

# ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON COMMUNICATIONS AND CONVEYANCE

## **2023 - 2024 COMMITTEE RULES**

*The Committee shall operate under the Joint Rules of the Legislature and the Standing Rules of the Assembly. The following Committee procedures and guidelines are designed to further expedite the conduct of Committee business.*

Committee hearings are held at the time and place designated in the Assembly Daily File, subject to the discretion of the Speaker. A majority of the entire Committee membership shall constitute a quorum.

### **1. WORKSHEET**

When a bill (or constitutional amendment or resolution) is referred to the Committee, Committee staff shall forward to the author a worksheet ("Background Information Request") to be completed as part of the preparation of the Committee analysis. To allow Committee staff adequate time to analyze the bill, the completed Committee worksheet and all relevant background information, including updated support and opposition letters, must be provided to the Committee no later than seven (7) calendar days after receipt of the worksheet or the due date assigned by the consultant. The Committee Chair may reschedule the bill hearing if the background worksheet is not received at least ten (10) calendar days prior to the proposed hearing date, and the "set" will count against the author's limit of three sets.

### **2. SETTING BILLS**

- (a) Initial Referral to Committee. No bill may be set, nor file notice published, until it has been referred to the Committee. Once referred, the Committee may set the bill for any available hearing date, at the discretion of the Chair.
- (b) 30-Day Waiting Period. No bill may be heard or acted upon until, after its introduction, it has been in print for 30 days. This rule may be suspended concurrently with the suspension of the requirement of Section 8(a) of Article IV of the California Constitution.
- (c) Notice. A bill being heard in the Committee of first reference must be noticed in the Daily File at least four (4) days prior to a hearing. Otherwise, notice shall be published in the Daily File two days prior to the hearing. This requirement can be waived by a majority vote of the Assembly.
- (d) Three Set Limit. A bill may be set for hearing in a Committee only three times. A bill is considered "set" when it has been noticed in the Daily File for one or more days. If the author postpones the hearing of a bill, or submits amendments in violation of Rule 6 below causing the hearing to be rescheduled, such action may count as a set. If the Committee postpones the hearing on the bill, such action shall not count as a set. If the Daily File indicates "testimony only," the hearing does not count as a set. This

requirement may be suspended by approval of the Rules Committee and a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Assembly.

- (e) Setting of Bills by Subject Matter. When, in the judgment of the Chair, more than one bill before the Committee deals with like subject matter, the Chair may schedule such bills to be heard together.

### **3. COMMITTEE ANALYSES**

A Committee analysis is required for every bill. Analyses will be provided electronically to the members of the Committee and to the authors before they are made available to the public. Analyses shall be made available to the public at least one working day prior to the hearing, with a "working day" being defined as any day on which the Assembly Daily File is published. In the case of special meetings, analyses shall be made available to the public at the beginning of the hearing.

### **4. ORDER OF AGENDA**

- (a) Priority of Authors. Bills of the Committee members shall be taken up after all other authors present have taken up their measures.
- (b) Consent Calendar. The Committee consent calendar may be taken up as determined by the Chair.
- (c) Special Orders of Business. When the Chair finds that another order of business would be more expedient, measures may be taken up out of order or set as a special order of business.
- (d) Author's Representative. If a bill is to be presented by someone other than the author, it will be taken up after all present authors (including those temporarily "passed over" and Committee members) have been accommodated. The representative must be an Assemblymember or Senator, a member of the author's staff, or staff of an Assembly or Senate committee. No lobbyist, sponsor or supporter of the bill may present the bill before the Committee. Members or staff other than the author wishing to present the bill must first provide the Committee with a signed authorization letter from the author.

### **5. CONSENT CALENDAR**

- (a) Chair's Recommendation. The Chair may, prior to a hearing, recommend bills for consideration on the Committee's consent calendar.
- (b) Removal. Any member of the Committee may request that a bill be removed from the Committee's consent calendar prior to the consent calendar being taken up. Upon such request, the Chair shall remove the bill from the consent calendar, direct that the author be notified of the change, and place the bill on the Committee's regular calendar.

## 6. AMENDING BILLS

- (a) Sharing Amendment Requests with the Committee. When submitting amendments to Legislative Counsel for a bill in the possession of the Committee, or a bill in the subsequent possession of the Senate or Assembly Floors, the author's office shall provide a copy to the Committee as a courtesy.
- (b) Providing Amendments to the Committee. Author's office shall submit the following documents to process "Author's amendments": signed original of the amendments in Legislative Council format, one "in-context" draft of the amendments, along with an updated worksheet and background materials. Documents shall be submitted electronically to the secretary and consultant no later than noon (12:00) nine (9) calendar days prior to the hearing date.

If substantive author's amendments are submitted to the Committee after noon (12:00) nine (9) calendar days prior to the hearing date, the bill may be put over, rescheduled for a subsequent hearing and a "set" may be counted against the author's limit of three sets. The Chair shall determine whether or not an amendment is substantive.

