Legislative Process Flowchart

Legislation may begin in either chamber. Similar proposals are often introduced in both chambers.

Measure introduced in the House

Measure referred to committee, which holds hearings and reports measure to the House

OR

For important measures, special rule reported by the Rules Committee and adopted by the House

Leadership schedules measure for floor consideration

House debates and can amend measure

House passes measure

Measure introduced in the Senate

Measure referred to committee, which holds hearings and reports measure to the Senate

Leadership schedules measure for floor consideration

Senate debates and can amend measure

Senate passes measure

Measures must pass both the House and the Senate in identical form before being presented to the President.

One chamber agrees to the other chamber's version

OR

Each chamber appoints Members to a conference committee, which reconciles differences and agrees to a conference report

OR

House and Senate exchange amendments to bill and reach agreement

House approves conference report

Senate approves conference report

Legislation presented to the President.

President signs measure

Measure becomes law

If President does not sign measure into law within 10 days

If Congress is in session, measure becomes law

If Congress is not in session, measure does not become law ("pocket veto")

President vetoes measure

Measure does not become law, unless both chambers override veto by 2/3 majority

Source: Our American Government