

## Legislative Glossary

*Questions? Please contact WSBA's Outreach & Legislative Affairs Coordinator:*

*[Clark McIsaac](#), (206) 733-5991.*

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# A

<b>ACT</b>	A bill adopted by the Legislature.
<b>AD HOC COMMITTEE</b>	A committee formed for a short duration, usually to study a specific issue.
<b>ADJOURN SINE DIE</b>	To conclude a regular or special session without setting a day to reconvene.
<b>ADOPTED AND ENGROSSED</b>	This is the amendment document which includes the text of the original amendment and all additional amendments made to it.
<b>AMENDMENT</b>	Any change in a bill, resolution, or memorial. A committee amendment is an amendment proposed in a committee meeting. A floor amendment is an amendment proposed on the floor of a legislative chamber. A striking amendment removes everything after the title and inserts a whole new bill. Amendments can be amended.
<b>APPEAL FROM DECISION OF THE CHAIR</b>	A parliamentary procedure for challenging the decision of a presiding officer by asking the members to uphold or reject the decision.
<b>APPROPRIATION COMMITTEE</b>	The chief fiscal committee in the House. The committee is responsible for recommending how state monies will be spent.

# B

<b>BIENNIUM</b>	Two-year period. The Washington State fiscal biennium is from July 1 of odd-numbered years to June 30, two years later.
<b>BILL</b>	A proposed law presented to the Legislature for consideration.

<b>BILL DIGEST</b>	Summary of a bill, prepared by the Code Reviser's office.
<b>BILL HISTORY</b>	A record of the action taken on bills, resolutions and memorials.
<b>BILL INDEX</b>	A list of legislative measures by subject matter.
<b>BILL REPORT</b>	Summary of background and effect of bills, prepared by committee staff.
<b>BUMPING</b>	Slang term for suspending the rules to allow a bill to be advanced from second to third reading without having the bill revert to the Rules Committee.

## C

<b>CAUCUS</b>	A meeting of members of a body who belong to the same political party.
<b>CHIEF CLERK</b>	A person elected by the members of the House of Representatives to record the official actions of the House and to be the chief administrative officer of the House.
<b>CODE REVISER</b>	Operating under the supervision of the Statute Law Committee, this person codifies into the appropriate sections of the RCW those measures enacted into law by the Legislature and also codifies administrative rules adopted by executive branch agencies.
<b>COMPANION BILL</b>	A bill introduced in the same form in both the House and the Senate.
<b>CONCURRENCE CALENDAR</b>	A list of own-house bills amended by the opposite body and returned for possible concurrence.
<b>CONCURRENT RESOLUTION</b>	A resolution relating to the internal operation of the Legislature, in which one house concurs in the action of the other; it may originate in

either house.

**CONFERENCE CALENDAR** A list of bills to which both bodies have appointed conferees to discuss differences and seek resolution.

**CONFERENCE COMMITTEE** A committee which may be appointed to discuss specific differences of opinion between the House and Senate on bills which have passed each house but with differing positions on one or more amendments.

**CONSENT CALENDAR** Special calendar of noncontroversial bills created by the Senate Rules Committee. Closely related to the Suspension Calendar used in the House.

**CUTOFF DATES** Time certain set by a legislative body for specified action such as bill introduction, committee action, or passage of bills by either house.

## D

**DISPUTE CALENDAR** Bills amended by one body where the second body refuses to concur and asks the first body to recede.

**DIVISION** A method of voting by standing.

**DIVISION OF QUESTION** Consideration of each item separately.

## E

**EFFECTIVE DATE** The date a bill, once passed, becomes law. Unless a different date is specified, bills become law ninety days after Sine Die.

**EMERGENCY** A provision in a bill that allows a measure to become effective

<b>CLAUSE</b>	immediately upon the signature of the Governor.
<b>ENGROSSED AMENDMENT</b>	When an amendment has been amended, the changes are worked into the text to create the engrossed amendment.
<b>ENGROSSED BILL</b>	A bill which reflects all amendments made in the house of its origin.
<b>ENROLLED BILL</b>	A bill passed by both houses, which incorporates all amendments, and to which has been attached a certificate of enrollment indicating the date passed, votes cast on the bill, and the certifying officers' signatures. It is presented to the Governor for signature.
<b>EXECUTIVE SESSION</b>	A meeting for committee members to discuss and vote on bills they wish to report out of committee. These meetings are open to the public but no testimony is taken. Note that in other contexts executive sessions are closed to the public.

## F

<b>FIRST READING</b>	First of three readings required to pass measures. Bills on first reading are introduced and referred to standing committees.
<b>FISCAL NOTE</b>	An estimate of the expected cost of a measure to state and/or local government. Fiscal notes are prepared by the affected agencies and the Office of Financial Management (OFM).
<b>FISCAL YEAR</b>	The state fiscal year (FY) is July 1 through June 30.
<b>FLOOR RESOLUTION</b>	A written motion calling for action, which may be offered from the floor of either house. Floor resolutions are usually congratulatory, commendatory, or memorial.

## ...J

<b>JOINT COMMITTEE</b>	Committee which consists of members from both houses.
<b>JOINT MEMORIAL</b>	A message or petition addressed to the President and/or Congress of the United States, or the head of any other agency of the federal or state government, asking for consideration of some matter of concern to the state or region. Proposed amendments to the U.S. Constitution are also in the form of joint memorials.
<b>JOINT RESOLUTION</b>	An act of the Legislature which proposes an amendment to the state Constitution for reference to the people for acceptance or rejection. To pass, joint resolutions must receive a two-thirds affirmative vote of the members elected in each house.
<b>JOURNAL</b>	Official record of action of legislative session.

