

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

U.S. Senate Documents

Congress of the United States

---

2021

## Glossary of Legislative Terms: Brief Explanations of Legislative Terms Used Throughout Congress.gov, United States Congress

United States Congress

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/senatedocs>



Part of the [American Politics Commons](#), [Defense and Security Studies Commons](#), [Other Public Affairs, Public Policy and Public Administration Commons](#), [Peace and Conflict Studies Commons](#), [Policy Design, Analysis, and Evaluation Commons](#), [Policy History, Theory, and Methods Commons](#), [Public Administration Commons](#), [Public Affairs Commons](#), and the [Public Policy Commons](#)

---

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Congress of the United States at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in U.S. Senate Documents by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

## Glossary of Legislative Terms:

### Brief Explanations of Legislative Terms Used Throughout Congress.gov.

#### United States Congress

## A

**Action codes** – [Action codes](#) identify stages that condense detailed [legislative action steps](#).

**Adjourn** – Formally end a meeting of a chamber or committee.

**Adjournment sine die** – An adjournment that terminates an annual session of Congress. A sine die (“without day”) adjournment sets no day for reconvening, so that Congress will not meet again until the first day of the next session. Under the Constitution, adjournment sine die (except when the next session is about to convene) requires the agreement of both chambers, accomplished through adoption of a [concurrent resolution](#), which in current practice also authorizes leaders of either chamber to reconvene its session if circumstances warrant.

**Amendment** – A proposed change to a pending text (for example, a bill, resolution, another amendment, or a treaty [or an associated resolution of ratification]).

See also, [Proposed/offered Senate amendment](#) and [Submitted Senate amendment](#).

**Amendment exchange** – Also referred to as “amendments between the houses” or, colloquially, “[ping-pong](#).” A method for reconciling differences between the two chambers’ versions of a measure by sending the measure back and forth between them until both have agreed to identical language.

**Amendment in the nature of a substitute** – Amendment that seeks to replace the entire text of an underlying measure.

## B

**Bicameral** – Literally, “two chambers;” in a legislative body, having two houses (as in the House of Representatives and the Senate comprising the U.S. Congress).

**Bill** – The primary form of legislative measure used to propose law. Depending on the chamber of origin, bills begin with a designation of either H.R. or S.

[Joint resolution](#) is another form of legislative measure used to propose law.

## B (continued)

**Bill summary** – Upon introduction of a bill or resolution in the House or Senate, legislative analysts in the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress write a short summary that objectively describes the measure’s significant provisions. Introduced version summaries are subject to length limitations as a matter of policy.

When a measure receives action (for example, it is reported from a committee or passed by the House or Senate), the analysts then write an expanded summary, detailing the measure’s effect upon programs and current law. Bill summaries are written as a result of a congressional action and may not always correspond to a document published by the [Government Publishing Office \(GPO\)](#). A final public law summary is prepared upon enactment into law.

Each summary description identifies the date and version of the measure: for example, Passed House (03/08/2019).

**Budget resolution** – A measure (provided for by the [Congressional Budget Act of 1974](#), as amended) that sets forth a congressional budget plan, including aggregate budgetary levels, which may be enforced during the subsequent consideration of spending and revenue legislation. It is in the form of a [concurrent resolution](#) (for example, an H.Con.Res or an S.Con. Res), not a law-making vehicle; as such, it is not submitted to the president.

**By request** – A designation on a measure indicating that the member has introduced the measure on behalf of someone else (for example, the President or an executive branch agency), or pursuant to statutory requirements, and may not necessarily support its provision. See [bills introduced by request](#).

## C

**Calendar** – Lists of measures, motions, and matters that are (or soon will become) eligible for consideration on the chamber floor; also, the official document that contains these lists and other information about the status of legislation and other matters. The House has four such calendars, published as one document; the Senate publishes two.

**CBO - Congressional Budget Office** – The [Congressional Budget Office](#) is a legislative branch agency that produces independent analyses of budgetary and economic issues to support the Congressional budget process.

**Cloture** – The method by which a supermajority (typically, three-fifths) of the Senate may agree to limit further debate and consideration of a question (for example, a bill, amendment, or other matter). Details of the procedural process are provided for in Rule XXII of the Senate standing rules.

