



Maryland Student Legislature

Standing Rules of Order

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RULES §

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I. Scope and Precedence

The Standing Rules of Order shall be governed by the Constitution and By-Laws of the Maryland Student Legislature. Any rule contained herein shall be deemed null and void in either whole or part, as deemed by the judiciary, should it conflict with either of these documents.

The Modus Operandi of the Maryland Student Legislature shall be as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order, most recent revised edition (RRO). The Presiding Officer and the Assembly shall be guided by rules of parliamentary practice for legislative organizations as set forth in RRO except where they conflict with the rules contained in the Standing Rules of Order, the Constitution, or By-Laws of the Maryland Student Legislature which shall supercede any rules contained in RRO.

The Scope and Precedence of the Standing Rules of Order as well as any rule which comes directly from the Constitution or By-Laws as well as any rule which specifically states as part of the rule that it is not suspend-able shall not be suspend-able by any motion to suspend a rule and may only be amended through an amendment to the Standing Rules of Order, Constitution, or By-Laws. Any motion to suspend such rules shall be deemed dilatory by the Presiding Officer.

II. Organization and Officers

- §1. General Assembly
- (a) The entire membership of the Maryland Student Legislature when gathered in assembly shall be known as the General Assembly. The General Assembly shall comprise the legislative body of the Maryland Student Legislature. (CON: Art VI, Sec 1)
 - (b) The Governor and the Attorney General shall be the only exception to section (a) of this rule. The Governor and Attorney General are not members of the legislative body of the Maryland Student Legislature. (CON: Art VI, Sec IV)
 - (c) When During an Annual Session, the Maryland Student Legislature (MSL) convenes as a unicameral General Assembly, it shall be known as a Joint Session. As defined in this paragraph, A General Assembly shall convene for the introductions of legislation, special guests, the election of officers, and any other purpose the Council of State deems necessary.
 - (d) During an Annual Session, except when meeting pursuant to paragraph (c) of this Rule, the MSL shall convene as a bicameral General Assembly consisting of a House of Delegate and Senate and shall follow these rules to the extent that they apply. (CON: Art VI, Sec III)
 - (e) During an Interim Assembly the General Assembly shall meet as a unicameral body unless there are more than 100 regular members in attendance when they shall meet as a bicameral body.
 - (f) During an Annual Session, each Delegation shall be assigned a ratio of Delegates to Senators that equals two Delegates for every one Senator based on the number of registered members seven days prior to the opening day of the Annual Session.
 - (1) In order to have two Senators, A Delegation must have at least six members in attendance.
 - (2) Should a Delegation's attendance at the opening session change more than 25% from it's registration, the formula shall be recalculated.

§2. Opening Day

At the beginning of each Interim Assembly and Annual Session, the Speaker of the Assembly shall call the session to order and call the roll of delegations. If necessary, he or she should proceed with the organization of the General Assembly. In the absence of the Speaker of the Assembly, the President of the Senate shall perform these duties, and in the absence of both the Speaker of the Assembly and the President of the Senate, the Secretary of State or the Comptroller may conduct the organization of the General Assembly.

- §3. Presiding Officer
- (a) The Speaker serves as the presiding officer of the General Assembly. In the absence of the speaker, the Speaker Pro Tem serves as the presiding officer, and in the absence of the Speaker and the Speaker Pro Tem, the Governor shall designate a Delegate to serve as the presiding officer.
 - (b) When convened as a bicameral General Assembly, the Speaker or Speaker Pro Tem or designated Delegate (as per section (a) of this rule) shall preside over the House of Delegates. The Senate shall be presided upon by the Lieutenant Governor. The Senate shall elect a President Pro Tem who shall serve in the absence of the Lieutenant Governor, in the absence of the Lieutenant Governor and the President Pro Tem, the Senate shall elect its own chair. (CON: Art V, See XI (a), Sec XII (a), (b))

- §4. Staff and Officers
- (a) The Secretary of State shall serve as the Chief Clerk of the General Assembly. When the General Assembly convenes as a bicameral body, the Secretary of State shall be assigned to the House of Delegates and shall appoint a member of the Senate to serve as it's Chief Clerk.
 - (b) The Attorney General shall serve as the Parliamentarian of the General Assembly. When the General Assembly convenes as a bicameral body, the Attorney General may serve as the Parliamentarian to both houses or may appoint a member to serve as Parliamentarian to the house in which he or she does not act as Parliamentarian.
 - (c) The Presiding Officer may appoint other staff as necessary, but their authority shall not supersede that of the Presiding Officer.

Daily Business

§5. Call to Order

The Presiding Officer shall take the chair every day at precisely the hour to which the General Assembly is scheduled to convene and immediately call the General Assembly to order. Divine Services may be performed, after which the Presiding Officer shall cause the roll of delegations to be taken. If a quorum is present, the Presiding Officer shall proceed with the business of the day. With the consent of the General Assembly, the reading of the Journal of the previous day may be omitted.

