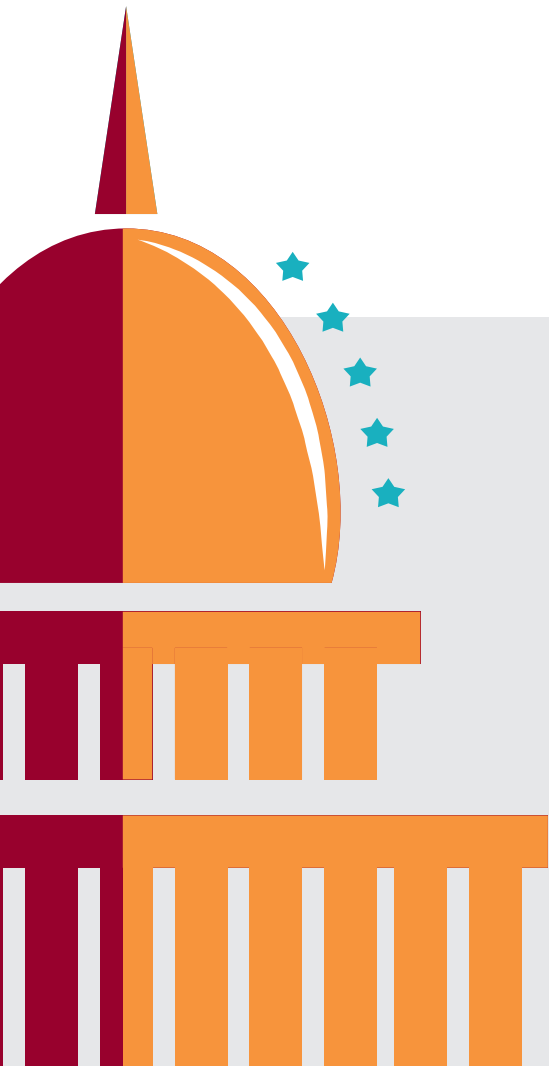




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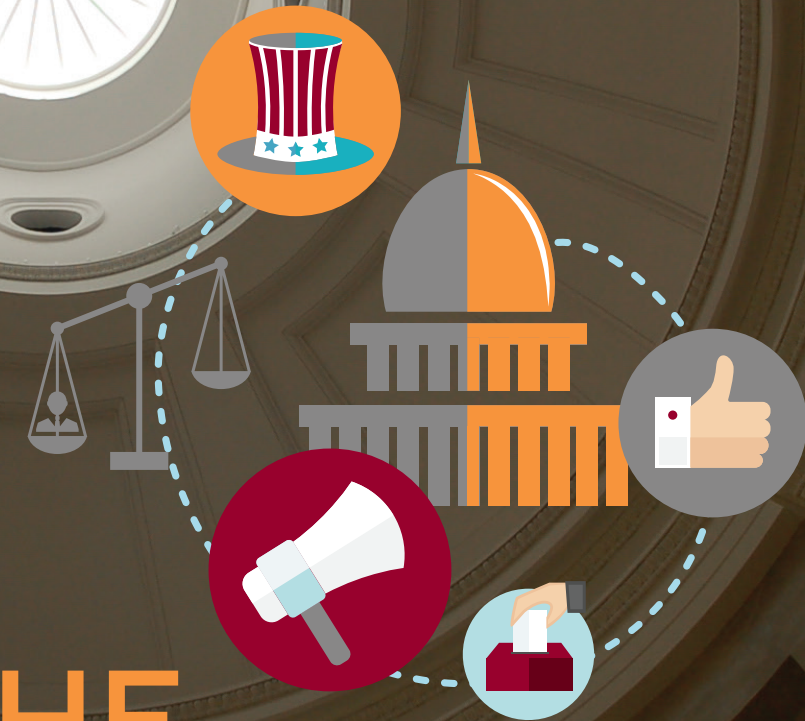


NC Farm Bureau staff constantly monitor legislation in both Raleigh and Washington, D.C. and advocate on behalf of farmers and rural communities at every opportunity. But as you know, there is no substitute for grassroots advocacy, and for that reason we encourage you to stay engaged in the legislative process – know your legislators, know the process, and stay informed. If you aren't already signed up, consider subscribing to our Daily Briefing and Capitol Roundup email newsletters, follow us on social media, and watch our weekly NC Farm Bureau Report video for the latest news on North Carolina agriculture. And if you feel you can do more, contact us to find out the many ways you can help make a difference – because your passion is what drives this organization and will keep agriculture growing for years to come.

