



Legislative Glossary

A

Act	An act is a bill that has passed both houses of the Legislature.
Adjournment	A motion to adjourn ends a session day's business and sets a future date and time to reconvene the next session day.
Adoption	A favorable action by a chamber on an amendment, motion, resolution, or memorial.
Agenda	A list of business, including proposed legislation, to be considered at a council or committee meeting or during a hearing.
Amendment	An amendment changes a bill or other proposed legislation. A council, or individual representative may propose amendments.
Analysis	A document prepared for each committee of reference for each bill. It summarizes the bill, explains its potential impact on current law and constituents, etc. Legislators use bill analyses to decide whether or not to support the passage of bills or to report bill favorably or unfavorably.
Apportionment and Redistricting	Legislative action taken after each ten-years, (census), to establish the membership size of the House and Senate and draw legislative districts to reflect population shifts as recorded by the census.
Appropriation and Implementing Bills	Bills authorizing the expenditure of public funds. These bills are effective for only one fiscal year.

B

Bill	A draft of a proposed law. A bill stands for all legislation, including joint resolutions, resolutions, memorials, or measures upon which a council or committee may be required to report.
Bill Number	Bills are numbered when filed for introduction. House bills receive odd numbers, while Senate bills receive even numbers.
Bill Summary	A brief explanation of the contents of a bill that appears at the end of each bill filed for introduction.

Budget The totality of appropriations measures passed by the Legislature. Submitted by the Governor to the Legislature, the budget recommends monetary allocations for each of the departments of the state for the next fiscal year. Using recommendations from the Governor and individual departments, each house prepares its own version of the budget. After the budgets go through the legislative process, one final version is then presented to the Governor.

C

Calendars Calendars provide official notification of bills to be considered, session, and council and committee meetings and hearings awaiting legislative action.

Caucus A private, though not necessarily closed, meeting of legislators. A caucus may be composed of members of a political party, members from a specific geographical area, or members allied for a temporary purpose. A party's position on pending legislation is often discussed in caucuses.

Chair The presiding officer for a floor session, council, or committee meeting.

Chamber Also known as the "floor", it is the room in which the Senate or the House of Representatives meets.

Claim Bill A claim for compensation for a particular individual or entity for injuries or losses caused by negligence or error on the part of a public office or agency.

Clerk of the House Of Representatives The person appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives to assist the members of the House in the detailed process of enacting laws and recording that history.

Coding Coding is the formatting that indicates changes within a bill. New material is underlined while deleted material is stricken through.

Committee A panel of legislators appointed by the respective presiding officers to consider important issues and to report its recommendations for action by the body that originated it.

Companion Bill Bills introduced in the House and Senate that are identical or substantially similar in wording. The use of companion bills allows bills in both bodies to move through the committee process at the same time.

Compare Bill Bills with some provisions that are similar in text.

Conference Committee A committee composed of members of the House (appointed by the Speaker) and members of the Senate (appointed by the President of the Senate) whose sole purpose is to resolve the differences between the two houses on the language of a bill.

Conference Committee Report	A conference committee will issue a report, which usually includes amendments. The report must either be adopted or rejected as whole by each house of the Legislature.
Constituent	A citizen who resides in an elected official's district.
Constitution	The written instrument embodying the fundamental principles of the state, which establishes power and duties of the government and guarantees certain rights to the people. It is the basic law of the state and is ratified by vote of the people.
Constitutional Amendment	A joint resolution that proposes a change to the State Constitution. After final passage and filing with the Secretary of State, a proposed constitutional amendment is presented to the voters at the next regular general election.
Convene	To assemble the Legislature, or either house thereof, for the purpose of conducting formal business.
Councils	A council is composed of House members appointed by the Speaker to direct the development of policy within a wider jurisdiction than that of a standing committee.
Council Substitute	A House bill going through the council hearing process can have numerous amendments changing the original concept of the bill. In these instances, the bill is rewritten and becomes a "council substitute." (CS)
D	
Debate	Legislators have the option of offering argument in opposition or support of an issue during session or a council or committee meeting.
Delegation	A group of legislators who represent parts of the same county or geographical area.
District	The area from which a State Senator, Representative, or Congressman is elected. The boundaries of State legislative and congressional districts are drawn during the apportionment and redistricting process.
E	
Enacting Clause	The phrase, "Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida" is required by the State Constitution to appear in every bill immediately before the provisions that are to become law.