- (c) Amendments Offered in Committee. If an author offers amendments at the hearing, and the amendments are substantive, the Chair may put the bill over to allow adequate time for Committee staff to reanalyze the bill and provide an updated analysis to the Committee members. The Chair shall determine whether or not an amendment is substantive. Otherwise, the Chair shall generally characterize the amendments being voted upon prior to the roll being called. Committee staff shall be responsible for preparing any amendments adopted in Committee. Any amendments accepted during a committee hearing are considered committee amendments, and not author's amendments.
- (d) Amendments to a Two-Year Bill. Author's amendments in Legislative Counsel form should be submitted to the Committee no later than noon (12:00) on the first Monday in December of the odd-numbered year in order for the bill to be set for hearing, unless this requirement is waived by the Chair.
- (e) Urgency Clauses. A bill may not be amended to add an urgency clause unless the author of the amendment has secured the prior approval of the Assembly Rules Committee. Adoption of an urgency clause amendment requires a majority vote by the Committee.

## 7. MEETINGS

- (a) Open Meetings. All Committee meetings, except for an authorized closed session, shall be open and public, and all persons shall be allowed to attend the meetings.
- (b) Time and Place. The Committee shall meet at its regularly scheduled time as designated in the Assembly Daily File, unless otherwise permitted by the Assembly.
- (c) Special Meetings. A special meeting shall be held in an area readily accessible to the public and not in the Assembly Chamber during floor session, and the Committee shall take care that every effort is made to inform the public that a meeting has been called.

- (d) Direction of Discussion. The Chair shall direct the discussion of matters under consideration by the Committee.
- i. The Chair may permit questions to be asked by the members of the Committee in an orderly and efficient fashion and in keeping with proper decorum.
  - ii. A member who desires to address the Committee or ask questions of a witness shall first signal or respectfully address the Chair. Upon being recognized by the Chair, the member may speak, confining any remarks or questions to the merits of the matter under consideration by the Committee.
- (e) Limits on Testimony. When it is necessary, due to the number or complexity of the bills on the agenda at a hearing, to limit testimony on one or more of the bills in order to ensure that all of the bills on the agenda have a fair and reasonable opportunity to be presented and discussed by the Committee, the Chair, at their discretion, may do any or all of the following:
- i. Limit duplicative testimony;
  - ii. Limit the number of witnesses appearing in support or opposition to a bill; and,
  - iii. Limit the time allotted to the presentation of testimony on a bill provided that both support and opposition receive equitable time for their presentation.
- (f) Restrictions on Chair. The Chair shall not preside at a hearing on a bill if the Chair is the sole author or the lead author of the bill.
- (g) Role of Vice-Chair. If, at a hearing commenced by the Chair, the Chair is not present or otherwise is presenting a bill to the Committee, the Vice-Chair shall temporarily preside. If the Vice-Chair is absent when the Chair must also be absent, the Chair may designate another Committee member to temporarily assume their duties.

## 8. VOTING

- (a) Quorum. A majority of the entire Committee membership constitutes a quorum. A quorum is necessary to take action or to adopt amendments.
- (b) Vacancies & Abstentions. Any vacancy on the Committee shall not reduce the number of votes required to take action on a bill. If a member is disqualified from voting due to a conflict of interest pursuant to Joint Rule 44, there shall be no change in the quorum requirements or the number of affirmative votes required to reporting a bill out of Committee. A member with a conflict of interest shall advise the Chair of the abstention.
- (c) Call of the Committee. The Chair may, at any time, order a call of the Committee. If requested by any member of the Committee or the author of the bill under consideration, the Chair shall order a call. In such a case, the Chair shall send the Sergeant-at-Arms for those members who are absent and not excused by the Assembly.

- (d) Operation as a Subcommittee. If a quorum is not present, the Chair may commence the hearing as a subcommittee and receive testimony on any scheduled bill.
- (e) Voting on Bills. A majority of the entire Committee membership is required to report a bill out of Committee. Committee action on bills, including reconsideration, shall be by roll call vote, and shall show all votes for and against, all members absent, and all members not voting. In the case of a tie vote, a motion fails. The final action of the Committee shall be announced by the Chair.
- (f) Voting on Amendments. A majority of those present and voting is sufficient to adopt committee amendments, provided that a quorum is present. A roll call vote is required to recommend the adoption of any amendments to any bill in Committee.
- (g) Substitution of Prior Roll Call. The Committee may, upon unanimous consent of the members present, substitute a prior roll call, provided that the members whose votes are substituted are present at the time of the substitution.
- (h) Making of Motions. A member who desires to make a motion shall first obtain recognition by the Chair. The member shall then open by stating their motion, and may not speak to the merits of the motion at that time, but shall confine any remarks to those necessary to explain the motion. If the motion is in order and is seconded, the Chair shall state such to the Committee. If the motion is debated, the Member who made the motion shall be recognized to open debate on the motion.
- (i) A Second to a Motion. Except as otherwise provided, a motion shall require a second.
- (j) "Without Objection" Motions. A second is not required where the Chair makes a motion that begins with the words "without objection." If any member objects, the motion is automatically withdrawn.
- (k) Vote Add and Changes. Once the roll is closed and the final vote on a motion is announced, any member of the Committee may add or change their vote to the roll prior to adjournment of the hearing, unless the addition or change would affect the announced outcome of the motion.