## C (continued)

**Codification measure** – Codification measures are not available in XML at this time, therefore XML/HTML text formats should not be expected to be available from [Congress.gov](https://www.congress.gov) nor from govinfo.

[Data Anomalies](#) lists some codification measures.

**Committee/Subcommittee** – A panel (or subpanel) with members from the House or Senate (or both) tasked with conducting hearings, examining and developing legislation, conducting oversight, and/or helping manage chamber business and activities.

**Committee-related activity** – A committee or subcommittee may interact with a bill in a variety of ways. Bills may be [referred](#) to or discharged from a committee by the full chamber. Committees [markup](#) bill texts, hold [hearings](#) to learn more about a topic, or may express [legislative interest](#). Committees [report legislation](#) out to the full chamber recommending or disapproving consideration or may report an [original bill](#).

**Committee chair** – The member of the majority party on a committee who has formal responsibility over the panel’s agenda and resources, presides at its meetings, and can, in some circumstances, act on the committee’s behalf.

**Committee of the Whole** – A parliamentary device designed to allow greater participation in floor consideration of measures. It can be understood as the House assembled in a different form; it is a committee of the House composed of every Representative that meets in the House chamber. The House considers many major measures in the Committee of the Whole.

**Committee report** – Document accompanying a measure reported from a committee. It contains an explanation of the provisions of the measure, arguments for its approval, votes held in markup, individual committee members’ opinions, cost estimates, and other information.

Committee reports are published in the [congressional report](#) document series.

**Communications** – Written statements, messages or petitions sent to the Congress by the President of the United States, executive branch officials, or state or local governments. Types of communications include [executive communications](#), [presidential messages](#), [petitions](#), and [memorials](#).

**Companion measure** – Identical or substantially similar measures introduced in the other chamber.

[Identical bills](#), [procedurally-related measures](#), and legislation with [text similarities](#) are other [related bill](#) types.

## C (continued)

**Concurrent resolution** – A form of legislative measure used for the regulation of business within both chambers of Congress, not for proposing changes in law. Depending on the chamber of origin, they begin with a designation of either H.Con.Res. or S.Con.Res.

[Joint resolutions](#) and [simple resolutions](#) are other types of resolutions.

**Conferees** – Members of the House and Senate appointed to a conference committee. Also sometimes called “managers.”

**Conference committee** – Temporary joint committee created to resolve differences between House-passed and Senate-passed versions of a measure.

**Conference report** – The document presenting an agreement reached by a joint temporary committee (a conference committee) appointed to negotiate a compromise between the House and Senate.

Conference reports are published in the [Congressional Record](#) and also in the [congressional report](#) document series.

**Congress (that is, 2-year time-frame)** – When referring to a time-period (for example, the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress which convened on January 6, 2015) rather than the legislative branch generally, a Congress is the national legislature in office (for approximately two years). It begins with the convening of a new Congress comprising members elected in the most-recent election and ends with the [adjournment sine die](#) of the legislature (typically after a new election has occurred).

***Congressional Record*** – The *Congressional Record* is the official record of the proceedings and debates of the U.S. Congress. For every day Congress is in session, an issue of the Congressional Record is printed by the Government Publishing Office. Each issue summarizes the day’s floor and committee actions and records all remarks delivered in the House and Senate.

For more on the *Congressional Record*, see [About the Congressional Record](#).

**Congressional report** – Congressional reports originate from congressional committees and deal with proposed legislation or issues under investigation. Congress issues different types of reports, including [committee reports](#), [conference reports](#), and [executive reports](#).

Congressional reports may be issued by the House or Senate. Depending on the chamber of origin, report citations begin with the Congress number during which it was issued and either H. Rpt. or S. Rpt., and an accession number (for example, 112 H. Rpt. 1). Congressional reports are compiled in the [U.S. Congressional Serial Set](#).

## C (continued)

**Continuing resolution (continuing appropriation)** – An appropriations act (typically in the form of a joint resolution) that provides stop-gap (or full-year) funds for federal agencies and programs to continue operations when the regular (or annual) appropriations acts have not been enacted by the beginning of the fiscal year.

