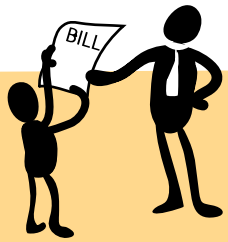
1

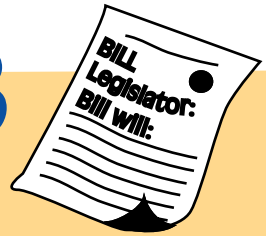
Someone comes up with an idea for a law.

2



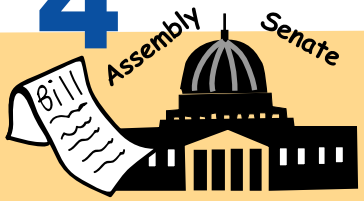
A legislator agrees to author the idea and take it through the official steps.

3



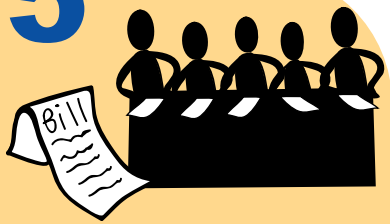
Lawyers who work for the legislature write the idea into legal language. It is now called a bill.

4



The bill is taken to the Assembly or the Senate. The title is read and the bill is given a number. Every bill number begins with AB or SB to show in which house it started.

5



The bill goes to a committee, which holds meetings that people can attend to tell how they feel about the bill.

6

People also tell the legislators what they think about bills by writing letters, sending email messages, or telephoning them.

7

If the committee recommends the bill be passed, it goes back to the full Assembly or Senate for debate and vote.

8

If a bill gets enough votes to pass in the house where it started, it goes to the other house and goes through steps 5-7 again.

9

If a bill does not get the number of votes it needs from each house, it dies. It can be started again from the beginning at another time.

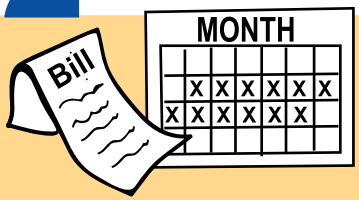
10

Bills that have passed in both houses go to the Governor. The governor can sign the bill into law or . . .

11

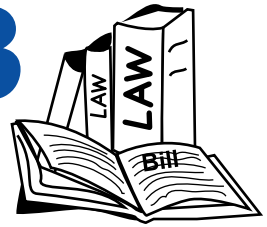
. . . veto it, which means to reject it, or . . .

12



. . . choose not to sign or to veto it. After 12 days the bill becomes law without the governor's signature.

13



Finally, the bill becomes a law for the State of California. Most laws take effect on the first day of the following year.