

A GLOSSARY OF LEGISLATIVE TERMS

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/glossary.html> Excerpts 3/5/24

Bill Analysis

A document that must be prepared by committee and/or floor analysis staff prior to hearing the bill in that committee. It explains how a bill would change current law and sometimes mentions support and opposition from major interest groups.

Chief Clerk

Elected by Assembly members at the beginning of every two-year session to be principal parliamentarian and record keeper of the Assembly. Responsible for all Assembly daily and weekly publications.

Daily File

Publication produced by the Assembly and Senate respectively for each day those houses are in session. The publication provides information about bills to be considered at upcoming committee hearing and bills eligible for consideration during the next scheduled Floor session. Pursuant to Joint Rule 62(a), any bill to be heard in committee must be noticed in the Daily File for four days, including weekend days. The Daily File also contains useful information about committee assignments and the legislative calendar.

Desk

The long desk in front of the presiding officer's rostrum where much of the clerical work of the body is conducted. Also, a generic term for the staff and offices of the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the Assembly.

District Bill

Legislation introduced specifically on behalf of a legislator's district, generally affecting only that district.

Double Refer

Legislation recommended for referral to two policy committees rather than one for hearing. The first committee is not bound by the recommended second referral. Both committees must approve the measure to keep it moving in the process. Typically used for sensitive issue areas that transcend the jurisdiction

of one policy committee. Bill referrals are made by the Assembly and Senate Rules Committees for their respective houses.

Engrossed Bill

Whenever a bill is amended, the printed form of the bill is proofread to make sure all amendments are inserted properly. After being proofread, the bill is "correctly engrossed" and is therefore in proper form.

Enrolled Bill

Whenever a bill passes both houses of the Legislature, it is ordered enrolled. In enrollment, the bill is again proofread for accuracy and then delivered to the Governor. The "enrolled bill" contains the complete text of the bill with the dates of passage certified by the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the Assembly.

File Number

The number assigned to a measure in the Assembly or Senate Daily File. The file number changes each day as bills move on or off the Daily File. These include measures on second and third reading; in conference; unfinished business (a bill amended in the other house and awaiting concurrence in amended form); and, in the Senate, Governor's appointments. Legislation is taken up on the Assembly or Senate Floor in chronological order according to file number. Items considered on the floor are frequently referred to by file number.

Fiscal Bill

Generally, a measure that contains an appropriation of funds or requires a State agency to spend money for any purpose. The Legislative Counsel determines which bills are fiscal bills. The designation appears at the end of the Legislative Counsel's Digest found on the first page of each bill. Fiscal bills must be heard by the Assembly and Senate Appropriations Committees in addition to the policy committees in each house.

4-Day File Notice

Officially known as Joint Rule 62(a), the requirement that all bills for the first committee of reference be noticed in the Daily File for four days prior to committee hearings where they will be considered. The second or subsequent committees of reference only require a notice of two days.

Inactive File

The portion of the Daily File containing legislation that is ready for floor consideration, but, for a variety of reasons, is dead or dormant. An author may move a bill to the inactive file and subsequently move it off the inactive file at a later date. During the final weeks of the legislative session, measures may be moved there by the leadership as a method of encouraging authors to take up their bills promptly.

May Revision

Occurring in early May, the updated estimate of revenues and expenditures that replaces the estimates contained in the Governor's budget submitted in January.

Pass on File

Bills are taken up during a Floor Session according to their member in the Assembly or Senate Daily File. An author may choose to "pass on file" thus temporarily giving up his or her chance to take up a measure on the floor.

Put Over

Action delayed on a legislative measure until a future date without jeopardy to the measure.

Reconsideration

A motion giving the opportunity to take another vote on the item in question. The motion for reconsideration must be accepted by a majority of the members present and voting.

Resolution

An opinion expressed by one or both houses which does not have the force of law. Concurrent and joint resolutions are voted on by both houses but do not require the Governor's signature.

Secretary Of The Senate

Principal parliamentarian and record keeper for the Senate, elected by Senators at the beginning of each two-year session. The Senate Secretary and his staff are responsible for publishing the Senate daily and weekly publications.

Sponsor

The legislator, private individual, or group who developed a piece of legislation and advocates its passage.

Spot Bill

A bill that amends a code section in such an innocuous way as to be totally nonsubstantive. The bill has been introduced to assure that a germane vehicle will be available at a later date after the deadline has passed to introduce bills. At that future date, the bill can be amended with more substance included.

Third Reading

Each bill introduced must be read three times before final passage. Third reading occurs when the measure is about to be taken up on the floor of either house for final passage.

Third Reading Analysis

A summary of a measure ready for floor consideration. Contains most recent amendments and information regarding how members voted on the measure when it was heard in committees. Senate floor analyses also list support or opposition information on interest groups and government agencies.\\\

Urgency Measure

A bill affecting the public peace, health, or safety and requiring a 2/3's vote for passage. An urgency bill becomes effective immediately upon enactment.

Urgency Clause

Language in a bill which states the bill will take effect immediately upon enactment. A vote on the urgency must precede a vote on the bill. A 2/3 vote is required for passage.