Engrossed Bill	The version of a bill that incorporates adopted floor amendments. The revision is done in the house of origin and engrossed under the supervision of the Secretary of the Senate or the Clerk of the House.
Engrossing	The process of incorporating amendments adopted by a chamber into a bill.
Enrolled Bill	Once a bill has passed, it is enrolled in the house of origin under the supervision of the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate. After it has been enrolled and signed by officers of both houses, it is then sent to the Governor for action and transmittal to the Secretary of State. The version of the bill sent to the Governor is referred to as an enrolled bill.

F

Fiscal Year	For the state government of Florida, the period from July 1 to June 30 is referred to as the fiscal year for budgetary and accounting purposes.
Floor	The Chamber is also referred to as the “floor,” such as when a legislator takes the floor for debate.
Floor Amendment	When an amendment is offered in the Chamber during discussion of a measure.
Florida Statutes	An edited compilation of general laws of the State.

G

Gallery	The seating area above the legislative Chambers where the public may observe the houses during session.
General Bill	A bill of general statewide interest or whose provisions apply to the entire state. (SB, HB)

I

Identical Bill	Companion bills with identical language, including identical titles.
Impeachment	The Governor, Lieutenant Governor, members of the Cabinet, justices of the Supreme Court, and judges may be removed from office by impeachment. The House of Representatives has the sole power to impeach by a two-thirds vote of the members voting. The Senate tries all impeachments, with the Chief Justice of the Florida Supreme Court presiding. A two-thirds vote of the Senate is required to convict. If convicted, the officer is removed from office.
Initiative	Citizens can propose amendments to the Florida constitution by filing an initiative with the Secretary of State. An initiative must be signed by a specified number of citizen electors before it can be filed.
Instanter	Latin for “immediately.” A motion to take up an issue immediately.

Interim Refers to the period between the adjournment sine die of a regular session and the convening of the next regular session.

Introduction Refers to the first reading of a bill in the Legislature. Publication of a bill title in the Journal constitutes its first reading in that house.

J

Joint Committee Joint committees are composed of House and Senate legislators chosen by their respective presiding officers to oversee a specific legislative function.

Joint Resolution Joint resolutions are used to propose amendments to the Florida Constitution. They are also the form of legislation used for redistricting state legislative seats.

L

Law An act becomes a law after it has been approved by the Governor, allowed by the Governor to become law without his signature after his ability to veto the act within seven days after presentation has expired, or after the seven-day period or on the seventh day the Legislature adjourns sine die or takes a recess of more than 30 days. The Governor shall have 15 consecutive days from the date of presentation to either approve or veto the act.

Lay on the Table A motion to lay a measure on the table is typically the equivalent of rejecting the measure.

Legislature Florida has a bicameral legislature composed of a 40-member Senate and a 120-member House of Representatives. Senators serve four-year, staggered terms and Representatives serve two-year terms. Each house is the sole judge of the qualifications and elections of its members and has the power to choose its own officers and establish its own rules of procedure.

Linked Bill A bill that takes effect only if another bill passes.

Lobbyist A person registered with the Legislature who encourages, directly or indirectly, the passage, defeat, or modification of legislation on behalf of another party. The term derives from the fact that lobbyists usually stay in the areas (lobbies) next to the chambers of the Senate and the House, either to meet legislators as they walk to and from the chambers or await legislative action, which might affect their interest.

M

Majority Leader The legislator from the majority party designed by the presiding officer of each house to be the leader of the majority party members in that house.

Majority Party The political party having the most members in a house.