**Cosponsor** – Representatives or Senators who formally sign on to support a measure. Only the first-named Member is the [sponsor](#), all others are cosponsors, even those whose names appeared on the measure at the time it was submitted.

**CRS - Congressional Research Service** – The [Congressional Research Service \(CRS\)](#) of the Library of Congress works exclusively for the United States Congress, providing policy and legal analysis to committees and Members of both the House and Senate, regardless of party affiliation. CRS provides Congress with analysis that is authoritative, confidential, objective, and non-partisan.

## D

**Daily Digest** – A section of the [Congressional Record](#) summarizing the day's floor and committee actions in each chamber, with page references to the verbatim accounts of floor actions. It also lists the measures scheduled for action during each chamber's next meeting and the announcements of upcoming committee meetings.

The Digest appears at the back of each daily *Record*. Its pages are separately numbered and preceded by the letter D. In the bound *Congressional Record*, all Daily Digests for a session are printed in a separate volume.

## E

**Enacted** – Made into law.

**En bloc** – “All together.” Sometimes a committee or congressional chamber will agree to act concurrently on multiple measures (for example, bills) or matters (for example, nominations), thereby considering them “en bloc.”

**Engrossed measure** – Official copy of a measure as passed by one chamber, including the text as amended by floor action.

## E (continued)

**Enrolled measure** – Final official copy of a measure as passed in identical form by both chambers and then printed on parchment for presentation to the President.

**Errata** – Errata are lists of errors in congressional publications. The corrections are printed on sheets, or pages. The errata sheets are usually tipped into the original document.

Congress.gov provides errata text on a tab within committee report texts (for example, errata issued for [105HRpt341](#)) and treaty documents (for example, errata issued for [TD110-5](#)).

**Executive business** – Nominations and treaties submitted by the president to the Senate for its “Advice and Consent;” the Senate treats such business separately from its legislative business.

**Executive Calendar** – The list of treaties and nominations that are (or soon will become) eligible for consideration by the full Senate; also, the [official document](#) that contains these lists and other information about the status of items of executive business.

**Executive communication** – Written statement or petition presented to Congress by the Executive Branch or other organization that may affect appropriations.

**Executive report** – A written committee report accompanying a matter of executive business ([treaty](#) or [nomination](#)) reported by the committee.

**Executive session** – A period under Senate rules during which executive business is considered on the floor. (Legislation is considered only in legislative session, with its own distinct rules and practices; the Senate may go back and forth between legislative and executive session, even within the course of a day.)

## F

**Federal depository library** – Libraries where congressional and other federal publications are available for free public use. Locate a [depository library](#).

**Filibuster** – In the Senate, the use of dilatory or obstructive tactics to delay or block passage of a measure by preventing it from coming to a vote.

## G

**Germaneness** – The requirement that an amendment be closely related—in terms of the precise subject or purpose, for example—to the text it proposes to amend. House rules require amendments to be germane; Senate rules apply this restriction only in limited circumstances.

**GPO - Government Publishing Office** – Government Publishing Office is a legislative branch agency that provides publishing and dissemination services for the official and authentic government publications to Congress, federal agencies, [federal depository libraries](#), and the American public.

## H

**Hearing** – A formal meeting of a congressional committee (or subcommittee) to gather information from witnesses for use in its activities (that is, the development of legislation, oversight of executive agencies, investigations into matters of public policy, or Senate consideration of presidential nominations).

Learn more [About Committees and Committee Materials](#).

See also, [Committee-related activity](#).

**History of Bills** – History of Bills is a section published within the [Congressional Record Index](#). History of Bills documents legislative information and actions on a measure with the associated [Congressional Record](#) pages.

Congress.gov links to History of Bills from Actions tabs (for example, [Bill History – Congressional Record References](#)) for legislative measures dating from 1995.

**Hold** – A request by a Senator to his or her party leader to delay floor action on a measure (for example, bill) or matter (for example, nomination), to be consulted on its disposition, and/or an indication that he or she would object to a unanimous consent request to consider said item of business or otherwise delay or obstruct consideration.