§6. Business of the Day

The Secretary of State or Chamber Clerk shall lay upon the desk of the Presiding Officer at the beginning of each day's session all business, properly arranged and classified, pending before the General Assembly at that session.

§7. Order of Business

- (a) After the reading of the Journal, the order of business shall be as follows:
 - (1) Presentation and disposition of petitions, memorials, and other papers including guests and other visitors.
 - (2) Introduction of Bills.
 - (3) Introduction of Resolutions.
 - (4) Introduction of Simple Resolutions.
 - (5) Reports of Legislative Committees.
 - (6) Special Orders of the Day.
 - (7) Constitutional Amendments.
 - (8) Rules Amendment Consent Calendar.
 - (9) Consent Calendar.
 - (10) Third Reading of Bills.
- (b) The order of business may be changed at any time by a 2/3 vote of the members present or, unless 2/3 of the members present object, by the Presiding Officer.
- (c) The order for consideration of legislation during a third reading of bills shall be set by the presiding officer.

§8. Messages

- (a) Messages from the Governor may be received at any time and take precedence, except when:
 - (1) A question is being put
 - (2) The roll is being called
 - (3) A visitor or special guest is addressing the General Assembly
- (b) Messages from the Governor or any other officer shall be transmitted in writing to the Presiding Officer and communicated to the General Assembly by the Presiding Officer except:
 - (1) In the case of a veto, the Governor may read his or her own message to the assembly, though the Governor may not answer questions on the floor or participate in debate of any kind.

§9. Petitions and Memorials

Petitions, memorials, and other papers addressed to the General Assembly may be presented by the Presiding Officer. The object of all petitions and memorials shall be endorsed thereon and entered in the Journal.

The Presiding Officer

§10. Order and Decorum

- (a) The Presiding Officer shall preserve order and decorum during sessions of the General Assembly or during an Annual Session, the House and the Senate.
- (b) If a member violates any of these rules, the Presiding Officer shall call the member to order, and any member of the General Assembly may request the Presiding Officer to do so. The Presiding Officer may take any reasonable action necessary to compel the member to observe the call for order. All questions of order shall be determined by the Presiding Officer without debate.
- (c) The Presiding Officer shall have general supervision over the Chamber and its adjacent areas while the General Assembly is in session. The Governor shall have general supervision over these areas during an Interim Assembly or an Annual Session when the General Assembly is not in session.

§11. Prerogatives

- (a) The Presiding Officer may speak on points of order in preference to other members and shall decide all points of order. The decision of the Presiding Officer is final unless, upon appeal, it is reserved by a majority vote of the members present. The Presiding Officer shall not vote except to make or break a tie, and during elections of the Council of State.

III. Attendance and Quorum

§12. Quorum

- (a) Quorum shall be set at 50% + 1 of the members in attendance at the first session of the General Assembly during an Interim Assembly or first Joint Session of an Annual Session provided that no less than two Delegates are represented.
- (b) Upon the Suggestion of any member, the Presiding Officer shall order a call of the General Assembly to ascertain if a quorum is present. Simultaneously, the Presiding Officer shall cause notice to be given to the members who

are absent from the Chamber, but not absent from the session in general. Upon receiving notification, the absent members shall report to the Chamber.

- (c) The Presiding Officer shall entertain no motion for a quorum which he or she deems to be dilatory.

§13. Leave of Attendance for Committees

Without leave of the General Assembly, no legislative committee shall hold a session during a session of the General Assembly.

IV. Bills and Resolutions

§14. Sponsorship

- (a) A bill or resolution may be sponsored by any member, including the Governor and Attorney General.
(b) The Governor and Attorney General shall be permitted to testify on behalf of their bill or resolution before the committee to which it has been assigned, but shall not be permitted to speak upon a bill or resolution on the floor of the House, Senate, or unicameral General Assembly.

§15. Legislation Numbering

Each act, simple resolution, resolution, simple amendment or constitutional amendment shall be numbered in order as they are received by the Attorney General beginning with A001-XXXX for Acts, SR001-XXXX for Simple Resolutions, R001-XXXX for Joint Resolutions, and CA001-XXXX for Constitutional Amendments.

§16. Three Readings

- (a) Every Bill or Joint Resolution in order to pass the General Assembly shall be read three different times during at least two different sessions of an Interim Assembly unless two thirds of the Members of the General Assembly shall otherwise determine by yeas and nays.
(b) During an Annual Session, a Bill or Resolution being passed in its house of origin shall automatically be placed on third reading in the second house.

