The Legislative Process

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The General Court By the Numbers

- 3rd Largest Legislative Body in the English-Speaking World
- 400 Volunteer Member House
- 24 Volunteer Member Senate
- 30% Turnover Every 2 Years
- Members of the County Delegation

- 1,000+ bills filed every year
- NHAC Tracks 15% of Filed Bills
- $13 Billion Budget
- Every Bill has a Public Hearing
- Every Bill has a Vote on the Floor
- 23 House Policy Committees
- 14 Senate Policy Committee
How Do They Get Anything Done

- Rely on "Advice"
- Committee Recommendations
- Party Leadership Guidance
- Lobbyists’ advocacy
- Constituents’ Calls
- Governor’s Advice
- State Agencies’ Advice
- Most Work is Done in Committees
- Calendars and Schedules
- Very Tight Deadlines
- But, They have More Flexibility than They Let On
Some Differences

THE HOUSE
• In general, the House can operate more like a herd
• Going with the Pack
• Count Votes in Blocks
• Caucuses & Leadership Pressure
• Geography
• Philosophy (Different from Party Affiliation)
• Large Numbers in the House Allow for More Mavericks
• 1 of 400 is more forgiving than 1 of 24

THE SENATE
• Small Group Politics vs Mass Marketing
• Senators need to be able to work with each other
• Can be difficult to go against established blocks
• But they do give each other a pass on occasion, because they will each need a pass at some point
• Gaming is a good example
• Counting to 13 can be harder than counting to 201
How a Bill Becomes a Law

**Senate**

- A bill is introduced by a member of the Senate and assigned to a committee for review.
- During Committee, legislators and members of the public have the opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of the bill. Members of the committee can offer amendments. The full committee votes on the final version of the bill and it is sent to the Senate Floor.
- The full Senate discusses and votes on the bill.

- Bill is Defeated
- Governor allows the bill to become law without his signature after 7 days.
- Governor signs the bill and it is

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- Bill is Defeated
- Legislature can override with a 2/3 majority vote in each body
- Governor Vetoes the Bill and sends it back to Legislature

**Key Process**

- Bills must pass through both chambers before being sent to the governor.
- If a bill is returned to the original chamber with amendments, a committee of conference may be formed to discuss changes. The Committee is made up of Senator and Reps. If no agreement the bill is defeated.

- The Governor
The Lobbying Process

- In-House
  - Full Time
  - Part Time
- Contract lobbyists
- Knowing the Rhythm, Rules and the Policy
FAQ

• Who can be a lobbyist?
• How to spot a lobbyist?
• How many lobbyists are there in NH?
• How are lobbyists regulated?
• How do I find out when a hearing/vote is scheduled for?
• What’s the difference between a commission and committee?
• How do I sign up to speak at committee?
• Can I watch the floor speeches on TV?
Still Have Questions... Call us

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