

THE TEXAS LEGISLATIVE PROCESS: THE "REAL" STORY



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HOW TO PASS A BILL: THE PROCESS





DYNAMICS OF THE LEGISLATURE

- Legislature is Dominant Branch in Texas
 - Budget Control
 - Regulatory and Administrative Functions
- Extremely Dynamic Process
- Condensed Legislative Session
- Politics Impacts All Aspects of Process
 - Party Politics
 - Personalities of Leadership and Members
 - Geographic Politics



INCREASE IN VOLUME

TML Legislative Update Chart

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Bills Introduced*</u>	<u>Total Bills Passed</u>	<u>City-Related Bills Introduced</u>	<u>City-Related Bills Passed</u>
1993	4,560	1,089	800+	140+
1995	5,147	1,101	800+	140+
1997	5,741	1,502	1,100+	130+
1999	5,908	1,638	1,230+	130+
2001	5,712	1,621	1,200+	150+
2003	5,754	1,403	1,200+	110+
2005	5,369	1,397	1,200+	105+
2007	6,374	1,495	1,200+	120+
2009	7,609	1,468	1,500+	120+

*Includes bills and proposed Constitutional amendments; regular session only.



LIMITED GOVERNMENT

- Despite the Recent Increase in Bill Filings Process is Designed to Produce Limited Government
- Historical Passage rate is only 20% or 80% of Filed Bills Fail to Pass
- Increase in Volume is Straining Legislative Process
- Forces Reliance on Staff, Opinion Leaders, & Lobbyists to Vet Bills



HOW TO PASS A BILL IN A MINUTE OR LESS WHEN SUSPENDING THE CONSTITUTION





COMMITTEE PROCESS IS VITAL

- Committees form the backbone of the legislative process
- Chairmen wield almost unilateral power over bills in their committee
- Vast majority of work on bills occurs in committee
- Know the Rules or Pay the Consequences
- Last stop for most bills



RULES ARE MADE TO BE BROKEN

- House and Senate Rules Detail All Functions
- Calendar Deadlines Play a Significant Role
- Rules routinely “suspended” or “reinterpreted”
- Key Rule Provisions
 - **House Rule 4:** Outlines “Organization, Powers, and Duties of Committees” (common point of order)
 - **Senate Rule 5.13 (“2/3rds Rule”):** “Suspend the regular order of business”; 11 Senators Control



POINTS OF ORDER



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NEW TECHNOLOGY

- New Electronic Tools Have Enhanced Openness of State Government
- Ability to View Floor Sessions and Hearings Via Internet (www.capitol.state.tx.us)
- Real Time “Two-Way” Communications



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CONCLUSION

- To Be Successful you Must be Flexible
- Stay in Front of Legislative Tidal Wave
- Recognize Political Realities
- Utilize New Technology to Gain Information
- Know the Rules and Use Them to Your Advantage
- Hope for the Best!



QUESTIONS

Thank You.

Snapper Carr

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