

# CHAMBER PROCEDURE

## Order of Business for Wednesday and Friday Sessions

- Call to order by the presiding officer (Speaker of the House, Senate President pro tempore, Lt. Governor)
- Invocation by a volunteer Delegate and Senator
- Announcements by the Clerk or the Legislative Counselors
- Proceed to the Order of Business
- The Clerk will be directed by the presiding officer to call the Calendar. As each bill is ready for debate, the Clerk will read the bill number and title.
- Once recognized by the presiding officer, the patron will stand to speak and explain the purpose of the bill.
- After explanation by the Patron, other members may request to speak or may ask the patron or any member to yield for the purpose of a question. All recognitions shall be determined by the presiding officer.
- The Majority Leader will be instructed to make most procedural motions, i.e. to recess, to adjourn, call for the pending question, etc....

## WHAT TO SAY AND HOW TO SAY IT:

### TO DO THIS

### YOU DO THIS

Be Recognized

Rise and address the presiding officer as follows: House: Mr. Speaker Senate: Mr. President

Ask a question of the Patron or of another member

Rise and be recognized, and in response to the presiding officer asking "For what purpose does the Delegate/Senator Rise?" you respond "to question the Patron/Delegate or Senator" or to ask "Will the Patron/Delegate or Senator yield for a question?"

The presiding officer will ask the Patron/Delegate or Senator if he will yield to a question. If he says yes, you proceed to ask your question and remain standing to hear the response. When the question has been answered, sit down. If you have a further question, you must ask again obtain permission by asking through the presiding officer, "Will the Patron/Delegate or Senator yield for a further question?" Follow the same procedure to continue with questions.

Speak

Rise and be recognized, and in response to the presiding officer asking "For what purpose does the Delegate/Senator rise?" you respond "To speak to the bill or resolution." You then have the floor and you may either speak for or against. When you finish your remarks, sit down.

Each member should have the opportunity to speak at least once prior to the presiding officer returning to a member that has previously spoken. This does not include recognition for the purpose of asking a member to yield to a question.

End Debate

The motion to end debate is usually reserved as a responsibility of the Majority Leader. If debate does not naturally come to a stop (i.e. nobody requests the floor), and debate is running long or points are being repeated, then the Speaker will usually call upon the Majority Leader to "Move the Pending Question." A vote is taken on the Motion for the Pending Question and, if agreed, then debate ends and the next vote is taken on the passage of the bill or resolution. If the motion for the pending question is defeated then debate continues unless debate time has concluded on the legislation.

## VOTING

In taking the vote in either the House of Delegates or the Senate, the presiding officer shall put each question to a voice vote and each question shall be as follows: "All in favor of passing Bill #\_\_\_\_\_ (or whatever the motion/question may be shall be stated), say 'Aye,' " and "those opposed say 'No.'" If the outcome is unclear or if a division is called for by any member, the outcome shall be determined by a show of hands with each member raising their right hand to be counted either for or against. All decisions shall then be announced by the presiding officer.

## DECORUM

**The presiding officer will be instructed to preserve order and decorum at all times. Each member's conduct should be guided by courtesy and respect to all members and their opinions.**