Message The houses of the Legislature send formal communications to each other regarding actions taken on bills. The Governor also sends messages to the Legislature informing them of his actions on bills.

Minority Leader The legislator elected by the minority party caucus or conference in each house to be the leader of the minority party members in that house.

Minority Party The political party that has less than a majority of members in a house.

Motion A formal proposal, usually oral, made by a legislator on the Chamber floor or in a council or committee meeting to take some procedural action before a legislative body.

O

Oath of Office An oath or vow taken by a public official prior to taking up his or her official duties.

Override To pass a bill after the Governor has vetoed it. This requires a two-thirds vote of each house.

P

Passage Favorable floor action on a bill. Bills and joint resolutions are passed, while memorials, amendments, and other resolution are adopted.

President of the Senate The presiding officer of the Senate. The Senate President is elected by the members in the Senate and serves for a term of two years.

President Pro Tempore A Senator who is elected by the full membership of the Senate for a term of two years. The Senate President Pro Tempore presides over the Senate Chamber whenever the Senate President is absent and no other Senator has been designated to preside.

Proclamation The formal pronouncement issued by the Governor, or jointly by the Senate President and House Speaker, calling the Florida Legislature into a special session. It describes the subject matter and the length of the session. It is also referred to as “the Call.”

Public Review Period A 72-hour public-review period required by the Constitution before a vote on final passage of a general appropriations bill may take place increasing state revenues.

Q

Quorum The Constitution requires a majority of the members elected to a house to be present before a session may convene or transact legislative business. The rules of each chamber impose the same requirement upon their committees. A simple majority (half of the membership, plus one) constitutes a quorum.

Quorum Call A motion-requesting members to come to the Chamber or council or committee meeting to establish the presence of a majority before transacting legislative business.

R

Readings The Constitution requires that a bill be read three separate times on three separate days before it can be passed.

Recess To end a day's session or a committee meeting.

Repeal To delete a previously passed law.

Roll Call An electronic vote or the calling of the roll of names to determine the outcome of a vote on a legislative matter.

Rules Provisions for the procedure, organization, officers, and committees of each house of the legislature.

S

Select Committee A committee created for the purpose of studying or investigating a specific matter within a specified time period.

Sergeant of Arms The person in each house who is responsible for the security of the legislative house and the maintenance of that house's property.

Session The period during which the legislature meets. There are five types of session that may be convened: extended, joint, organization, regular, and special. *Extended Session*: A regular or special session that has been prolonged beyond its allocated tie in order to complete action on introduced legislation. *Joint Session*: The annual session held the first day of a regular session in the House Chamber and attended by members of both houses, the Governor, the Cabinet, members of the Supreme Court, and invited guests. *Organization Session*: Directs the Legislature to convene on the 14th day after the general election, solely for the purpose of the election of officers, the appointment of committees, and the adoption of the rules. Organization Session is also known as Interim Session. *Regular Session*: The annual session that begins on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of each odd-numbered year, and on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in March of each even-numbered year, for a period not to exceed 60 consecutive days. *Special Session*: Special sessions may be called by Proclamation of the Governor, by Joint Proclamation of the House Speaker and the Senate President, or by the members of the Legislature for the purpose of considering specific legislation and shall not exceed 20 consecutive days unless extended by a three-fifths vote of each house.

Similar Bill As used in bill history, companion bills that are substantially similar in text or have substantial portions of text that are largely the same.

Sine Die	A Latin phrase meaning “without day” recognizing the end of a regular session.
Speaker of the House	The presiding officer of the House of Representatives, elected by the body at the Organization Session for a term of two years.
Speaker Pro Tempore	A member of the House of Representatives who is elected by the body to stand in for the Speaker under certain circumstances.
Special Order Calendar	A list of bills determined to be of high priority and scheduled for consideration in a specific sequence during a floor session on a particular day.
Sponsor	The legislator or council that files a bill for introduction. The sponsor’s name appears first on the bill and on any material dealing with the bill. A co-sponsor is a legislator who signs a bill in addition to the sponsor.
Standing Committee	A standing committee is created by rule with continuing authority to consider measures within its subject field.
Statutes	The compilation of individual laws which are the official laws of Florida.
Subcommittee	A subset of members from a committee, which performs duties as requested by a committee.

