

REQUESTING, REVIEWING & READING A BILL

2016 LEGISLATOR ORIENTATION

REQUESTING A BILL

- **WHAT YOU DO:**
 - Submit a blue bill draft request sheet
 - Provide a brief description of what you want the bill to do
 - Attach any model bills or proposed language
 - Provide your name as requester and how to reach you.
 - Provide e-mail address and/or phone number for any other contact who can provide more information.

REVIEWING A BILL

- **WHAT YOU GET:**
 - A draft bill with an LC number (this is not the Bill Number, which is given when the bill is introduced)
 - The bill draft will look like this: (Your name won't be in the "introduced by" line until you actually introduce it.)
 - A letter and a page of instructions -- **PLEASE RESPOND TO THIS!** This is your chance to make changes in the bill draft before it is introduced. You can revise as much as you need to with the drafter within certain deadlines.
- **WHAT YOU DO WITH THE DRAFT SENT TO YOU**
 - Review the bill draft, paying particular attention to whether the title is broad or narrow.
 - Approve the draft as written or provide revisions to the drafter via the instruction page. If revising, work with the drafter until the bill reflects your intent. Each revision generates an instruction letter.
 - Return the instructions regarding the draft. This goes into the bill history, the "junque file".

READING A BILL

- **WHAT YOU'LL SEE -- PARTS OF A BILL**
 - Sponsor Line (with co-sponsor/s if you sign them up)
 - By Request Line (only for legislative committee or state agency requests)
 - Title. The title may be broad, (generally revising) which can allow broad amendments (maybe beyond the sponsor's wishes or it can be narrow (e.g. specifying an increase or decrease not just a revision).
 - Body of the Bill - New sections or

Unofficial Draft Copy

As of: month, day, year (time)

LC ____

**** Bill No. ****

Introduced By *****

By Request of the State Auditor

A Bill for an Act entitled: "An Act revising the Life and Health Insurance Guaranty Association Act and incorporating model act language; amending sections 33-10-201, 33-10-202, 33-10-205, 33-10-210, 33-10-216, 33-10-217, 33-10-222, 33-10-223, 33-10-224, 33-10-225, 33-10-226, and 33-10-227, MCA; repealing sections 33-10-219, 33-10-220, and 33-10-228, MCA; and providing an immediate effective date."

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of

BROAD TITLE EXAMPLE:

AN ACT GENERALLY REVISING LAWS RELATED TO LICENSING BOARDS;...

NARROW TITLE EXAMPLE:

AN ACT ESTABLISHING THE OFFENSE OF AGGRAVATED DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE;

amended code. (See below.)

- Dates. If you don't request a specific effective date, the default effective date is October 1 of the year in which the bill is enacted. Otherwise, the effective date might be immediate or delayed. There may be termination dates or applicability dates.
- Additional sections. There can be several types. For instance, **Codification** sections tell where the new language is to be placed in statute. **Severability** and **Savings Clauses** protect parts of legislation if a court strikes other language. **Repeal** sections direct removing or deleting certain parts of law (only the title of the section is listed). **Coordination** sections coordinate different bills if there are conflicting words. Other sections may notify tribes of impacts or provide vote requirements for amendments to the constitution (among other reasons).

- **NEW OR AMENDED LANGUAGE:**

- Section number then MCA code number. (Example A) Codes are in numerical order. If there is no code number, it is new language and may be anywhere in the bill. (Example B)
- Underlining - Indicates new language in existing statutes.
- ~~Strikeouts~~ - Removes existing language in an existing statute.
- All CAPS - Indicates an amendment after introduction (in committee or on the floor).
- Plain text may either show unamended language in a statute (see Example A) or be new language (see Example B).
- Section completely stricken. After bill introduction a standing committee or the committee of the whole (House or Senate) may decide that nothing in the statute needs changing. The statute stays in the bill, stricken, but nothing is changed in that law.

EXAMPLE A: AMENDING LANGUAGE

Section 1. Section 87-2-103, MCA, is amended to read: "**87-2-103. License required -- exceptions.** (1) Except as provided in ~~subsection~~ subsections (2) and (3), it is unlawful for a... person to:..."

EXAMPLE B: NEW LANGUAGE:

NEW SECTION. Section 10. Assistance program audits. (1) In each 10-year period, the medical assistance programs provided for in chapters 3, 4, 7, and 8 must be audited for performance objectives as determined by each licensing board in chapters 3, 4, 7, and 8 at least twice, as provided in ... subsections (2)

RECOGNIZING A BILL BY ITS COLOR

- **BILL COLORS.** Provide visual clues to where the bill is in its way to becoming a law. **White** = introduction (& enrolled). **Yellow** = 2nd reading 1st house. **Blue** = 3rd reading 1st house & 1st reading 2nd house. **Tan** = 2nd reading 2nd house. **Salmon** = Reference bill & 3rd reading 2nd house. **Ivory** = reference bill with amendments by free/conference/governor.

WHAT YOU CANNOT DO

- Change a bill beyond its original purpose or include more than one subject in a bill, except for an appropriation bill or general revisions. Montana Constitution Article V, Section 11.

WHY IS MY BILL SO LONG?

Montana's Legislature requires a bill to contain the full text of all the statutes that must be amended to carry out your request. This allows you to read a bill in context and also to know that all sections that need to be changed will be altered to reflect your bill. This may mean you have a simple idea but a long bill. Most bills have either existing statutes only or in combination with new language.