

The purpose of this document is to explain how Committees and Committee Hearings will function for every student, **especially that amendments should be passed during committee time**. The layout of the document will explain what committees are, the specific names and functions of them, how bills are put into each committee, and the functionality of Committee Hearings themselves. If you have any questions pertaining to committees after this document, please reach out to **MSL Speaker** .

What are Committees?

- Committees are pre-set groups that receive bills pertaining to a specific area of policy.
- Each Committee has a Chair and a Vice-Chair that maintains the flow, order, and viewing of bills.

List of Committees:

- Appropriations
 - Chair - Vardaan Srivastava
 - Vice Chair - Augustine Nnakwe
- Ways & Means
 - Chair - Dominick Satterwhite
 - Vice Chair - Maryam Abdurrahman
- Environment
 - Chair - Timothy Winans
 - Vice Chair - Dennis Henderson
- Health
 - Chair - Conner Feng
 - Vice Chair - Raphaela Sulley
- Economic Matters
 - Chair - Ben Ferdman
 - Vice Chair - Hayden Day
- Judiciary
 - Chair - Ryan Cave
 - Vice Chair - Audrey Grutzik
- Government, Labor, and Elections
 - Chair - Justin Carlson
 - Vice Chair - Nicole Kuria
- Transportation
 - Chair - Jamil Sheikh
 - Vice Chair - Tamas Smulovics

How are Committees Assigned?

- The Speaker of the Assembly (Speaker of the House) assigns each and every student to a committee
 - Speaker can choose how this is done

- EX: Creating a first come first served form or choosing people manually
- Each Committee will, generally, have the same number of people

How are Chairs and Vice-Chairs Chosen?

- The Speaker of the Assembly or the Speaker of the House, after assigning students to a committee, will look at each group and choose from that specific number of individuals
 - How this is done varies depending on Speaker preference
 - EX: Creating a form based on previous experience and participation
- Generally, Chairs are experienced members and Vice-Chairs are comparatively less experienced but have shown great interest and dedication towards the position and club
- **If you are selected as a chair, the Speaker of the Assembly will reach out to you prior to the Annual Session**

How do Committee Hearings Work?

- Members of each committee will proceed to their assigned room
- Chair and Vice-Chair will set-up and prepare the pre-assigned bills of each committee
 - Bills are pre-assigned by the Attorney General and the Speaker of the Assembly/House
- The chair will begin the hearing by declaring the rules:
 - The flow of the committee is up to the chair but generally it will follow the same recommended format. Each bill hearing will begin with a testimony from the bill author where they explain their bill. This will be followed by questions on the bill from committee members. The committee will then discuss any potential amendments which can either be passed or rejected. Voting on bills in committee is up to the chair, some choose to vote on a bill directly after it is heard, others may wait and conduct a voting session on all bills at the end.
 - The chair is in charge of the flow of debate and the flow of bill hearings as well as noting which bills have passed in committee. The chair may choose to cut off testimony, questions, or debate on amendments at their discretion but generally there will be a predetermined amount of time for each which will be explained before bill hearings begin.
 - The Vice-Chair will time keep and update bills with amendments.
- At the end of the hearing, where either time is gone or all bills have been seen:
 - The chair will report the result of all bills to the Secretary of State, making clear which bills failed to pass in committee.
 - The chair or vice chair will also send any amendments to the Secretary of State following the committee hearing.
- Note: Time for bills in each committee will vary based on the number of bills.

How do Amendments Work?

- **Amendments Should Be Passed In Committee**
- Committee is the easiest place to amend legislation. Once an amendment is proposed there is a period of short debate where the committee decides whether to accept or reject

the amendment. If it is passed the chair or vice chair should note the changes made, reporting which bills have been amended and the exact changes made to the Secretary of State following the committee session.

- Any technical amendments should be passed in committee and not during general floor proceedings. Substantive amendments are also recommended to be made in committee but these types of amendments are more acceptable during floor proceedings.
- Council of State **encourages** committees to pass amendments here in order to maximize debate time on the Floor Proceedings (House & Senate)
- Vice-Chairs will actively update bills with their new amendments

What Ifs:

- What if a bill is not heard?
 - That bill will be encouraged to be sent to the floor proceedings if that bill is not heard due to time constraints;
 - Otherwise that bill will be automatically rejected and not sent to the floor
- What if a bill does not make it out of committee?
 - That bill will not be heard during floor proceedings
 - However, the a delegate or senator may issue a vote to bring back this bill, which requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority vote from chamber where the vote originates
- What happens to an amended bill?
 - The amendment that is placed on a bill will be sent to the Attorney General and Secretary of State
- What if I want to remove an amendment?
 - If a student wants to remove an amendment placed on a bill during committee, that student must
 - Either find time within the committee hearing to vote on rehearing a bill and removing that amendment or propose an additional amendment during floor proceedings.