

YMCA YOUTH AND GOVERNMENT

Parliamentary Procedure Guide

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1. Introduction

1. It is important to keep in mind that this is a CONFERENCE and not a legislative session. The major working objective is to prepare and consider in depth bills relating to crucial state concerns. The use of technical motions and restrictive parliamentary procedure are discouraged.
2. The Rules and Procedures of the Legislature have been adjusted from the YMCA Conference on National Affairs Mountain Manual (rev. May 2023), and were modified in order to fit state legislative needs.
3. References in this document will follow the format of (area, section, subsection). If no subsection is specified, please refer to the entire section of text.
 - a. Example: “(see 1.3.a)” refers to the Introduction, section 3, subsection a, this very section of text.

2. General Procedures and Decorum

1. The Presiding Officers of the Conference shall serve as the Chairpersons for their respective Chamber and remain neutral during debate. The Committee Chairs shall serve as the Chairpersons for their respective Committee and remain neutral during debate.
 - a. Chairpersons will choose a clerk from among the Chamber if necessary.
2. The Chairpersons for the session shall have the right to call a delegate out of order if that delegate is being disruptive in nature or is breaking any other rule of procedure. This shall be done by the sole discretion of the Chairperson.
3. The Chairpersons for the session shall be the interpreter of these rules, and in such will rule upon any motion presented upon the floor. The Chairperson shall have complete discretion when choosing to recognize a motion.
4. Absolutely no clapping is permitted after the defeat of a bill or after any speaker.
5. Controlled applause or spirit fingers will be allowed following the passage of a bill, but delegates may not leave their seats to congratulate the author.
6. Do not reference other bills.
7. Do not refer to another delegate by their name, rather you may address them as “a previous delegate” or “a previous speaker”.
8. Face and hand gestures are not permitted during another delegate’s speech.
9. Remain seated and quiet during an author’s opening and closing statements.
10. Do not raise your placard or hand while a speaker is addressing the chamber.
11. A delegate seeking to be recognized should remain seated and raise their placard. They should not call out. “Placard waiving,” which shall be defined as any erratic moving of a placard with the intent of being recognized, will be called out of order.
12. The use of false debate will be called out of order during all sessions. A “false debate” shall be defined as a sarcastic speech, or being recognized to speak during debate but deliberately presenting arguments in favor of the opposing side. An example of false debate is a delegate being recognized to speak a pro statement but calling for the defeat of the bill. Agreeing with the intentions of the bill are not considered false debate.

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13. The use of any prop while speaking will be called out of order during all sessions. A “Prop” shall be defined as any external, non-verbal element which is used during a recognition to demonstrate a point. Examples of props are, but are not limited to charts, pictures, magazines, printed research, etc. Brief gestures with a bill book or a notebook are not considered use of a prop.

3. Committee and Chamber Procedure

1. The order in which proposals shall be heard will be determined at random. This order shall not be determined by proposal number.
2. Each bill in Committee and Chamber shall be considered in the following manner:
 - a. Opening remarks by the bill author (4 minutes). Following their speech, the author must reserve the remainder of their time to their closing.
 - b. Non-debatable, technical questions; (see 4.3 and 4.4).
 - c. Chairperson opens debate. Con and pro speakers will alternate; Debate must start and end with a con speaker. Upon recognition, the delegate must thank the Chair, state their name, and delegation. A delegate may exercise up to three (3) of these actions without further impediment:
 - i. Address the Chamber.
 - ii. Ask a series of questions of the bill author, provided the author’s permission is sought through and granted by the Chair (see 4.5).
 - iii. Make one motion, provided they declare their intention to make a motion when they first take the floor. This motion shall take precedence over yielding the floor.
 - iv. Motion needs to be made in the beginning of the speech. Only 2 motions during a con/pro speech are allowed.
 - d. Delegates must continue to seek permission, through the chair, to pose a series of questions to the bill author.
 - e. A delegate must reserve their right to make a motion.
 - f. Yielding to another delegate is not in order during Committee or Chamber.
 - g. The floor is not relinquished by a speaker unless the delegate yields their time to the Chair, or their time has elapsed.
 - h. Author’s summation (time reserved from opening statement).
 - i. Appropriate voting or ranking procedures will take place (see 6.1 or 6.2).
3. Previous question is in order after the first round of debate and must be approved by 2/3 of the chamber. The Presiding Chairperson in that Chamber must agree upon previous question.
4. If a delegate is called out of order prior to addressing the floor, the chair shall seek a different speaker of the same intent (con or pro) rather than a speaker of the opposing intent.
5. Artificial Intelligence(AI) tools shall be only used for research and should not be used to directly compose speeches or bills for the conference. Any concerns or suspicions about the use of Artificial Intelligence(AI) should be brought directly to the Conference Staff and not voiced in debate. Ideas do not have to be original, but crediting your sources is a crucial skill.

