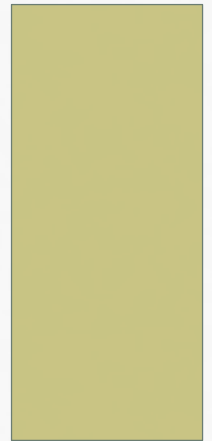


HOW LEGISLATION GETS MADE

VATOA WEBINAR
DECEMBER 3, 2014

JEFFREY GORE, HEFTY & WILEY P.C.



OR...WELCOME TO THE SAUSAGE FACTORY



WHOOPS, HERE IT IS ...



SOMEHOW THE SYSTEM WORKS WITH REASONABLE EFFICIENCY

- General Assembly convenes every year, beginning on the Second Wednesday of January (January 14 for the 2015 session)
- In even number years, session typically lasts 60 days; 30-45 days in odd number years
- Bills originate upon filing by a Delegate or Senator
- Approx. 3,000 pieces of legislation considered each session.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

- “Prefiling” deadline
- Last day for bill introduction
- Committee action deadlines
- Budget deadlines
- Crossover
- Sine die
- Reconvened or “veto” session

THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

- Nearly all bills are referred to policy committee for action (some exceptions)
- Subcommittees are often where the action is – particularly in the House
- Policy Committees may refer bills to “money committees” – House Appropriations, Senate Finance for review of fiscal impacts
- Most bill only get the House or Senate Floor if recommended (“reported out”) by a committee

STANDING COMMITTEES

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Legislative Committees

Log in go

Committee information includes **membership**, regularly scheduled **meeting time**, and a hot-linked list of **bills and resolutions** in committee. View [House](#) or [Senate](#) committee **statistics**.

House Committees

- [Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources](#)
- [Appropriations](#)
- [Commerce and Labor](#)
- [Counties, Cities and Towns](#)
- [Courts of Justice](#)
- [Education](#)
- [Finance](#)
- [General Laws](#)
- [Health, Welfare and Institutions](#)
- [Militia, Police and Public Safety](#)
- [Privileges and Elections](#)
- [Rules](#)
- [Science and Technology](#)
- [Transportation](#)

Senate Committees

- [Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources](#)
- [Commerce and Labor](#)
- [Courts of Justice](#)
- [Education and Health](#)
- [Finance](#)
- [General Laws and Technology](#)
- [Local Government](#)
- [Privileges and Elections](#)
- [Rehabilitation and Social Services](#)
- [Rules](#)
- [Transportation](#)

COMMITTEE DYNAMICS

- Speaker of House refers bills to House committees
- Senate Clerk refers bills to Senate committees
- Majority party controls the committees
 - Appoints chairperson who appoints subcommittee chairs
 - Currently, both House and Senate chamber controlled by Republicans
 - 67-33 in House
 - 22-18 in Senate
 - All seats up for election in 2015

RELEVANT COMMITTEES FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Standing committees:

- House committee on science and technology
- House committee on counties, cities and towns
- Senate committee on local government
- Senate committee on general laws and technology
- House and Senate rules committees (studies)
- House and Senate “money committees”

Special committees:

- Joint Commission on Technology and Science (JCOTS)
- Governor’s Broadband Advisory Council

WHAT HAPPENS TO A BILL ONCE INTRODUCED

- Starts with referral to committee
- Sometimes then referred to subcommittee
- Published on a (sub)committee docket with little advance notice, maybe 1-2 days
- Patron will present bill and stakeholders and public (on all sides of the issue) will typically be given some time to speak
- Most successful bills are amended by the committee (but most bills don't pass)
- If the committee "reports" the bill to the floor, then the full chamber votes on any committee amendments and then on the bill
- The bill goes to the other chamber if it passes the house of origin and the process starts over
- Bills that pass both chambers but in different forms go to conference committee for resolution
- Once passed by both chambers, bills go to the governor who can sign, veto or send down amendments

INTEREST GROUPS

- Local Government (VACo, VML, individual localities, VATOA?)
- Individual Private Providers of Internet, video communications or technology services
- Virginia Cable Television Association
- Northern Virginia Technology Council
- Citizens/Consumers?

STATE BUDGET

- The Appropriations Act, commonly referred to as the state budget is THE MOST IMPORTANT LEGISLATION
- The state budget trumps all other legislation
- Funding priorities are set out and state funds appropriated, but the budget can also make policy changes that override state code
- A two-year “biennial” budget is adopted in each even year legislative session. The current biennial budget is for fiscal years beginning July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2016 (FY '15-'16)
- The budget is amended during the “short” interim session (2015)

HOW CAN VATOA MAKE AN IMPACT?

- Begin following the relevant year-round special commissions
- Get involved in VACo and VML
- Track relevant bills and relevant committees during session
- Share information with (educate) membership
- Communicate with the governor's office (Secretary of Technology)
- Communicate with key legislators