

# 12 Steps to Make a LAW in Tennessee

# 1



Someone says to a legislator:

**“THERE OUGHT TO BE A LAW...”**

# 2

The **LEGISLATOR WRITES** and **SPONSORS** a bill to the Tennessee General Assembly.  
▶ It must be **READ, REVIEWED** and **PASSED 3 times** by **BOTH Senate and House** to become a law. The time for this process will vary with each chamber.

# 3



**FIRST READING:** The bill is read and reviewed in each chamber. If there are no objections, it receives a number and is assigned to a **COMMITTEE** for a comprehensive study.

# 5

If there are **NO OBJECTIONS** the **COMMITTEE**:

- can pass the bill and send it to the **SECOND READING** (with or without amendments), or
- can pass it and send it to another committee, or
- can pass it and send it to the calendar committee.



# 4

In the **COMMITTEE**, the sponsor requests a public hearing, in which the committee discusses the bill and listens to comments. Public participation is encouraged!

# 6

**SECOND READING:** The bill is read, discussed, and debated by both chambers.



# 7

**THIRD READING:** The bill is placed on the calendar for a **FLOOR VOTE**. It is read for the third time, debated, and voted on by all members in both chambers.

# 8



The **SENATE** and the **HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES** **MUST AGREE** on **ALL PARTS** of the **BILL** and its **AMENDMENTS** **BEFORE** it can **BECOME** a **LAW**.

# 9(a)

If the **SENATE** and the **HOUSE DISAGREE**:

- one chamber can concur with the other's bill version and send it to the governor, or
- they form a **CONFERENCE COMMITTEE** made of Senators and Representatives who reconcile the differences. That bill is sent to both chambers for a final vote. If approved, the new bill is sent to the **Governor**.



# 9(b)

If the **SENATE** and the **HOUSE AGREE** the bill is sent to the **Governor** for a signature.



# 10

The **GOVERNOR** has ten days to sign the bill into law. He also has the authority to

- veto it, or
- allow it to become law without his signature, or
- reduce or disapprove any sum of money appropriated in the bill.



# 11

If **VETOED**, the bill goes back to the legislature for reconsideration. A two-thirds vote of both the Senate and the House is required to overturn a veto and the reduced or disapproved monies.

# 12

**THE BILL BECOMES A LAW**

if the Governor signs it, or both the Senate and the House of Representatives override the Governor's veto.



*This infographic is provided by the Tennessee Catholic Public Policy Commission*