

THE 2015 LEGISLATURE

The South Dakota Legislature is established by Article III of the Constitution of South Dakota as a bicameral legislative body.

SESSIONS

Legislative Sessions can run for up to 40 days every year, depending on the legislative calendar set by the Legislature.

The 2015 Legislative Session will begin Tuesday, January 13, 2015, and end Monday, March 30, 2015, to complete a 39-day Session. During the Session, the Legislature will be in recess beginning Monday, March 16, through Friday, March 27.

Special Sessions: May be called by the Governor or two-thirds of both houses of the Legislature.

MEMBERSHIP

The **Senate:** 35 Senators (27 R and 8 D) elected from 35 districts. The Constitution provides for not fewer than 25 or more than 35 members.

The **House:** 70 Representatives (58 R, 12 D) elected from 35 districts. The Constitution provides for not fewer than 50 or more than 75 members. District 26 and 28 has been subdivided into two House districts to ensure compliance with the Voting Rights Act.

Term of Office: Two Years.

Elected: November of even-numbered years.

COMMITTEE	Senate Chair	House Chair
Agriculture & Natural Resources	Gary Cammack	Lee Qualm
Appropriations	Deb Peters	Justin Cronin
Commerce & Energy	Blake Curd	Tim Rounds
Education	Deb Soholt	Jacqueline Sly
Government Operations & Audit	Larry Tidemann	Dan Dryden
Health & Human Services	Bruce Rampelberg	Scott Munsterman
Judiciary	Craig Tieszen	G. Mark Mickelson
Legislative Procedure	Corey Brown	Dean Wink
Local Government	Bob Ewing	Kristin Conzet
Retirement Laws	Bruce Rampelberg	Jim Bolin
State Affairs	Tim Rave	Brian Gosch
Taxation	Jeff Monroe	Roger Solum
Transportation	Mike Vehle	Mike Verchio

How an Idea Becomes Law



A bill is simply an idea that someone would like to see become law. It could be anything from the penalty for committing a crime to the amount of money that can be spent on a state program.

The idea can come from anyone, but only a State Representative or Senator can take that idea and guide it to final passage through the State Legislature.



Drafting a bill means putting the idea into legal language. The drafting is done by the Legislative Research Council, an agency of state government. Introduction of a bill can be made by any member of the House or Senate, and more than one legislator generally sponsors a bill. The legislator whose name appears first on the bill is the "prime sponsor."



The Bill is introduced in the House or Senate. A bill is given to the Chief Clerk of the House or the Secretary of the Senate and is assigned a number. If the bill is sponsored by a Senator, it is a Senate Bill. Proposals which start in the House are House Bills.

The bill is given a First Reading in the "House of Origin" (in the House if sponsored by a Representative; in the Senate if sponsored by a Senator). A First Reading means the bill's number and title are read aloud.

The Senate President or Speaker of the House then assigns the bill to a committee.



Committee action is crucial to the legislative process. A committee's responsibility is to examine a bill carefully, take testimony for and against the bill, and decide whether to send the bill to the "floor" (the full House or Senate) for consideration by the full body.



The committee can send the bill to the floor with a "Do Pass" recommendation. They can "Table" the bill, which means it is dead unless the full body orders the committee to send the bill to the floor ("Smoke-Out"). Or, depending on the length of the session, the committee can defer a bill to the day after the last Legislative Day, which also kills the bill since there are a predetermined number of legislative days in an annual session. In rare cases, if a committee cannot get enough votes to pass or kill the bill, a measure may be sent to the floor without recommendation. In that case, the full body must vote whether they want to place the bill on the "calendar" (agenda) for consideration.

Once a bill reaches the floor, it is debated and voted on. If it passes, the bill is forwarded on to the other body, where it goes through the same committee process.



If a bill passes both the House and Senate, it is sent to the Governor. If signed, the bill becomes law. If vetoed, the Legislature has an opportunity to decide whether to override or uphold the veto. If the Legislature succeeds in overriding the veto, the bill becomes law.

THE SENATE

OFFICERS

President:
Matt Michels (R)

By virtue of the office as Lieutenant Governor, presides over Senate; announces Senate Chairs and members of committees; refers bills to appropriate committees.

President Pro Tempore:
Corey Brown (R)

Elected by Senate; presides over Senate in absence of President. Appoints Senate Chairs and committee members.

Majority Leader:
Timothy Rave (R)

Ass't Majority Leader:
Dan Lederman (R)

Majority Whips:
Ried Holien (R)
Ernie Otten (R)
Deb Soholt (R)

Minority Leader:
Billie Sutton (D)

Ass't Minority Leader:
Troy Heinert (D)

Minority Whips:
Scott Parsley (D)
Jim Peterson (D)

MAJORITY AND MINORITY LEADERS

Preside over party caucuses, direct party strategy, assemble party members for important votes, and serve as liaisons for party caucuses in dealing with the Governor and press. Minority members of committees are appointed on nomination of minority leadership. The leaders are elected by their respective party membership.

EMPLOYEES

Responsible for the administrative details of the two chambers and calling the roll for votes.

Secretary
Kay Johnson

Chief Clerk
Arlene Kvislen

LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH COUNCIL

Prepares legislative drafts and provides professional staff to standing committees and individual legislators for technical advice and research.

Director: Jason Hancock

THE HOUSE

Speaker:
Dean Wink (R)

Elected by House of Representatives; presides over House; appoints House Chairs and members of committees; refers bills to appropriate committees.

Speaker Pro Tempore:
G. Mark Mickelson (R)

Elected by House of Representatives; presides over House in absence of Speaker.

Majority Leader:
Brian Gosch (R)

Ass't Majority Leader:
Steven Westra (R)

Majority Whips:
Jim Bolin (R)
Don Haggar (R)
Kris Langer (R)
Mike Stevens (R)

Minority Leader:
Spencer Hawley (D)

Ass't Minority Leader:
Julie Bartling (D)

Minority Whips:
Paula Hawks (D)
Dean Schrempf

2015 LEGISLATIVE TIMETABLE

January 13	First day of Session.
February 3	Last day to introduce individual bills.
February 4	Last day to introduce committee bills.
February 20	Last day to use J.R. 5-17.
February 24	Last day for required bill delivery (smoke-out) in house of origin.
February 25	Last day for a bill to pass the house of origin.
February 25	Last day to introduce commemorations (J.R. 6H-1)
March 9	Last day for required bill delivery (smoke-out) in second house.
March 10	Last day for a bill to pass both houses.
March 30	39 th Legislative Day.
July 1	Effective date of enacted legislation (except emergency measures).

VISITOR INFORMATION

Legislative sessions and committee hearings are held in the Capitol at Pierre and are open to the public.

Committee hearings are conducted in the morning of each legislative day. Notice of time and location of each hearing is posted in front of each chamber on the third floor.

Legislative session convenes daily at 2:00 p.m. (CT). The public galleries are located on the fourth floor. Additionally, live audio webcasts of all committee meetings and floor sessions can be heard by accessing the Legislature's Web site and clicking on the committee or chamber you wish to monitor.

TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

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Legislative
Research
Council

The South Dakota Legislature



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PREPARED BY
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State Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501
January 2015