# the LEADER



## THE LAWMAKING PROCESS IN NC







## THE LAWMAKING PROCESS IN NC

*North Carolina Farm Bureau is known across the state as one of the strongest grassroots organizations. At its core, the primary reason for our success and immense grassroots strength is passion. This organization has an unmatched passion for agriculture, rural communities and farmers that extends from the counties to Raleigh and even on to Washington D.C. It's something that keeps us strong and relevant, but we can't let down our guard.*

*With the current 24-hour news cycle and constant legislative movement, NC Farm Bureau must continue to adapt, keep our ear to the ground and ensure all of our members not only have relationships with legislators, but fully understand the legislative process. For that reason, we've put together several top-level questions about the legislative process for you to review and share with others in your community.*

### WHERE DOES THE IDEA FOR A BILL USUALLY COME FROM?

The path an idea takes to become a bill comes in many forms. It may be as simple as a single person calling their legislator with a problem they want addressed. It could be a national issue to which a large “think tank” group proposes a solution. Or, in the case of Farm Bureau policies, it is an issue that has been discussed by many stakeholders to arrive at a compromise solution.

### WHO CAN DRAFT BILLS AND WHAT'S THIS PROCESS LIKE?

Technically, any “competent” person may draft a bill, but in reality, most bills originate within the General Assembly itself. Legislators typically use non-partisan staff to draft bills to ensure that the language meets certain standards and is consistent. Even if an outside group proposes draft language, the bill drafting staff will review it prior to filing.

### WHO CAN INTRODUCE BILLS?

While anyone can influence or create the content of bills, only members of the NCGA can actually introduce bills to the legislature for consideration. Even the Governor can only express policy positions, for example, the Governor's budget. Most bills are introduced by individual legislators, but in the NCGA a bill may have up to four primary sponsors and an unlimited number of legislators have the option to co-sign the bill. There are limited instances where a committee may recommend and introduce a new bill.

### WHAT HAPPENS IN COMMITTEES?

After a bill is introduced, it will be assigned to committees based on the subject matter of the bill. In each committee, the bill sponsor will describe what the bill does and answer questions from other legislators on the committee. There is also an opportunity for the public to comment on the bill. Based on the discussion, legislators on the committee have the option of amending the bill, approving the bill, taking no action on the bill, disapproving the bill, or a combination. Because bills often go through multiple committees, each with its own series of discussions and proposals, the content of a bill can change frequently and without notice. This is why Farm Bureau staff attend committee meetings and closely monitor the progress of key legislation.

### AFTER APPROVAL BY A COMMITTEE, WHERE DOES THE BILL GO?

Once a bill has passed through all of the assigned committees it will be voted on by the full chamber (House or Senate). If it passes the vote of the full chamber, the bill is sent to the other chamber for consideration. Once in the second chamber, the bill will be assigned to the relevant committees of that chamber and the process repeats. Sometimes, the second chamber amends the bill and it has to be returned to the originating chamber for concurrence on the amended language.

### WHERE DOES IT GO AFTER IT PASSES BOTH THE HOUSE AND SENATE?

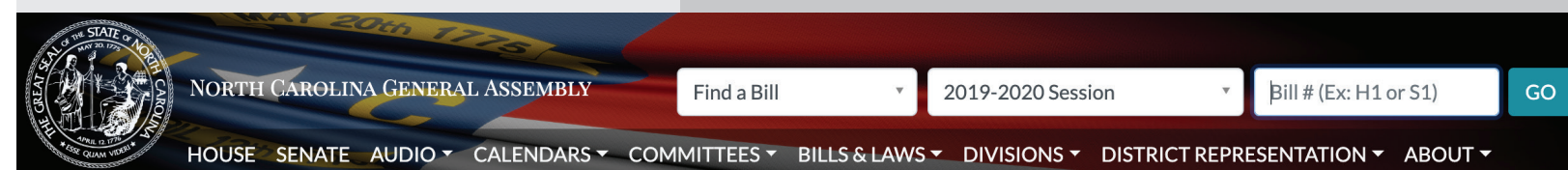
In most cases, once the exact same bill language has passed both chambers the bill is sent to the Governor for consideration. The Governor may sign the bill, veto the bill, or allow the bill to become law without his/her signature.

### WHAT IF THE GOVERNOR VETOES THE BILL?

The bill goes back to the original chamber with the veto message. The General Assembly can override the veto with a 3/5 majority vote in both chambers, in which case the bill then becomes law. If there is not a 3/5 majority vote, then the veto stands, and the bill does not become law.

## How to track a bill :

1. Go to the NC General Assembly's website at [www.ncleg.gov](http://www.ncleg.gov).
2. At the top of the web page you should see a bill search section that look like this:



3. In the box that says “BILL #” type in the bill#. You must put an “S” in front of the bill number if it is a Senate bill and an “H” in front of the bill number if it is a House bill. For example, the NC Farm Act would be S315.
4. Once you hit the “GO” button you will be able to read all versions of the bill, see the bill sponsors and read the most recent version.