



Florida Model Legislature

How to Write a Bill

What is a Florida Model Legislature bill?

Bill writing is a major component of our legislative process. It serves to create, amend, or abolish laws. Bills at model legislature are written by students (delegates). All bills are compiled and printed in a bill book. Every delegate will receive a bill book. Bills will be debated in house and senate committees. Favorable bills will be sent to the chamber leadership for debate on the floor during full sessions. All bills must be state issues only.

Step 1: Bill Idea

Ideas for a change to state laws can come from concerned citizens, legislators, residents, etc., who have ideas on how to improve their lives and the state. Many laws are already in existence in Florida, but these laws can be amended for further improvement. Your idea for a bill must be for either a law that does not yet exist, or an amendment to an existing law. You will need to do some RESEARCH. In the box below, write down your ideas for a law, that would improve the lives of the citizens of Florida. Some topics for ideas are:

1. Education
2. Florida Springs
3. Crime
4. Traffic
5. Income Taxes
6. Equality
7. Employment
8. Civil Rights

What are some topics that are important to you?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Use these questions to help you generate more ideas.

1. What conditions exist in your school that make it difficult for you to get the best education?
2. What conditions exist in your city that makes it difficult for you to feel safe?
3. Are there enough employment opportunities for your family?
4. Does your family have health care?

Now, formulate your idea for a bill: _____

Research tools:

1. Go to <http://laws.flrules.org/> and type in keywords for your bills; a law may already exist and may just need to be amended.
2. Research your district demographics and talk to your constituents.
3. Review existing legislation under consideration by the actual Florida legislature:
<http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/Sections/Bills/bills.aspx>

Step 2: Draft Your Bill

Writing Your Bill

Now you draft your bill. You can work as a team with your campus delegation or you can work alone. Collaborate, research, and have fun. Remember, your bill **MUST** be a Florida state issue. Only resolutions, which are usually a joint effort, can be used for federal issues.

The bill should include:

1. Title and Sponsor
2. Bill # and Committee will be assigned by staff
3. Begin with “*An act related to*”
4. Followed by: “Be it Enacted by the Florida Model Legislature: (Enacting Clause)”
5. Body of the Bill
6. Summary

Title & Author/Sponsor: The first part of your bill is the title. The Florida Constitution states that: “every law shall embrace but one subject and matter properly connected therewith, and the subject shall be briefly expressed in the title.” (Article III, Section 6). Author/Sponsor can be the bill author or the person sponsoring the bill. They don’t have to be one in the same. Write your bill title and sponsor below. The title does not need to be detailed, but it needs to clearly present the idea you’re trying to convey.

Title: _____

Sponsor: _____

Bill # and Committee will be assigned by conference staff based on conference needs and bill contents.

An act related to: a brief summary of “what” your bill will do. I.E. “*An act related to in-state tuition for veterans; amending s. 1009.26 relating to postsecondary tuition; providing an effective date*”.

An act related to: _____

Enacting Clause: The Florida Constitution states that the enacting clause of every law shall read: “Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida”. Nothing else is needed on this line.

Body of the Bill: The body of the bill specifies how the bill will fulfill the requirements you wrote in your “act related to and title”. These specifications are separated into **sections**. Your sections should include at least:

- Existing statutes/Change/addition(underlined)/deletion(~~striketrough~~)/repealing of existing laws
- Definitions of terms used in the bill if necessary
- Actions such as funding, enforcement, penalty
- An effective date

Summary: Provide a brief summary of your bill and its intended actions if passed.

Now it’s time to draft your bill. Attached is a Florida Model Legislature bill template. Write your draft in the spaces provided. Use only the number of sections you need.

Florida Model Legislature

Bill #: Assigned by staff

Sponsors:

Title:

Committee: Assigned by Staff

1 An act related to

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3 Be it enacted by the Florida Model Legislature:

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5 Section 1.

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34 Summary

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Step 3. Saving As and Submitting a Bill

Your bill is complete! Before submitting your bill, make sure to check spelling and grammar. A sloppy bill will reflect poorly on the author.

Save your bill in Microsoft 2003 or greater format (.doc/.docx)!!! This is vital to making sure your bill receives corrections and is sent back to you in a timely manner. Please Title your bill to match the inside of the document. If your Bill Title is “XYZ” Then your Document should be named “XYZ”. After you have correctly saved the document, [fill out the bill submission form](#), and submit your bill.

Step 4. Drafting Process

We will then go through a drafting process, where we will make sure your bill follows our guidelines and make sure there is no overlap between the bills we have already received and your bill. We will also correct spelling errors, misrepresented statutes and assign a Committee and Bill Number to your bill. *We will not change anything substantial in your bill! We will only clarify it if necessary.* Upon finishing your draft bill, we will either accept it as it is if it only has minor corrections, or we will send it back to you for correcting. This process can take a while, so please remember to have patience. Once your bill is submitted, you must have research to back your law; this is a perfect time to research.

Step 5. Resubmitting your Bill

Once you have finished our corrections, please resubmit your bill on our website and we will be in touch with you with either more corrections, or a letter of bill acceptance.