§17. Simple Resolutions

- (a) A Simple Resolution unless a Rules Amendment (which includes: Standing Rules Amendments and Writing Manual Amendments) shall be included on a Simple Resolution Calendar which may be considered as whole unless a majority of the Members object.
(b) A Rules Amendment (which includes: Standing Rules Amendments and Writing Manual Amendments) shall be included on a Rules Amendment Consent Calendar which may be considered as whole unless a majority of members object.
(c) A Simple Resolution does not require the approval of the Governor in order to be presented to those whom it is mandated.
(d) Simple Resolutions shall only be considered when meeting in a Unicameral Session.

§18. Form for Introduction

- (a) Each Bill and Resolution shall be prepared for introduction in the format according to The Writing Manual for Acts and Resolutions.
(b) The Attorney General may refuse to accept for introduction any Bill or Resolution not drawn in conformity with these requirements.

§19. Hopper

- (a) A member desiring to introduce a Bill, Simple Resolution or Joint Resolution shall file the documents required by Rule 18 with the Attorney General by the Universal Deadline for the event.
(b) If a Bill, Simple Resolution, or Joint Resolution multiple sponsors, the chief sponsor shall be first listed.
(c) Except by amendment, no additional sponsors may be added after a Bill or Resolution is filed with Attorney General.
(d) The Attorney General shall deem any legislation "emergency" which is submitted after the announced deadline for submission of Bills and Resolutions. Legislation that is submitted as "emergency" shall be on a topic which has become pertinent after the Universal Deadline for the event or will be moot prior to the next Interim Assembly or the Annual Session.

§20. Printing

- (a) The Attorney General shall coordinate with the Secretary of State to print and distribute a copy of all Bills and Resolutions in conformity with these Rules to all Members duly registered for an Interim Assembly or Annual Session.

- (b) The sponsor of a Bill or Resolution which is deemed "emergency" under these Rules shall provide the appropriate number of copies to conform with paragraph (a) of this Rule.

First Reading

§21. Introduction

A Bill, Simple Resolution or Joint Resolution is introduced when it is read for the first time or when it is appropriately received by the Attorney General prior to the Universal Deadline for the event.

§22. Time Limitations

- (a) No Bill, Joint Resolution, or Simple Resolution may be introduced after the end of the second session of an Interim Assembly or Annual Session unless three-quarters of the Members so determine by yeas and nays.
- (b) The Attorney General shall return to its sponsor any Bill, Joint Resolution or Simple Resolution which is not received by the Universal Deadline for the event.
- (c) Any Bill, Joint Resolution or Simple Resolution deemed "emergency" or introduced under paragraph (a) of this Rule shall be referred to the legislative committee Rules and Executive Nominations.

§23. Assignment

- (a) Upon introduction, a Bill or Resolution shall be referred by the Attorney General to its appropriate legislative committee.
- (b) The following shall be assigned to the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee:
 - (1) Standing Rules Amendments;
 - (2) Writing Manual Amendments;
 - (3) Any Bill or Resolution submitted after the Universal Deadline.
- (c) A suspension of the Rules is required in order to consider a Bill or Resolution without referring it to a committee.

Second Reading

§24. General

- (a) Upon the report of a legislative committee, a Bill or Resolution is considered on its second reading. At this time, the Presiding Officer will call for the chair of the legislative committee to present a brief summary of the Bill or Resolution and any amendments adopted by the legislative committee. The chair shall then move for the adoption of the legislative committee report and the yeas and nays taken.
- (b) Debate on the adoption of the committee report is limited to ten minutes equally divided in open debate.
- (c) Upon approval a favorable legislative committee report by the Committee, the Presiding Officer shall assign the Bill or Resolution to third reading calendar.
- (d) No Bill or Resolution having received an unfavorable committee report, said report having been approved by the Assembly (or by the originating house during the Annual Session), shall be assigned to the third reading calendar.

Third Reading

§25. Yeas and Nays

No Bill or Joint Resolution may be adopted unless it be passed in the General Assembly by a roll call of the yeas and nays by delegation.

§26. Calendars

- (a) Except as provided in Rule 27, no Bill or Resolution may be considered on third reading without being adopted on second reading with a favorable committee report.
- (b) Each third reading calendar shall be conspicuously displayed by the Secretary of State prior to and during the session in which it is to be considered.

§27. Petition of Bill or Resolution Reported Unfavorably

- (a) A Bill or Resolution, having received and been adopted on second reading with an unfavorable committee report, may be petitioned to the floor by any Member presenting the Presiding Officer with the signatures for same of not less than one-half the number of member required for a quorum.
- (b) The Presiding Officer, having received under paragraph (a) of this Rule shall immediately put the question before the House on whether or not to consider the bill or resolution for third reading, said question requiring a two-thirds affirmative vote of the Members present to be passed.
- (c) A petition under this Rule may only be presented when no other question is pending.

§28. Consideration

- (a) Consideration of a Bill or Resolution is limited to one hour in length not including any recess of the General Assembly, equally divided in open debate.

(b) Consideration of any amendment to a bill or resolution is limited to twenty minutes equally divided in open debate.

