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ENGROSSED BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

When one House passes a bill, it officially becomes designated as "An Act," and all bills and resolutions passed by one House are engrossed before being messaged to the other House.

When a bill or resolution which has passed one House is passed by the other, if amended, the amendments only are engrossed before being messaged back to the House of origin. Should the House of origin concur in the amendments of the other House with amendments, these too would be engrossed and returned to the latter House.

The Senate uses white paper for its engrossment of bills, resolutions, and amendments, and the House uses blue paper for its engrossment of bills, resolutions, and amendments.

(U.S. Code, Title 1, Section 106)

[Law on Engrossments]

Every bill or joint resolution in each House of Congress shall, when such bill or resolution passes either House, be printed, and such printed copy shall be called the engrossed bill or resolution as the case may be. Said engrossed bill or resolution shall be signed by the Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate, and shall be sent to the other House, and in that form shall be dealt with by that House and its officers, and, if passed, returned signed by said Clerk or Secretary. When such bill, or joint resolution shall have passed both Houses, it shall be printed and shall then be called the enrolled bill, or joint resolution, as the case may be, and shall be signed by the presiding officers of both Houses and sent to the President of the United States. During the last six days of a session such engrossing and enrolling of bills and joint resolutions may be done otherwise than as above prescribed, upon the order of Congress by concurrent resolution.

Amendments to:

See also "Third Reading," pp. 245–247.

After a bill or resolution has been ordered engrossed and read a third time, an amendment thereto is not in order except by unanimous consent, or unless the previous action is reconsidered.[1]

[1] *See* "Third Reading," pp. 245–247.

By unanimous consent or without a point of order being raised, engrossed bills have been amended by action of conferees with later approval by the House and Senate; [2] the Senate has agreed to a House amendment to a Senate bill with an amendment to the text of its bill, and the House later agreed to the Senate amendment to the House amendment; [3] and the House has amended the text of an engrossed bill, in considering amendments in disagreement between the two Houses, with the Senate subsequently concurring in the House action.[4]

Business for Purpose of Quorum:

The engrossment and third reading of a measure is defined as business for the purpose of calling a quorum.[5]

Clerical Corrections:

By unanimous consent, the Secretary of the Senate has been authorized on many occasions to make necessary technical and clerical changes in the engrossment of certain bills or amendments to House bills.[6]

In 1962, the Senate amended a House bill, passed it as amended, and subsequently authorized and directed the Secretary of the Senate, in the engrossment of the amendment, to make a technical change in the language thereof, by the adoption of such an order.[7]

Demand for Reading of, Delays Passage One Day:

A demand for the reading of an engrossed bill prior to the usual reading of the bill by title on its third reading would defer action on its passage until the bill has been engrossed, and the copy received from the printer.[8]

Duplicates of Engrossed Bills Furnished When Original Lost:

See also "Lost in Processing and Duplicates Furnished," p. 238.

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[2] Oct. 29, 1942, 77-2, *Journal*, p. 459; *see also* House Report 1247 on S.1285 of 78th Cong., 2d sess.

[3] July 18, 1949, 81-1, *Record*, p. 9689.

[4] Mar. 9 and 13, 1939, 76-1, *Record*, pp. 2526-28, 2610, 2628.

[5] Dec. 4, 1942, 77-2, *Record*, p. 9328.

[6] *See* July 2, 1954, 83-2, *Record*, p. 9619; Feb. 8, 1956, 84-2, *Record*, p. 2348.

[7] Mar. 19 and 20, 1962, 87-2, *Record*, pp. 4477, 4547.

[8] *See* May 27, 1940, 76-3, *Record*, p. 6903; House precedent, May 10, 1939, 76-1, *Record*, p. 5404; "Third Reading," pp. 196-98; Sept. 10, 1959, 86-1, *Record*, p. 18914.

The Senate has furnished the House with duplicate copies of engrossed bills in compliance with its request, and the House has furnished the same to the Senate, in compliance with its request.[9]

Indefinitely Postponed:

In one case, after a Senate bill had been passed by both Houses and engrossed, it was discovered that the beneficiary had died, and the bill was indefinitely postponed by a concurrent resolution.[10]

Reconsideration of Engrossed Bill:

When the vote rejecting a joint resolution has been reconsidered an amendment is not in order unless the votes ordering the engrossment and third reading thereof are also reconsidered.[11]

Rejection of Engrossed Bill:

The rejection of the question of engrossing a Senate bill has the effect of killing it.[12]

Return of From House, Pursuant to Request of Senate:

See "Usages of Concurrent Resolutions," pp. 446–448.

Suspended Toward End of Session, Engrossment of Bills:

On different occasions, by concurrent resolution, during the closing days of a session, the engrossing and enrolling of measures by printing was suspended, and they were ordered to be engrossed and enrolled by the most expeditious methods consistent with accuracy.[13]

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[9] July 19, 1886, 49–1, *Record*, p. 7147; Jan. 10, 1887, 49–2, *Record*, p. 474; Feb. 7, 1887, 49–2, *Record*, p. 1438; Jan. 31, 1895, 53–3, *Record*, p. 1562; May 15 and 16, 1894, 53–2, *Record*, pp. 4747, 4796; June 28, 1906, 59–1, *Record*, p. 9472.

[10] Feb. 6 and 7, 1952, 82–2, *Record*, pp. 886, 907.

[11] May 22, 1934, 73–2, *Record*, p. 9241.

[12] Apr. 14, 1938, 75–3, *Record*, p. 5409; Mar. 20, 1890, 51–1, *Record*, p. 2436; for similar instances *see also* May 3, 1792, 2–1, *Journal*, p. 437; May 12, 1796, 4–1, *Journal*, p. 255; May 25, 1796, 4–1, *Journal*, p. 273; May 30, 1796, 4–1, *Journal*, p. 281; and June 1, 1796, 4–1, *Journal*, p. 287.

[13] Mar. 4, 1927, 69–2, *Journal*, p. 282, *Record*, p. 5916; Feb. 28, 1931, 71–3, *Record*, p. 6491; Feb. 25, 1929, 70–2, *Journal*, p. 210, *Record*, p. 4230.

Yeas and Nays Ordered on Engrossment:

The Senate on different occasions has ordered the yeas and nays on the question of the engrossment of Senate bills,[14] as well as on the question of the engrossment and third reading of a Senate bill,[15] which has occasionally been determined in the negative.

[14] Jan. 21, 1884, 48-1, *Record*, p. 526; Feb. 19, 1884, 48-1, *Record*, p. 1239.
[15] July 17, 1888, 50-1, *Journal*, p. 1122; Mar. 20, 1890, 51-1, *Record*, p. 2436.