can also make these for other general announcements:

- "Point of Personal Privilege! (After recognition by the Chair) I would like to introduce my parents in the gallery, Mr. & Mrs. Hebert."
- "Point of Personal Privilege! (After recognition by the Chair) There is too much talking in the back of the room."

## **RECESS**

This is like the break you take during grade school! You may ask the Chair to consider taking a recess, but typically, the Chair asks the floor for a volunteer to make the motion. The Chair will usually state what the recess is for (a water break, bathroom break, stretch break, until the next morning, etc.).

- To move for recess: "Thank you Chair. I move that we take a recess until after lunch (or whatever the Chair is entertaining a motion for)."

## **RECOGNITION TO SPEAK**

- If you would like to speak, raise your hand (or name card) and wait for the Chair to recognize you.



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- After being recognized, you will stand and thank the chair, simply by saying, “Thank you, Chair.” If you simply wish to speak, you may begin your statement immediately. (You do not have to reserve your right to make a statement). If you wish to do something else, you must state your intent.
- To ask a question of the sponsor: “Will the author yield to a question?”
- To ask more than one question: “Will the author yield to a series of questions?”
- To make a motion: “Chair, I move that...”
- If, after asking questions of another member, you wish to make a statement, you may simply do so; again, you do not have to reserve your right to make a statement.
- When done, you may either formally yield the floor by stating, “I yield my time to the Chair,” or you may simply sit down. Either is acceptable.

## SPEAKING ON THE FLOOR

You may speak only to the issues, avoiding personalities and not referring to the proceedings in the other chamber. In debate, unless you are the author of the bill, if you have spoken, you will generally not be recognized to speak again if other members wish to speak. This gives more people a chance to participate in debate. If you wish to speak again, and a colleague does not, you can ask the colleague to yield his/her speaking time to you. This is usually allowed, but it is within the presiding officer’s discretion not to recognize a yield of time (especially if a legislator has spoken a lot and there are others who wish to be heard).

- To refer to a comment made by another member: “In reference to the statement made by “a/the previous speaker,” “my friend”, “my colleague” . . . (follow with your point).”

**\*A Note about Personal References:** At no time should you or anyone else addressing a committee or the Assembly/Senate refer to another delegate by name. It’s considered to be rude. Reference to comments of another member may only be made if relevant to the issue at hand and not in reference to discussion in the other chamber. Remember you are debating the TOPIC, not the PERSON.

## SUSPEND THE RULES

When the chamber wants to do something that it cannot do without violating one of its regular rules, it can adopt a motion to suspend the rules. Typically this motion is used to hear a bill that was previously defeated or vetoed by the Governor. Rules may NOT be suspended to allow members of the opposite chamber or the Governor/Lt. Government to speak on the floor!

- “Chair, I move that the rules be suspended and that the chamber (state reason for suspension)...”

## VOTING

Get used to voting – it happens a lot on the chamber floor! The primary voting procedure is a voice vote. On the floor, at the time a vote is called, the Chair will ask the Sergeant-at-Arms to seal the doors of the chamber – no notes shall be passed, and no one may enter or leave the chamber during a vote. Sometimes the vote is so close that the Chair may ask people to stand and be counted or to press the buttons on their desk if they vote “Aye” or “Nay.” When calling for a vote, the presiding officer will use the following forms



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(please refer to the Debate Procedure section for when abstentions may apply). For more information regarding voting, please see the Standing Joint Rules for the Assembly and Senate.

- For the affirmative vote: "Those in favor, say 'Aye'."
- For the opposing vote: "Those opposed, 'Nay'."

## **MODEL GOVERNMENT – LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES**

### **General Rules:**

The Senate shall be called to order by the Senate President.. The Assembly shall be called to order by the Speaker. These officials shall preside over their respective chambers unless prevented from doing so by illness or other serious reason. Floor leaders will serve when the presiding officers are not present.

It shall be the basic duties of all presiding officers to:

- Open the session at the time scheduled
- Announce all business before that house
- Receive all motions presented by members
- Put to a vote all questions requiring a vote as they arise
- Restrain members within the limits of the rules of order
- Enforce the observance message from other branches of government
- Receive and announce message from other branches of government
- Represent and stand for the body over which they preside, declaring its will, and in all things obeying its commands.

It shall be the basic duties of the Clerk to:

- Give public readings of bills and amendments as directed by the presiding officer
- Manage movement of bills
- Make all announcements to the body
- Supervise the recording of all votes taken on all bills and amendments

It shall be the duty of the Sergeant-at-Arms to:

- Facilitate decorum in chamber
- Regulate movements in and out
- Assist with managing materials
- Announces guests

All members of the Legislature shall be present during all sessions unless prevented from doing so by illness or other serious reason. A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of all members of a house.