§29. Floor Leaders

During time equally divided in open debate, the chair shall recognize a Member wishing to serve as the manager of time for those wishing to speak in the affirmative and those wishing to speak in the negative.

§30. Reassignment

If a Bill or Resolution on third reading is committed or recommitted to any legislative committee, it shall lay over until the next Interim Assembly, or in the event that there is no Interim Assembly scheduled, it may be laid over to the Annual Session and assigned to the house to which the Author is assigned. Upon it being reported to the appropriate house, it shall be on second reading.

§31. Legislation Held Over

(a) Any Bill or Resolution having not been considered on third reading during an Interim Assembly shall be held over and may be considered until the adjournment sine die of the legislative year.

(b) Legislation shall not be held over from one legislative year to another. This Rule may not be suspended.

AMENDMENTS

§32. Effect of Amendments

An amendment to a Bill or Resolution, adopted by a legislative committee or the General Assembly or house thereof remains a part of the Bill or Resolution unless the General Assembly or house thereof specifically reverses or modifies the action..

§33. Single Subject

No amendment on a subject different from that under consideration may be offered.

§34. Change of Purpose

No Bill or Resolution may be amended in its passage through the General Assembly by the use of the words "strike out everything after the words 'A Bill' or 'A Resolution'," or by any other amendment or series of amendments with the effect of changing the predominance of the original purpose of the Bill or Resolution.

§35. Form and Submission

Amendments to a Bill or Resolution, whether included with the report of the General Assembly or offered from the floor shall be clearly and specifically written. The amendment shall be delivered to the desk prior to its introduction.

Consent Calendar

§36. General

(a) A consent calendar contains all Simple Resolutions other than Rules Amendments duly introduced in the General Assembly and given a favorable report by its assigned committee. The consent calendar shall be considered by the yeas and nays during the order of business contained in Rule 7.

(b) A Rules Amendment Consent Calendar contains all Standing Rules Amendments and Writing Manual Amendments duly introduced in the General Assembly and given a Favorable Report by the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee, The Rules Amendment Consent Calendar shall be considered by the yeas and nays during the order of business contained in rule 7. The Rules Amendment Consent Calendar requires a two-thirds vote in order for the calendar to be adopted.

Presentment

§37. General

(a) The Presiding Officer shall cause any Act or Joint Resolution having achieved final passage to be dated and signed by the Presiding Officer, and sent to the second house for consideration, where appropriate. Any Act or Joint Resolution having achieved final passage in the second house be dated and signed by the presiding officer and shall be presented to the Governor for their approval.

(b) When meeting unicamerally, any Act or Joint Resolution having achieved final passage be dated and signed by the presiding officer and shall be presented to the Governor for their approval.

(c) The Presiding Officer shall cause any Simple Resolution having achieved final passage to be dated and signed by the Presiding Officer and presented to the Attorney General for distribution.

V. VETO

§38. General

When a Bill or Resolution has been vetoed by the Governor and is returned to the General Assembly:

- (a) The message containing the Governor's objections shall be entered at large upon the General Assembly Journal and shall be read aloud either by the chair, or if the Governor so desires, it shall be read aloud by the Governor who shall have no rights to speak or debate except to read verbatim from the written objection. The Governor shall have no right to ask or answer questions of the General Assembly at this time.
- (b) At the next session of the General Assembly, the General Assembly then shall proceed to reconsider the Bill or Resolution, and the presiding officer shall put the question: "Shall the Bill (or Resolution) pass notwithstanding the objections of the Governor?";
- (c) The vote of the General Assembly shall be determined by role call of the yeas and nays and entered upon the Journal; and,
- (d) The vote of at least three-fifths affirmative majority are necessary to pass the Bill or Resolution over the Governor's veto. (CON: ART VI, SEC X)
- (e) The question of reconsideration under this rule is debatable for no more than thirty minutes equally divided in open debate, and is not amendable, nor is the bill or resolution to which it applies.

VI. DEBATE

§39. Procedure in Debate

Every Member desiring to present a petition or other matter, to make a report or a motion, to question another member who has the floor, or to speak on any matter, shall rise from his or her seat, address the presiding officer, and proceed further only when or recognized by the presiding officer. If two or more members seek recognition at the same time, the presiding officer shall determine which is entitled to the floor. With the consent of the presiding officer, any Member may address the General Assembly from the front of the chamber.

§40. Order During Debate

No member may:

- (a) While the presiding officer is putting a question or addressing the General Assembly, walk across the chamber or converse privately; or,
- (b) Hold private conversation in a manner to interrupt debate.

§41. Limit of Debate

No Member may speak except upon the subject under debate.

§42. Personal References

A Member during debate may not make personal references about other Members and shall refer to them by some respectful designation other than their proper names.

VII MOTIONS

§43. Majority Vote

Except as otherwise specifically provided in these Rules, each question shall be determined by a majority vote of the votes cast by persons legally entitled to vote, excluding blanks and abstentions, provided that there is a quorum present.

