



# 10-Minute Supervisor Trainings

Kentucky Soil and Water Conservation Commission

AUGUST 2019

## **HOW BILLS BECOME LAWS IN KENTUCKY**

It takes time to create new laws in the Commonwealth. The old saying that the wheels of government turn at a slow pace is sometimes correct. A formal process must be adhered to in order to create new bills and potentially new laws. The process is as follows:

Bills in one chamber of the General Assembly can be either new bills filed by a member of that chamber or bills that have been introduced and passed in the other chamber and which must be approved by both the House and Senate to become law.

The ***Committee on Committees*** in both the House and Senate are powerful committees chaired by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate. They decide to what committee particular bills are sent. The fate of a bill can sometimes be determined by which committee gets the bill. This is why bills introduced by the opposition party sometimes never get brought up. In addition, bills with bipartisan support often get moved on along.

When a bill is sent to a committee, it can be reported out of a committee with a favorable or unfavorable report. It can also be amended or, in the Senate, reported out of the committee with no opinion. A bill can also be voted down. If a bill is not called up at all, it simply dies in committee.

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The **Rules Committee** in both the House and Senate is another powerful committee chaired by the House Speaker and the Senate President. When a bill gets its second reading, the Rules Committee can delay the bill coming to the floor for a vote of all the members, which recommits it to the committee it came from or another committee.

When a bill gets its third reading, it can be called up for a vote. If it is passed and has already been passed by the other chamber, it goes to the Governor for his signature. If it has not yet been passed by the other chamber, it goes there for approval, and if approved, to the Governor.

If one chamber changes a bill that was already approved by the other, it must go back to the chamber in which it originated for approval. This is called **concurrence**.

When the Governor gets the bill, the Governor can sign it, veto it or refuse to act upon it. If the Governor signs the bill or does not act upon it, it becomes law.

If the Governor vetoes the bill, the bill goes back to the Legislature. The veto can be overridden by a constitutional majority of both the House and the Senate (at least 51 House votes and 20 Senate votes.)

If the Governor's veto is not overridden, the bill does not become law.

# How a Bill becomes a Law in Kentucky