### **Order of Business:**

#### **1. Call to Order**

\*all houses shall be called to order and adjourned according to the printed schedule.



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## 2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call by Delegations  
this can and should be dispensed with unless a large number of students is missing.
4. Introduction of Bills on the Calendar
5. Debate of Bills
6. Recess (or adjournment) \*at time listed on the schedule only

### **Reading of Bills:**

The Clerk will read the bill number and title (An Act to ...). Word for word reading is not necessary unless amended. This will be left to the discretion of the presiding officer. Authors of bills that are amended greatly or combined are urged to make arrangements to retype their bills for clarity. Announcements will be made regarding this before debate begins. At the conclusion of the reading, the presiding officer will say, "We will now move to the author's opening, followed by pro-con debate to determine if this bill shall pass."

### **Debate:**

The presiding officer shall recognize speakers in the following manner:

1. Authorship speech - 3 minutes  
\*time left unused may be yielded to the author's closing speech
2. Technical Questions - 2 Minutes
3. Con/Pro/Con - 2 minutes per speech (total of 3 speeches)  
\*speakers will be called for this in order with regard to stance on the issue for these 3 speeches only
4. Open debate - 2 minutes per speech  
\*speakers are called without regard to pro or con. This continues until time elapses or the house votes to end debate
5. Closing - 2 minute (plus time yielded from authorship speech, if any)  
\*the author's opportunity to summarize before the vote

Time limit on a bill is 26 minutes, however this can be extended up to a maximum of 45 minutes with a 2/3 majority vote of the house. When time elapses, a motion to extend debate (only before 45 minutes) must be passed or the bill is forced to the author's closing and a final vote.

### **Recognition:**

When the presiding officer calls for speakers and a member wishes to be recognized, they shall raise their placard and wait to be recognized. Preference should be given toward members who have spoken less. Upon being recognized, they will address the presiding officer and say "Delegate [last name], [delegation] delegation, Thank you, Chair." The speaker will proceed and speak only on the issue at hand and will avoid references to other members. All conversation will be between a member and the presiding officer rather than between members.



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A member may yield their time to another delegate. The first delegate must state their name and delegation and the person they yield to, name and delegation. The first member must speak for 45 seconds before yielding is in order. Members may be called out of order for failing to address the presiding officer and references to other members, either direct or indirect, at the discretion of the presiding officer.

### **Amendments:**

Amendments may be offered from the floor to any bill during open debate unless the amendment significantly alters the nature of the original bill.

### **Procedure for Amendments:**

Amendments must be presented to the Clerk with an official amendment form. The author must be recognized by the presiding officer while amendments are in order. Amendments may not be proposed during the first two rounds of debate nor in the last five minutes of debate on a bill. The presiding officer will rule on the admissibility of an amendment if its germaneness is in question.

- The presiding officer will announce when amendments are in or out of order.
- The Clerk shall read the proposed amendment.
- The author will receive a 1 minute authorship speech.
- There is a 5 minute time limit on amendment debate.
- After the first con speech, all debate will be pro/con and will continue until a vote is called or the 5 minute time limit elapses.
- Debate on the original bill shall resume.

### **Motions in order during Debate:**

When a bill is being debated, no motions are in order except:

- To recess/adjourn only at the printed times in the schedule
- To amend at times specified in the sections pertaining to amendments.
- To defer a bill being debated but have it retain its place on the calendar.
  - This calls for an immediate vote. If a house passes the motion, the house moves on to the next order of business while the author makes changes or further researches the bill. When the author is ready, they say so and the matter is taken up immediately.
- To "call the previous question": A 2/3 majority vote is required to end debate.
- To extend the time limit
- Announcements may be made at any time by the presiding officer.

### **Voting on Bills:**

A majority of those present shall be required for passage of a bill. The presiding officer may request that the chamber be sealed by the Sergeant-at-Arms and cleared of all non-voting members. Once begun, voting shall not be interrupted. Bills shall be voted upon by voice vote. If the vote is not decisive, the presiding officer may call for a standing vote.



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Also, any member of the body may request a standing vote between raps of the gavel. Per Robert's Rules of Order, the presiding officer has the power to deny the request.

All clerks as well as the speakers may vote. The Senate President may only vote to break a tie. In the event of a tie in the assembly, the bill shall be considered defeated.