**Hopper** – A wooden box on the House floor into which measures are dropped for formal introduction.

**House Rules Committee** – A committee in the House that, among other things, is responsible for reporting out “special rules”—simple resolutions that propose to the House tailored terms for debate and amendment of a measure on the House floor.



## I

**Identical bill** – A bill that is word-for-word identical to another bill. Bills are characterized as identical to each other at the introduced stage only, even though a later (for example, reported or passed) version of a bill might meet the same criteria for text similarity.

[Companion measures](#), [procedurally-related measures](#), and legislation with [text similarities](#) are other [related bill](#) types.

**International agreement** – Legal agreements the United States enters into with other States or international organizations; they may take the form of an executive agreement entered into by the executive branch (but not submitted to the Senate for its advice and consent) or the form of a [treaty](#).

## J

**Joint explanatory statement** – Statement appended to a conference report explaining the conference agreement and the intent of the conferees. Sometimes called a “statement of managers.”

**Joint resolution** – A form of legislative measure used to propose changes in law, or to propose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. Depending on the chamber of origin, they begin with a designation of either H.J.Res. or S.J.Res.

[Concurrent resolutions](#) and [simple resolutions](#) are other types of resolutions.

[Bill](#) is another form of legislative measure used to propose law.

**Journal** – The constitutionally-mandated record of certain House and Senate actions, including motions offered, votes taken, and amendments agreed to. Unlike the [Congressional Record](#), it does not contain remarks delivered in the House and Senate.

**Jurisdiction** – A set of policy issues that fall under the purview of a specific committee (or subcommittee); full committee jurisdiction is set by chamber standing rules and precedents.

## L

**Legislative action steps** – Each chamber produces detailed, chamber-specific legislative action steps. Each step has a number code.

[U.S. Congress Legislative Status Steps](#) is a depiction of the steps in relation to the codes. It was published in 1975 within a committee print titled [The Bill Status System for the United States House of Representatives](#).

## L (continued)

**Legislative interest** – A label used by committees to identify bills that were not formally referred to the committee but which the committee expresses jurisdictional or provisional interest in.

See also, [Committee-related activity](#).

**Legislative subject term** – The [legislative subject term vocabulary](#) consists of approximately 1,000 subjects, geographic entities, and organization names. CRS may assign one or many terms to describe a measure’s substance and effects. The legislative subject term vocabulary is consistently used for all bills and resolutions introduced since 2009 (111<sup>th</sup> Congress).

Terms assigned to a bill can be seen from the “View All Subjects” link to the right of each bill’s overview. [Find Bills by Subject and Policy Area](#) provides subject term search guidance.

See also, [Policy area term](#).

**LIV - Legislative Indexing Vocabulary** – The Legislative Indexing Vocabulary (LIV) was the [Congressional Research Service \(CRS\)](#) thesaurus for subject searching in databases of the Library of Congress from 1973 to 2008. This controlled vocabulary provided access via specific subjects to legislative material, public policy literature, and CRS products. With increased availability of electronic full text of documents and accompanying search capabilities, the level of detail employed by LIV became unnecessary and work began to modernize and streamline the pool of vocabulary terms assigned by CRS analysts to classify and group legislation. Those efforts resulted in the far more compact list of [legislative subject terms](#), in use since 2009.

## M

**Markup** – Meeting by a committee or subcommittee during which committee members offer, debate, and vote on amendments to a measure.

See also, [Committee-related activity](#).

**Measure** – A legislative vehicle: a bill, joint resolution, concurrent resolution, or simple resolution.

**Memorial** – Written statement or petition presented to Congress by the legislature of a state or territory that may affect the proceedings of a committee or Congress in general. Memorials may be referred by a Member of the House of Representatives. The Senate does not differentiate between memorials and [petitions](#).

## M (continued)

**Motion to proceed to consider** – A motion in the Senate, which, if agreed to by a majority of those present and voting, brings a measure (for example, bill) or matter (for example, nomination) before the chamber for consideration. Often referred to simply as a “motion to proceed.”