§44. Motions in Writing

If requested by the presiding officer, a motion shall be submitted in writing to the Clerk before it is debated.

§45. Division of a Question

If a motion contains more than one substantive proposition, the presiding officer or any Member supported by at least five others may call for a division of the question into separate propositions.

§46. Withdrawal

After a motion is stated by the presiding officer or read by the Clerk, it is in the possession of the General Assembly; however, it may be withdrawn by its sponsor at any time before the question is put thereon.

§47. Precedence of Motions

- (a) When a question is before the General Assembly, no motion may be received except for one of those set forth in paragraph (b) of this Rule and then only if the motion is of higher precedence than the original question.

- (b) The following motions have precedence in the order listed:
 - (1) To adjourn sine die (ending an Interim Assembly but not the legislative year);
 - (2) To adjourn to a time certain;
 - (3) To suspend a rule;
 - (4) To recess;
 - (5) To reconsider a previous action;
 - (6) To vote on the previous question;
 - (7) To lay on the table or postpone indefinitely;
 - (8) To postpone to a certain day or time;
 - (9) To commit;
 - (10) To recommit;
 - (11) To amend.

§48. No Motion During Voting

No motion may be received after a vote upon any question before the General Assembly has been called for by the presiding officer.

§49. Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn, other than one to adjourn sine die:

- (a)
 - (1) Shall state the hour and day to which it is proposed the assembly adjourn;
 - (2) Is not debatable;
 - (3) Can neither be amended nor reconsidered.
- (b) Must, in the opinion of the presiding officer, respect the calendar agreed upon by the host delegation and the Council of State.

§50. Motion to Reconsider

- (a) A motion to reconsider the vote of a question once decided is in order if the document or matter to which it relates is in the possession of the General Assembly. A document is in the possession of the General Assembly until such time as it is delivered to the Governor.
- (b) No motion for reconsideration is in order unless made during the same Interim Assembly in which the original question was decided.
- (c) A motion to reconsider any vote is in order only if made by a member who voted in the prevailing side of the original question.
- (d) A motion to reconsider is debatable only if the question to which the motion debates is debatable, in which case the debate may extend to the original question.
- (e) If a motion to reconsider is adopted, the original question is immediately before the General Assembly.
- (f) A vote on a question to reconsider may not be reconsidered.

§51. Motion to Vote Upon the Previous Question

A motion to vote upon the previous question may be made on any debatable motion and is not debatable, but is only in order after the affirmative and negative floor leaders have each consumed at least 5 minutes of time (where applicable). This motion requires a two-thirds majority vote of members present and precludes any additional debate should the motion be adopted. It then immediately brings the General Assembly to a vote on the question before it.

§52. Motion to Postpone Indefinitely

A motion to Postpone indefinitely is debatable for a period of ten minutes equally divided in open debate. Any motion which is postponed indefinitely may not be taken up again during that session of the Interim Assembly.

§53. Motion to Postpone to a Certain Day or Time

(Special Order)

A Motion to postpone to a certain day or time may be amended but may not be reconsidered. It is debatable for a period of four minutes equally divided in open debate.

§54. Motion to Amend

A motion to amend may be offered to a proposed amendment, but no motion may be accepted which would amend the former while it is pending.

VIII. VOTING

- §55. Explanation of Vote
The vote of a Member on a Bill, Resolution, or other question may be explained by that Member rising for that purpose for not more than one minute.
- §56. Yeas and Nays
The vote on any question, except as otherwise provided for within these Rules, shall be decided upon by yeas and nays and entered in the Clerk's Journal. Upon the request of any Member who indicates his or her support by rising from their seat with a "call for division," a roll call vote shall be taken.
- §57. Procedure for Voting
- (a) A question of Division may be called immediately following the announcement of the results of a voice vote, and before the timely rap of the gavel by the presiding officer.
 - (b) A recorded vote shall then be taken by each delegation chairperson or designee on a form which is provided by the Clerk. After sufficient time has been allowed, the presiding officer shall close the voting and call each delegation by name to report its vote. He shall then order that it be placed in the Journal.
 - (c) After the vote has been reported, a Member may not change his or her vote.
- §58. Journal Maintenance
The Secretary of State shall maintain an accurate record of the General Assembly's proceedings including the title of every Bill or Resolution introduced and every question or motion put before the General Assembly, including the vote and outcome.

Adjournment Sine Die

- §59. General
- (a) At an Interim Assembly a motion to adjourn sine die is out of order. The correct motion is to adjourn until the next Interim Assembly or Annual Session.
 - (b) The General Assembly shall notify the Governor prior to any contemplated adjournment sine die or adjournment until the next Interim Assembly or Annual Session and shall only adjourn as such if the Governor has no more messages or business for the General Assembly.