**Recess/Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn will only be in order at the close of all business. At all other times, a motion to recess shall be used. A motion to recess or adjourn is in order only at the times listed on the printed schedule, and cannot be made when another member has the floor. No house shall postpone a scheduled recess or adjournment of Model Government. The clock may not be "covered" in order to extend the session.

**Defeated Bills / Motion to Reconsider:**

A bill defeated by any house shall not be sent to any other for debate. It is considered permanently killed unless there is a successful motion to reconsider it in the house that defeated it. A motion to reconsider must be brought up by a member who voted to defeat it initially and requires a simple majority.

**Suspension of Rules:**

These rules may not be suspended at any time without approval of the State Director or their agent as well as a 2/3 majority of that house. Rule changes may be brought to the Governor's Cabinet at any time.

**Parliamentary Procedure:**

Rules of parliamentary procedure will be followed at all times and will be the same as those followed by the Wisconsin Legislature and Robert's Rules of Order as long as they are not inconsistent with these specific printed rules which have been written to cover needs of the Model Government. Final authority for all rules decisions shall rest with the advisor of the house and the State Director during Model Government.

**Docket:**

The docket will be established according to the system in the Committee Chair Procedures. No bill may be taken out of its order on the docket except on a motion to defer or with permission of the State Director.

**Bill Transmission:**

A bill passed by any house will be sent immediately to the Secretary of State at the Bill Routing Center. From there it will be directed to an additional house where it will be inserted into the docket in a slot determined by the Secretary of State and the State Office. No house shall consider two or more consecutive bills from another house. Upon passage of all houses, the bill will be sent to the governor for consideration.



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### **Complaining against procedure:**

A delegate shall rise and say, "I rise to a point of order." The presiding officer will say, "State your point." The presiding officer decides if it is a valid point, and so states. A decision of the presiding officer may be questioned, and may be overruled by a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority vote of the members present.

### **Joint Conventions:**

The Senate President shall preside over joint conventions of the Legislature as indicated on the schedule. Joint conventions shall be held only for the purpose of hearing officials of the state or Youth in Government and hearing of joint resolutions from members of any house.

The Youth Governor will report their approval, veto, or line-item vetoes at the final joint session of Model Government. The legislature may override any veto with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  majority of all members present. Two rounds of debate must occur on any override attempt. No motions are permitted besides the motion to override.

### **Decisions on Rules:**

The Wisconsin Youth in Government State Director may approve spot rules changes if s/he feels it is in the best interest of the program. The State Director shall be the final authority in cases of disagreement or rules interpretation.

### **Start of each bill:**

"Will the reading clerk please read the number and title of the next bill?"

"Will the author of bill number \_\_ please come forward?"

"There will now be a two minute reading period on this bill."

[tap gavel once when there are 30 seconds remaining]

[tap gavel twice when there are 10 seconds remaining]

"The time for reading has now elapsed. The author is now recognized for a three-minute opening statement. Author, you may begin when ready."

"We will now move into a two-minute round of non-debatable technical questions. Are there any such questions on the floor?"

"Seeing none/no remaining questions..."

OR

"The time for non-debatable technical questions has elapsed..."

"We will now move into two rounds of pro-con debate. Seeing as the author's opening was a pro speech, we will now entertain a two-minute con speech."





"Thank you, delegate. We are now in order for a pro speaker. Are there any such speakers on the floor?"

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"Thank you, delegate. We are now in order for a final con speaker. Are there any such speakers on the floor?"

"Thank you, delegate. We will now move into a period of open debate. Are there any such speakers on the floor?"

**When each delegate speaks:**

- Delegate must state name and delegation
- Can have two rights:
  - Can ask author questions & speak
  - Can ask author question & make a motion
  - Can speak & make a motion
  - Can speak & yield remainder of their time to another delegate
  - Can speak & yield remainder of their time to the author (after speaking for a minimum of 45 seconds)
  - Can speak & yield remainder of time to the chair

**When debate is done:**

"The time for open debate has now elapsed. (OR "Seeing no other speakers...") We will now hear the author's (2 + yielded time) minute closing summation. Author, you may begin when ready."

"Thank you author. We will now move to a vote on this bill. All those in favor, please signify by saying aye. All opposed, please signify by saying nay. In the ears of the chair, the ayes (nays) do have it. This bill does (not) pass." (bang gavel twice)

**If in doubt:**

"The chair is in doubt. We will have a standing vote. All those in favor please stand. (count; author also counts as in favor). All those opposed, please stand. This bill does (does not) pass." (bang gavel twice)