**Motion to recommit** – In the House, a motion offered by a member of the minority party at the end of floor consideration that, if adopted in its simple form, returns the measure to legislative committee. If combined with “instructions to report back forthwith,” the motion effectively provides one last opportunity for a minority party member to offer an amendment to the measure. In the Senate, the motion may be offered at other times during consideration of a measure and is not a prerogative of a member of the minority party; it may also be used as a means of offering an amendment.

**Motion to table** – A non-debatable motion in the House and Senate (and in their committees) by which a simple majority may agree to negatively and permanently dispose of a question (for example, an amendment).

## N

**NARA - National Archives and Records Administration** – After the President signs a bill into law, it is delivered to NARA’s Office of the Federal Register where editors assign a [public law number](#).

**Nomination** – The president’s formal submission of an individual’s name, and the federal government position to which he or she is proposed to be appointed, for Senate consideration and potential confirmation.

**Notes** – Legislative analysts in the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress may supplement a bill record with a brief note when the title, text, or actions require explanation beyond the information immediately available. Such explanations might alert the user to a text anomaly, note that the bill is a vehicle for a rapidly moving measure, include links to additional documents, or aid in the interpretation of the measure’s context.

## O

**Official title** – A bill’s sponsor designates an official title which may be amended in the course of legislative action. Bills may also have short titles. The more complex a bill becomes, the more likely the bill is to acquire additional titles.

See also, [Popular title](#) and [Short title](#).

## O (continued)

**Ordered reported** – Committee’s formal action of agreeing to report a measure or matter to its chamber. See also, [Reported](#).

**Original bill** – An introduced bill that embodies a text approved in a committee markup but not formally introduced prior to the markup. Senate committees are authorized to report original bills within their jurisdictions in addition to reporting measures that have been introduced and referred to them; some House committees also have authority to originate certain measures.

See also, [Committee-related activity](#).

## P

**Parliamentarian** – Nonpartisan staff officials (one in each chamber, assisted by deputies and assistants) who provide expert advice and assistance to the presiding officer and to members on the application and interpretation of chamber rules, precedents, and practices (including referral of measures to committee).

**Partitioned nomination** – A presidential nomination (PN) with multiple nominees may be partitioned by the Senate if the nominees follow a different confirmation path. Partitions are identified with a suffix; for example, PN230-1 (114<sup>th</sup> Congress) and PN230-2 (114<sup>th</sup> Congress). Searching on a PN number in Congress.gov, such as PN230, without a partition designation will retrieve all partitions of a partitioned nomination.

**Party caucus/Conference** – The official organization comprised of all members of a political party serving within a congressional chamber (for example, the Senate Republican Conference, the House Democratic Caucus, etc.).

**Petition** – Written statement from any entity other than a state legislature – boards, commissions, cities, towns, individuals – that may affect the proceedings of a committee or Congress in general. The Senate does not differentiate between [petitions](#) and [memorials](#).

**Ping-pong** – See [Amendment exchange](#).

**Point of order** – A member’s statement to the presiding officer that the chamber (or committee) is taking action contrary to the rules or precedents, and a demand that they be enforced.

## P (continued)

**Policy area term** – The [policy area term vocabulary](#) is consistently used for all [bills](#) and resolutions introduced since 1979 (96<sup>th</sup> Congress). The term *Commemorations* was used from 1997 to 2008 (105<sup>th</sup> to 110<sup>th</sup> Congresses) to categorize measures introduced to honor or memorialize. The term displays in the Subject - Policy Area section of those measures. Example: [H.Con.Res.205 \[110<sup>th</sup>\]](#).

Policy Area terms display to the right of the bill Overview. [Find Bills by Subject and Policy Area](#) provides subject term search guidance.

See also, [Legislative subject term](#).

**Popular title** – An informal, unofficial name for legislation that may be assigned by the House, Senate, or CRS to improve access. Popular titles are usually not found within official legislative texts (for example, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act is commonly known as the health care reform bill).

**Presidential message** – Written statement presented to the Congress, such as the President’s Budget or the State of the Union address.

**Previous question** – Non-debatable motion, available in the House and its legislative committees, which, when agreed to, cuts off further debate, prevents the offering of additional amendments, and brings the pending matter to an immediate vote.