T

Temporarily Postponed	A motion can be made in the Chamber or in a council or committee meeting to temporarily defer consideration of a measure.
Term Limits	Constitutional limits on the number of consecutive terms a member may serve in the same chamber.

V

Veto	An objection by the Governor to an act passed by the Legislature.
Veto Override	If the Governor vetoes an act, the Legislature may override the veto by a vote of two-thirds in each house.
Veto, Line Item	The Governor may choose to veto specific items in a general appropriations act or any specific appropriation in a substantive act containing an appropriation.
Vote	A decision on a question. Types of votes include the following: <i>Extraordinary Vote:</i> Certain measures require more than a simple majority vote for passage; thus, such measures are said to require a “extraordinary vote.” <i>Favorable Vote:</i> The act of approving a pending legislative matter. <i>Tie Vote:</i> An equal number of legislators vote for and against a bill, amendment, or motion. The measure dies, having failed to receive a majority vote. <i>Unfavorable Vote:</i> The act of disapproving a pending

legislative matter. *Voice Vote*: An oral vote is allowed on some legislative issues such as motions, amendments, and resolutions. A voice vote cannot be used for passage of bills or joint resolutions.

Vote Board The electronic voting display located in each Chamber that shows how legislators vote on measures.

W

Waive the Rules A member may make a motion to waive the rules in the consideration of a measure on the Chamber floor. A vote of two-thirds is required for the motion to be agreed to.

Withdraw To remove a bill, amendment, or other measure from a council or committee or for further consideration in the Chamber.

Without Objection A phrase used by the presiding officer during session to indicate that he or she is disposing of a matter without taking a roll call vote of the members. It is understood that the members present unanimously approve the action taken.

Y

Yield A legislator may grant part of the allotted time for which he or she has the floor to another member.

WORDS COMMONLY REFERENCED

Charter School Charter schools are public schools that receive public money but generally have more flexibility in the rules, regulations, and statutes that apply to the traditional public school giving them more flexibility. Charter schools are attended by choice and admission is allocated by lottery-based admissions. However, the lottery is open to all students.

Magnet School Magnet Schools are public schools with specialized courses or curricula. "Magnet" refers to how the schools draw students from across the normal boundaries defined by authorities (usually school boards) as school zones that feed into certain schools.

Fundamental School

A fundamental school is a school whose purpose is to provide a traditional, standards based education for its students. The emphasis is on providing a rigorous academic program and on developing individual responsibility and independence in each student.

Fundamental schools are “magnet” schools providing equal access for all students of the district without consideration of the neighborhood where a child lives. Parents choose to have their children at the fundamental schools and agree to support the goals, philosophies and student and parent expectations.

Alternative School An alternative school is an institution that provides alternative education. It is an educational establishment with a curriculum and methods that are nontraditional. These schools have a special curriculum offering a more flexible program of study than a traditional school. They originated to serve a growing population of students who were not experiencing success in the traditional schools.

PARCC The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) is a consortium of 22 states plus the U.S. Virgin Islands working together to develop a common set of K-12 assessments in English and math anchored in what it takes to be ready for college and careers. These new K-12 assessments will build a pathway to college and career readiness by the end of high school.

Common Core State Standards

The Common Core State Standards Initiative is a U.S. education initiative that seeks to bring diverse state curricula into alignment with each other by following the principles of standards-based education reform.

With the implementation of new standards, states are also required to adopt new assessment benchmarks to measure student achievement. Formal implementation is expected to take place in the 2014–2015 school year.

Assessments Educational assessment is the process of documenting, usually in measurable terms, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs. Assessments can focus on the individual learner, the learning community (class, workshop, or other organized group of learners), the institution, or the educational system as a whole.