IX. Legislative Committee Procedures

- §60. Committee Purpose and Function
- (a) To ensure that legislation brought to the floor will produce stimulating debate
 - (b) Committees should be devoid of any partisan debate
 - (c) Any technical amendments with regard to grammar and spelling should be made in committee
 - (d) The Rules Committee, in addition to (a), (b), and (c), is charged with ensuring that amendments to the MSL's Standing Rules or Writing Manual be beneficial for the future of the organization.
- §61. Appointment and Function of Chair, Vice-Chair and Members
- (a) The Speaker of the Assembly shall appoint the Chair, Vice-Chair, and all Members of each committee.
 - (b) The Vice-Chair shall serve in the role as Clerk of the Committee and will assume the role of chair in the chair's absence, thus appointing a member to assume the role of Clerk of the Committee.
 - (c) The Clerk of the Committee is a full voting member of that committee.
 - (d) The Chair may only vote when necessary to make or break a tie.
 - (e) At the end of each committee session, the Vice-Chair shall forward to the Attorney General all legislation for which a final recommendation has been reached.
- §62. Committee Design
- (a) The Following legislative committees shall be established:
 - (1) Environmental Matters;
 - (2) Health and Government Operations;
 - (3) Judiciary;
 - (4) Rules and Executive Nominations, which shall consist of one Member from each delegation;
 - (5) Ways and Means.
 - (b) A Member may not be appointed to more than one of the legislative committees referred to in paragraphs (a)(1) through (a)(5) of this Rule.
 - (c) In accordance with (b), Rules and Executive Nominations may run separately from all other committees if time permits, however it is acceptable to run both committees simultaneously.
 - (d) The Council of State shall establish special legislative committees as are deemed necessary.

- §63. Committee Reports
- (a) The Chair of each committee shall direct the clerk of the committee to prepare a list of the legislation which was recommended favorably or unfavorably. The list shall be transmitted to the Secretary of State.
 - (b) The Chair shall attach to each piece of legislation reported to the floor, a copy of each amendment thereto adopted by the committee.
 - (c) Pursuant to §24, the Chair of the Committee will read the reports and thus should have a report prepared when called upon by the presiding officer.
- §64. Consideration of Legislation in Committee
- (a) The Chair shall call each Bill or Resolution for consideration according to the calendar published by the Attorney General.
 - (b) Each Bill or Resolution shall be considered by the committee.
 - (c) The procedure for consideration shall generally follow these guidelines:
 - (1) The Sponsor of the legislation may testify for a period of up to three minutes. Non-Members shall be afforded the right to testify on behalf of any legislation at the request of the sponsor.
 - (2) Upon conclusion of the sponsor's statement, members of the Committee may then proceed to mark-up the legislation. Members may engage in debate, ask questions of the sponsor, or propose amendments upon recognition of the Chair.
 - (d) With the consent of the Committee, the Chair may institute further procedures for consideration, so long as they do not deviate from standard parliamentary practice.
 - (e) At the expiration of the time allotted for consideration of a piece of legislation, no more than 10 minutes total, the Chair shall then move directly into a vote on each remaining question, with a majority of members present and voting in the affirmative to give the piece of legislation a favorable recommendation.
 - (1) A committee member who was not present at the time a vote was taken may not:
 - (I) Vote ex post facto
 - (II) Vote by proxy
 - (2) Any member who is testifying in his/her own committee is eligible to vote and participate in discussion, without exception
 - (f) The Chair shall decide on all interpretations of these rules and points of order but shall be subject to appeal. A two-thirds vote of the committee members present overrules the chair's decision.
 - (g) Quorum for a Committee shall be one more than half of the Members present at the opening of Committee Business at each Interim Assembly or Annual Session. The Committee may consider legislation without a quorum, however they may not vote until a quorum is achieved.
 - (h) Amendments proposed in committee must be sponsored by a member of said Committee.
 - (i) Members, observers, and sponsors of the legislation currently being discussed may be present for all proceedings of any committee provided that order is maintained during the Committee session.
- §65. Conference Committee Rules
- (a) When a Bill or Resolution has been amended by the second house and been returned to the first house, having been read for the third time and passed by said house, the presiding officer shall call each amendment to the attention of the original house and cause it to be read. A period of ten minutes equally divided in open debate shall be allowed, at the expiration of which the presiding officer shall put the question: "Will this house concur in the amendment(s) of the other house?"
 - (b) If the original house concurs in every amendment, the Bill or Resolution in its amended form shall be immediately considered again by the original house on third reading for final passage.
 - (c) If the original house does not concur in every amendment, a conference committee may be formed at the request of the original house.
- §66. Conference Committees
- (a) A conference committee shall consist of three members of each house appointed by their respective presiding officer, and shall be chaired by a member of the originating house.
 - (b) The recommendations of the conference committee shall be limited to the subject of disagreement.
- §67. Report of the Conference Committee
- The report of the conference committee shall be:
- (a) In writing and signed by a majority of the conferees;
 - (b) A question of the highest privilege and may be made while a motion to adjourn is pending;
 - (c) May not be amended;

- (d) May be laid upon the table, this action having the effect of laying the Bill or Resolution to which it pertains upon the table.