**Private bill** – In contrast to public bills (which apply to public matters and deal with individuals only by classes), a private bill proposes to provide benefits that are restricted to one or more specified individuals (including corporations or institutions), typically when no other legal remedy is available.

The [Legislative Subject term “Private Legislation”](#) is assigned to measures proposed to provide benefits that are restricted to one or more specified individuals. Measures with a Legislative Subject term assignment “Private Legislation” usually do not get a Policy Area term assignment.

See also, **Private laws**.

**Privileged nomination** – Certain nominations entitled to expedited procedures, pursuant to [S.Res. 116 \(112<sup>th</sup> Congress\)](#).

**Procedurally-related measure** – Legislation that affects consideration of other legislation (for example, a rule for consideration, a bill ordered to be reported or passed in lieu of another measure).

[Identical bills](#), [companion measures](#), and legislation with [text similarities](#) are other [related bill](#) types.

## P (continued)

**Pro forma session** – A daily session of either chamber held chiefly to avoid the occurrence of either a recess of more than three days within the annual session or an [adjournment sine die](#) (either of which would constitutionally require the consent of the other chamber). Pro forma sessions are typically short, with no business, or very little, conducted.

**Proposed/offered Senate amendment** – A Senate amendment is proposed or offered when a Senator has been recognized by the presiding officer, sends his/her amendment to the desk (or identifies an amendment already at the desk), and the amendment is read by the clerk. The amendment becomes pending before the Senate and remains pending until disposed of by the Senate. Occasionally the term “called up” is used in lieu of “proposed” or “offered.”

Both proposed and [submitted amendments](#) are numbered and printed in the *Congressional Record*.

## Q

**Quorum** – Minimum number of members of a chamber (or committee) required for the transaction of certain types of business.

**Quorum call** – Action to formally ascertain the presence of the minimum number of members required to transact business. In the Senate, quorum calls are also commonly used as a sort of “time out” in floor proceedings without recessing the chamber.

## R

**Ranking member** – The most senior (though not necessarily the longest-serving) member of the minority party on a committee (or subcommittee). The ranking member typically oversees minority committee staff and may coordinate involvement of the minority party committee members in committee activities.

**Recess appointment** – A temporary presidential appointment, during a recess of the Senate, of an individual to a federal government position, where such appointment usually requires the advice and consent of the Senate.

**Referral** – Assignment of a measure to a committee or committees (or subcommittees) for potential consideration.

See also, [Committee-related activity](#).

## R (continued)

**Related bill** – A related bill may be a [companion measure](#), an [identical bill](#), a [procedurally-related measure](#), or one with [text similarities](#). Bill relationships are identified by the House, the Senate, or CRS, and refer only to same-Congress measures.

**Reported** – Formal submission of a measure by a committee to its parent chamber or by a subcommittee to its parent committee. See also, [Ordered reported](#).

See also, [Committee-related activity](#).

**Reserved bill number** – In recent Congresses, the resolution specifying House internal rules of procedure includes reserving bill numbers for assignment by the Speaker. In the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress (2011-2012) the practice was extended to reserve additional bill numbers for assignment by the Minority Leader.

Resolutions with “Numbering of Bills” sections include: [H.Res.5](#) [114], [H.Res.5](#) [113], [H.Res.5](#) [112], [H.Res.5](#) [111], [H.Res.6](#) [110], [H.Res.5](#) [109], [H.Res.5](#) [108], [H.Res.5](#) [107].

In the Senate, some of the lowest [bill](#) numbers are reserved for leadership.

**Roll call vote** – A vote that records the individual position of each Member who voted. Such votes occurring on the House floor (by the “yeas and nays” or by “recorded vote”) are taken by electronic device. The Senate has no electronic voting system; in such votes, Senators answer “yea” or “nay” as the clerk calls each name aloud. Each vote is compiled by clerks and receives a roll call number (referenced in Congress.gov as a “Record Vote” [Senate] or “Roll no.” [House]). See [Roll Call Votes by the U.S. Congress](#).

**Resolution of ratification** – A resolution by which the Senate, if supported by a vote of two-thirds, formally gives its advice and consent to a treaty, thereby empowering the President to proceed with ratification of the [treaty](#).