## ...L

<b>LEGISLATIVE BUDGET NOTES</b>	Document providing detail about the biennial operating budget.
<b>LEGISLATIVE DIGEST AND HISTORY OF BILLS</b>	A publication issued periodically containing the sponsors, titles, short digest of content, legislative actions, and veto messages of the Governor for each bill, memorial, resolution, and gubernatorial appointment.
<b>LEGISLATIVE REPORT</b>	Summary of legislation passed during one or more legislative sessions.

**LIST** A way to organize bills in the legislature’s bill tracking website. This tool allows multiple bills to be tracked in one group, or to be tracked in separate groups. Similar to organizing document files in folders on your computer.

## M

**MAJORITY LEADER** Leader of the majority party in the state Senate. In the House, second in command to the Speaker. Elected by the majority caucus in each body.

**MAJORITY REPORT** Document bearing the signatures of a majority of the members of a committee recommending a particular action on a measure.

**MEASURE** Any matter before a body such as a bill, memorial, or resolution.

**MINORITY REPORT** Document carrying signature(s) of a minority of the members of a committee recommending an action different from the majority.

## N

**NULL AND VOID CLAUSE** Language specifying that a measure is invalid unless funding is provided in the budget by a specified date.

## O

**OFM** Office of Financial Management. The chief executive agency for evaluating the budget, preparing fiscal notes, and providing fiscal policy analysis to the Governor.

**ORDER OF  
CONSIDERATION**

A list of measures anticipated to be acted upon by the House or Senate on a particular day.

## P

**PASSAGE OF BILL**

The act of passing a bill by either or both houses of the Legislature.

**PREFILING**

The act of introducing a bill prior to the beginning of session. Prefiling starts on the first Monday in December prior to the commencement of the session, or twenty days prior to a special session.

**PRESIDENT PRO  
TEMPORE**

A senator elected by the Senate to discharge the duties of presiding officer in the Lieutenant Governor's absence.

**PRIME SPONSOR**

The originator or first name on a bill or amendment that has been introduced.

**PROVISO**

A clause in a bill that sets out specific exceptions to the general law.

**PULL**

Slang term for moving a bill. For example, Rules Committee members may move (pull) bills from the Green sheet to the floor for action by the full Senate or from the White sheet to the Green sheet, or members may vote to pull a bill from a committee to the floor.

## ...R

**RCW**

Revised Code of Washington - A codification of current statutes as enacted and amended.

**RECALL**

The recall is the vote of the people which, in effect, tries the elective public officer on charges brought against the officer. All elective public



officers except judges of courts of record are subject to recall and discharge from elective offices.

**REPORTING OUT** Action by a committee on a measure which moves the measure out of the committee. A measure may be reported out with a do pass, do not pass, amend, substitute, refer to another committee, or no recommendation.

**ROLL CALL** Record of how members voted on a particular issue or question.

**RULES REVIEW** The list of bills eligible for consideration to be moved to the House Rules Consideration list or calendar. Equivalent to the Senate White sheet.

## S

**SECOND READING** The reading of a bill for the second time, in full, in open session, opening it to amendatory action.

**SEVERABILITY CLAUSE** A section of a bill which instructs the court that if one section of the act is found unconstitutional, the remainder of the act will remain intact.

**SHORT TITLE** An abridged description of the bill.

**SINE DIE** To conclude a regular or special session without setting a day to reconvene.

**SPECIAL SESSION** A session of no more than 30 days, convened by the Governor or the Legislature, following adjournment of the regular session. The Legislature, upon two-thirds vote of all members, may call itself into special session.

**SPONSOR** Member offering a bill, amendment, resolution or memorial.

<b>STRIKE OUT</b>	To delete language from a bill or resolution.
<b>STRIKING AMENDMENT</b>	Amendment removing everything after the title and inserting a whole new bill. Strikers can be amended, therefore, you might see a designation for Adopted as Amended. The version of the amendment with the changes worked into the text is labeled "Engrossed."
<b>SUBSTITUTE</b>	A version of a bill offered by a committee in the first house. If adopted, the substitute replaces the original bill or resolution. The floor and the second house cannot offer substitutes.
<b>SUPPLEMENTAL BUDGET</b>	Changes in the second year of the biennium to funds allocated in the original capital, operating, or transportation budgets.

## T

<b>THIRD READING</b>	The final consideration of a bill before either house. The bill can be debated, tabled, referred, but not amended. Final passage takes a constitutional majority.
<b>TITLE-ONLY BILL</b>	A bill which contains nothing more than a title and a number. It is introduced in order to have a vehicle on which to amend substance at a later time.

## U

<b>UNFINISHED BUSINESS</b>	Business which has been laid over from a previous day.
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## V

**VETO** Rejection of a bill by the Governor. The Governor has power to veto sections of bills but cannot make any additions. The Governor can also veto appropriation items. To pass a bill over a Governor's veto takes a two-thirds vote of both houses and is known as overriding a veto.

## W

**WAC** Washington Administrative Code. The administrative rules and regulations by which state agencies operate to execute the Laws enacted by the Legislature.

**WASHINGTON STATE REGISTER** A monthly publication which lists all proposed new agency rules and regulations as well as proposed amendments, meeting notices, etc.

**WHIP** An assistant to the majority or minority leader, the duties of the whip include counting votes, checking attendance, and maintaining caucus discipline on partisan issues and procedural questions.

**WORK SESSION** Informal discussion of a measure or topic by a committee. No executive action or amendments are permitted.

## X...

**X-FILE** The House and Senate Rules Committees may place bills that will go no further in the process on the "X-file."