§68. Action on Conference Committee Reports

Upon the report of a conference committee having been duly received by the presiding officer, it shall take precedence and interrupt any business other than a vote in progress. The presiding officer shall cause the report to be read and shall put the question to the house "Does the house accept the recommendations of the conference committee?"

- (a) This question is debatable for a period of ten minutes equally divided in open debate.
- (b) The report of the conference committee shall be adopted by both houses in order for the Bill or Resolution to be adopted.
- (c) A conference committee report may not be amended or recommitted.

X. APPELLATE INTERPRETATION

§69. Appeal from the Decision of the Chair

- (a) A decision of the Chair may be appealed by any Member who is supported by at least three other Members who indicate their support by standing at his or her seat.
- (b) An appeal must be made immediately, before the consideration of any other matter.
- (c) At the time of the appeal, the Member who made the motion to appeal can choose to appeal to the body as a whole, or directly to the Attorney General.
 - a. An appeal to the body as a whole will take the following form:
 - i. The Presiding Officer shall relinquish the Chair and shall take a place on the floor.
 - ii. At that time, the Speaker Pro Tempore shall preside over the appeals proceedings.
 - iii. An appeal is debatable if the decision appealed was made from a question which was its self debatable.
 - iv. Debate is restricted to the decision of the Chair and may not extend to the main question.
 - v. A member who has the floor at the time of a ruling by the Chair from which an appeal is taken shall relinquish the floor pending disposition of the appeal.
 - vi. Debate on an appeal shall not exceed ten minutes divided in open debate.
 - vii. Prior to either side using their time, the Attorney General shall be allowed to make a statement relating to the interpretation of the Rule in question.
 - viii. A majority of the members present and voting, provided that there is quorum, shall overturn the ruling of the Chair.
 - ix. The body's decision is final and not subject to appeal.
 - b. An appeal directly to the Attorney General will take the following form:
 - i. The Presiding Officer shall recognize the Attorney General and then step aside, allowing the Attorney General the dais.
 - ii. At such time, the Attorney General will make a ruling on the rule in question, in accordance with the Constitution and the Standing Rules of Order of the Maryland Student Legislature, in addition to Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised 10th Edition.
 - iii. The ruling of the Attorney General is not debatable, but it is subject to appeal to the Council of State in accordance with the Constitution of the Maryland Student Legislature (VII.I.E.3.b).
 - iv. In order to appeal the ruling of the Attorney General, a Member must be supported by three additional members.
 - v. The outcome of the appeal to the Council of State is not debatable or subject to appeal.
- (d) Instances when a member cannot appeal the ruling of the chair:
 - a. If a point of order is raised during an appeal, the Chair's ruling cannot be appealed.
 - b. Where there is no alternative answer to the question answered by the Chair, the appeal would be deemed dilatory.

XI. SUSPENSION OF A RULE

§70. Motion to Suspend a Rule

A motion to suspend a Rule:

- (a) Must be offered separately for each proposition.
- (b) Is debatable for a period of four minutes equally divided in open debate;
- (c) Does not permit discussion of the main question
- (d) In order to be adopted, requires the concurrence of at least two-thirds of the members present.
- (e) Cannot be reconsidered.

XII. AMENDING THE RULES

Rules shall be adopted by a majority vote. Thereafter, these shall be considered standing and as such any amendment to the, shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption and shall be presented as a simple resolution at an Interim Assembly or Annual Session.

This section and its contents are not suspend-able.

Decorum et Miscellany et al;

- §71. Dilatory motion
The presiding officer shall entertain no motion which is intended to cause a delay, or where the purpose is to obstruct or thwart the will of the General Assembly as clearly indicated by the existing parliamentary situation.
- §72. Time Equally Divided in Open Debate
(a) The term "equally divided in open debate" refers to the period for discussion in which Members are recognized by the presiding officer or via their floor leader to speak on a motion.
(b) Time used in the debate of an amendment or any other question other than the Main Motion shall not count against the time limits on a Bill or Resolution unless otherwise specified in these Rules, nor shall such debate exceed twenty minutes equally divided in open debate.
- §73. Question of Privilege
A member may rise and have precedence on all other matters except when a vote is being taken or a question is being put in order to respond to an offense of personal conduct, reputation, or rights.
- §74. Reading of Papers
Members may read from papers during debate provided that appropriate citation is made by the member if a source other than the original words of the Member are used.
- §75. Censure
(a) A Member may be censured by the General Assembly or his or her house for violating these Rules or for otherwise bringing harm or disrespect to the Maryland Student Legislature or any Member thereof by a two-thirds majority vote of those present provided a quorum is in attendance.
(b) The motion to censure is debatable for a period of eight minutes equally divided in open debate, may not be amended or reconsidered, and may not be offered when any other question is before the Assembly.
(c) A Member, having been censured, shall lose the right to speak or offer motions on the floor of the Assembly for one legislative hour.
- §76. Objection to Consideration of the Question
The Maryland Student Legislature does not recognize the motion for Objection to Consideration of a Question.