## S

**Short title** – In addition to an [official title](#), a bill may be assigned one or more short titles upon introduction, committee or chamber action, or enactment. Short titles may name all or portions of the bill’s content. In a display of titles, those that describe the entirety of the bill version appear under a bolded heading (for example, Short Titles as Passed House), followed by those, if any, that describe portions of the bill. Short titles may change as the bill moves through the legislative process.

See also, [Official title](#) and [Popular title](#).

## S (continued)

**Simple resolution** – A form of legislative measure introduced and potentially acted upon by only one congressional chamber and used for the regulation of business only within the chamber of origin. Depending on the chamber of origin, they begin with a designation of either H.Res. or S.Res.

[Joint resolutions](#) and [concurrent resolutions](#) are other types of resolutions.

**Slip law** – The initial publication of a measure that has become law. Slip laws are made available online within days after enactment through the U.S. Government Publishing Office (GPO) and are used until the law is published in a more permanent form. [Public and private laws](#) are then reprinted by number in the [Statutes at Large](#), and public laws later incorporated into the [U.S. Code](#).

**Special rule** – A resolution reported by the [Rules Committee](#) that, if agreed to by the House, sets the terms for debating and amending a specified measure or measures.

**Sponsor** – A Representative or Senator who introduces or submits a bill or other measure.

**Star print** – Star prints are corrected re-prints of congressional publications. Star prints supersede the original print of a report, document, print or hearing. Corrected re-prints may be identifiable by one or more stars, and sometimes the words “Star Print,” at the lower left-hand corner of official paper and PDF title pages or covers. Web-friendly bill texts display stars in the top left margin (for example, [Star print of 114SRes22](#)).

**Subject** – There are three separate and distinct subject term vocabularies used to facilitate [finding bills by subject](#). See [Policy area term](#), [Legislative subject term](#), and [LIV - Legislative Indexing Vocabulary](#).

**Submitted Senate amendment** – An amendment is submitted when a senator files his/her amendment at the desk with the clerk for possible future consideration by the Senate. A submitted amendment is not pending until it is formally [proposed/offered](#) by a senator. The term “filed” is sometimes used in lieu of “submitted.”

Both proposed and submitted amendments are numbered and printed in the [Congressional Record](#).

**Supermajority** – A term sometimes used for a vote on a matter that requires approval by more than a simple majority of those members present and voting, with a quorum being present; also referred to as extraordinary majority.

**Suspension of the rules** – In the House, a procedure that streamlines consideration of a measure with wide support by prohibiting floor amendments, limiting debate to 40 minutes, and requiring a



two-thirds majority for passage. Although rarely used, the Senate may also suspend various rules by a vote of two-thirds following one day's written notice.

## T

**Text similarities** – Legislation that is substantially similar in both text and meaning. Relationships indicated on this basis also include cases where language of one measure is found intact in another, often larger, measure.

**Identical bills**, **companion measures**, and **procedurally-related measures** are other **related bill** types.

**Title** – See **Official title**, **Popular title**, and **Short title**.

**Treaty** – An agreement negotiated and signed by the executive that enters into force if it is approved by a two-thirds vote in the Senate and is subsequently ratified by the President.

**Treaty document** – The text of a **treaty** as submitted to the Senate by the executive branch, as well as letters of transmittal from the President and the Secretary of State and accompanying background documentation.

## U

**Unanimous consent agreement** – In the Senate, a proposal that, if agreed to, establishes the procedural guidelines for considering a measure or matter on the floor. If any member objects to such a request, it is not agreed to. Also sometimes called a “UC agreement” or a “time agreement.”

**Unanimous consent request** – A proposal that all members (of a chamber or committee) agree to set aside one or more chamber or committee rules to take some action otherwise not in order. If any member objects to such a request, it is not agreed to.

## V

**Veto** – Presidential disapproval of a bill or joint resolution presented to him for enactment into law. If a president vetoes a bill, it can become law only if the House and Senate separately vote (by two-thirds) to override the veto. A less common form of presidential veto – a pocket veto – occurs if Congress has adjourned without the possibility of returning and the president does not sign the measure within the required 10-day (excluding Sundays) period.