## **9. RECONSIDERATION**

- (a) Single Opportunity. Reconsideration of a bill may be granted only one time.
- (b) Motion Requirements. A motion to reconsider can be made only under the following circumstances:
  - i. At the same meeting at which the bill is passed or defeated and the author is present; or,

- ii. Within 15 legislative days of the meeting at which the bill was defeated or prior to the interim study joint recess, whichever occurs first, in which case the same file notice is required as for setting a bill.
- (c) Notice of Reconsideration. Authors seeking reconsideration under Rule 9(b)(ii) above shall notify the Committee Chair in writing in order that notice of reconsideration may be published in the Daily File.
- (d) Unanimous Consent. The Chair, at their discretion, as a courtesy to any author, may offer reconsideration by unanimous consent for any bill that is defeated in Committee, unless there is objection by a Committee member.

## **10. INTERIM STUDY & INFORMATIONAL HEARINGS**

- (a) Interim Study. The Committee may refer the subject matter of any bill to the Rules Committee for interim study by a majority of those present and voting or by unanimous consent. The Committee may, however, subsequently reconsider and act on the bill.
- (b) Informational Hearings. The Chair may call the Committee to sit during interim or recess to conduct public hearings, gather information, discuss proposed legislation, or for any other proper purpose, conditioned on the approval of the Speaker and publication of the appropriate four-day file notice.
- (c) Geographic Restriction. Informational and oversight hearings outside of Sacramento are permitted during recesses, but the Committee may not act on a bill outside of Sacramento.

## **11. LETTERS OF SUPPORT AND OPPOSITION**

- (a) Position Letters: Letters communicating a formal position on a bill may be submitted to the Committee electronically via the Advocates Portal or by using the “Submit Position Button” on the Committee’s website. Stakeholders are encouraged to submit letters stating a clear “Support” or “Oppose” position. Letters that state a conditional position (ie; support if amended) will be listed in the analysis at the discretion of the Committee Consultant.
- (b) Letter Deadline. Position letters must be received by the Committee by noon (12:00) on the Friday of the week preceding the scheduled hearing of the bill in order for the position to be noted in the committee analysis. Letters received after that time may be referenced at the discretion of the Committee Consultant.
- (c) Letter Requirements. Position letters must be signed, on organizational letterhead where possible, and include the name and mailing address for the organization or individual expressing the position.
- (d) Updated Letters Position letters must reference the most current version of the bill being heard before the Committee. Individuals and organizations wishing to withdraw or update a previous position letter must communicate that information to the Committee in writing

prior to the release of the analyses. Letters in the possession of the Committee which are not addressed to the Committee, or which reference a prior version of a bill and have not been otherwise withdrawn, may be included at the discretion of the Committee Consultant if it deems the letter to have continuing relevance.

- (e) Letters for Oversight Hearings. Email your letter to [elizabeth.delgado@asm.ca.gov](mailto:elizabeth.delgado@asm.ca.gov) and [emilio.perez@asm.ca.gov](mailto:emilio.perez@asm.ca.gov) by noon (12:00) the day before hearing.

## **12. PUBLIC RECORDS**

- (a) Public Records. The Secretary is the custodian of the Committee's legislative records. The Secretary shall preserve the Committee's current legislative records and may store the Committee's past legislative records with the State Archives. The legislative records contained in an official Committee file that are in the possession of the Secretary are open to inspection and reproduction by the public in the Committee office by appointment during normal working hours, subject to Assembly requirements. The records held in the State Archives are open to inspection and reproduction pursuant to the procedures established by the Secretary of State.

## **13. COMMITTEE BILLS**

- (a) Requirements. The Committee may introduce a bill germane to any subject within the proper consideration of the Committee in the same manner as any member. A committee bill must contain the signature of a majority of the members of the Committee, including the Chair.
- (b) Naming of Authors. If all members of the Committee sign a bill, at the option of the Chair, the committee members' names need not appear as authors in the heading of the printed bill.
- (c) Consolidation. The Committee, at the discretion of the Chair, may consolidate related subject matter into a single legislative proposal whenever appropriate.

## **14. RULES**

- (a) Amendment of the Rules. These rules may be suspended or changed, or additional rules adopted, by a majority vote of the Committee consistent with the Joint Rules and the Rules of the Assembly.
- (b) Mason's Manual. In all cases not provided for by these rules, the most recently adopted Assembly or Joint Rules, or by statute, the authority shall be the most recent edition of Mason's Manual.

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