Maryland Student Legislature

Standing Rules of Order

Rules Supplement: Caucus Procedures

Issued: April 10, 1999 by the MSL Attorney General
Ratified: Annual Session 1999

§ C1 Political Parties/Caucuses

- A. The Maryland Student Legislature shall be divided among political parties. These parties shall represent different interests within the Legislature. At the onset of these rules, parties shall consist of:
1. Federalist Party
The Federalist party shall be considered the party of liberal thought. Its mascot shall be the bear and may be referred to as the "bear party." The party platform and philosophy shall be determined by its members and this determination shall be found by use of a caucus.
 2. Tories Party
The Tories party shall be considered the party of conservative thought. Its mascot shall be the longhorn and may be referred to as the "longhorn party." The party platform and philosophy shall be determined by its members and this determination shall be found by use of a caucus.
- B. All members who do not voluntarily affiliate with a political party shall be considered independent. Independent members shall not vote or take part in any caucus except when gathered with other independent members and in the process of banding together to form a third party.
- C. Third parties may be formed at any time prior to the close of caucusing before the first joint or bicameral session at any Interim Assembly (IA) or Annual Session (AS) of the Maryland Student Legislature. Any group of members who are independent may band together to form a third party so long as they consist of at least ten members and their names and the name of their party are presented to the Attorney General prior to the close of caucusing before the first joint or bicameral session of any IA or AS.

§ C2 Party Leadership

Each Party shall have two leadership positions in each chamber. These positions shall be:

- A. Party Leader
The party leader shall serve as the official spokesperson for their party and shall have the right to assume floor leader or to appoint a member from the party to assume floor leader on any motion to reach the floor. The party leaders shall preside over all meetings of the caucus and shall be empowered to choose positions (pro or con) for the party on each motion brought to the floor.
- B. Party Whip
The party whip shall serve as the liaison of the party leader and the members of the party. The party whip shall be empowered to poll the membership of the party on all legislative matters and matters of motions. In the absence of the party leader, the whip shall assume this role and may appoint a temporary whip.

§ C3 Caucusing

Caucusing may occur during times set aside on the agenda at any IA or AS by the State Government. Additional caucusing may occur at any time when the chamber is not in session and may occur outside of an IA or AS. The party leaders set caucus agendas.

~~§ C4 Floor Leadership~~

- ~~A. Floor leadership shall be given as an opportunity, first to the party leader.~~
- ~~B. Party leaders may yield their floor leadership to any member prior to the first use of their time. Party leaders may also choose not to accept floor leadership on behalf of their party, should a piece come to the floor on which the party has either no opinion on or an opinion in concert with the opposing party.
 - ~~1. Should an objection come from the floor on a piece on which a party or both parties have no opposing viewpoint, then floor leadership may be yielded back to the Speaker or President.~~
 - ~~2. The Speaker or President will then open the opportunity for floor leadership to the chamber. Any member may at this point assume floor leader for the motion at hand.~~~~
- ~~C. For the purposes of floor leadership when only two parties and an independent group are present, the parties shall assume floor leadership for either pro or con or may yield if the motion is non-combative.
 - ~~1. A motion shall be considered non-combative if both parties are in concert for the passing or failure of the motion.~~~~
- ~~D. For the purposes of floor leadership when there is also present a third party:
 - ~~1. The two parties with the most seats in any chamber shall be considered the majority and minority parties.~~
 - ~~2. The majority and minority parties shall have first choice of floor leadership.~~
 - ~~3. The lesser or third party(ies) shall have rights to claim the floor only if the majority and minority parties choose to yield their privilege, such as in the case of a non-combative piece.~~(Note: was stricken before adoption at Annual Session 1999)~~

§ C5 Non-Combative Status

Non-combative status shall be granted if the majority and minority parties have determined in concert that they are either for or against a motion.

§ C6 Subsidiary Motions/ Incidental Motions/Suspension of Rules

Subsidiary motions such as amendments and incidental motions such as motions for recesses and appeal of the decision of the chair and any consideration of suspension of a rule shall be considered of individual interest and any member of the chamber may rise to assume the floor on any debate on that issue.

§ C7 Scope

These rules shall be subject to the rules present in the Maryland Student Legislature (MSL) Standing Rules of Order and the MSL Constitution.

Amendments to these rules may be issued by the Attorney General prior to the opening caucus of any IA or AS until such time as they are, adopted into the standing rules and at that time shall be subject to the Standing Rules of Order amendment procedure.