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6. The presence of the “Seal of State Approval” cannot be used as a debate point. Any attempt to do so will be called out of order.

4. Technical Questions

1. During the period for technical questions, all questions must remain non-debatable.
2. Technical questions asked during debate may be debatable and non-debatable.
3. A non-debatable technical question shall consist of:
 - a. Questions that call for a factual response.
4. A debatable technical question shall consist of:
 - a. Questions that are hypothetical; or,
 - b. Questions that call for an opinion or assumption of the bill author; or
 - c. Questions that are not germane to the topic of the bill.
5. A series shall be defined as follows:
 - a. Three (3) technical questions during a period of technical questions; and,
 - b. Two (2) technical questions during a period of debate.

5. Motions during Committee and Chamber Sessions

1. The following motions are in order during a Committee Session:
 - a. Point of information, to ask for clarification on a rule or procedure.
 - b. Point of order, to object to a rule of procedure that is not being followed correctly.
 - c. Point of personal privilege, to address discomfort or issues that compromise the integrity of a member's performance (e.g., to use the bathroom).
2. The following motions are not in order during a Committee Session:
 - a. Motion to extend debate, to extend the period of debate.
 - b. Motion to move to the previous question, to end debate on a bill (see to 3.3).
3. The following motions are in order during a Chamber Session:
 - a. Motion for a division, to request a vote by standing vote.
 - b. Motion to expel the Governor, to remove the Governor from the legislative chamber.
 - c. Motion to extend debate, to extend the period of debate.
 - d. Motion to move to the previous question, to end debate on a bill (see to 3.3).
 - e. Point of information, to ask for clarification on a rule of procedure.
 - f. Point of order, to object to a rule of procedure that is not being followed correctly.
 - g. Point of personal privilege, to address discomfort or issues that compromise the integrity of a member's performance (e.g., to use the bathroom).

6. Voting & Ranking Procedures

1. Committee Procedure:
 - a. Delegates will rank their top bills after Committee using the voting criteria.

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- b. The top two (2) bills ranked from each Committee will move on to Joint Session.
 - c. All remaining bills will move on to Chamber Session.
- 2. Joint Session & Chamber Session Procedure:
 - a. Delegates will vote on the passage of each bill. This will occur after each bill has been presented.
 - b. Passage of a bill requires a simple majority, greater than half of the chamber (1/2).
 - c. Approval of a bill in the Chamber shall be recorded by delegates raising their placard in conjunction with a voice vote unless division of the chamber is called and recognized. In such a case, the vote shall be recorded by a standing vote. The Presiding Officers may call for a division if there is any doubt about the voice vote. In the event of an evenly split vote, the clerk shall cast the final vote.
 - d. Passed bills will be sent to the Youth Governor, to be either passed or vetoed.
 - e. The end of the consideration of a bill will be signified by two gavel taps. Motion for a division can only be recognized in between these two gavel taps. Division can be heard by the presiding officer and not recognized.
 - f. Absolutely no clapping is permitted after the defeat of a bill or after any speaker. Controlled applause or spirit fingers will be allowed following the passage of a bill, but delegates may not leave their seats to congratulate the author.
- 3. Veto Override Procedure:
 - a. Delegates will vote on whether the veto of the bill should be overridden. This will occur after each bill has been presented.
 - b. Veto overrides require a super-majority, two-thirds of the chamber (2/3).
 - c. Approval of a veto override shall be recorded in the same manner as bill passage ([see to 6.2.F](#))

7. Veto Override Procedure

- 1. Each bill passed in Chamber, which was vetoed by the Governor, shall have the right to be considered in the following manner:
 - a. Cabinet member statement (1 minute). The cabinet member will explain why the bill was vetoed.
 - b. Opening remarks by the bill author (1 minute). The author may only yield unused time to the Chair.
 - c. Chairperson opens debate. One (1) con speaker and one (1) pro speaker will be recognized; Upon recognition, the delegate shall thank the Chair, state their name, and delegation. A delegate may exercise up to three (3) of these actions without further impediment:
 - i. Address The Chamber.
 - ii. Ask a series of questions of the bill author, provided the author's permission is sought through and granted by the Chair.
 - iii. Make one motion, provided this intention is declared upon taking the floor. A motion shall preempt yielding the floor.

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- d. Appropriate voting procedures will take place (see 7.3).

8. Changes to the Rules

1. Rules may be changed by submitting the proposed change in writing to the Presiding Officers at any time. The Presiding Officer will present the proposed change for a vote among all legislative Presiding Officers. A super-majority is required for approval. Upon approval, the legislative Presiding Officers shall recommend the rule change to the State Director for the next Conference. No changes to the rules will be implemented within two months of the state conference. All schools will be notified of a rule change, if made.

9. Conclusion

1. While the Rules and Procedures of the Legislature provide a structured framework for conducting the conference, it is important to remember that the primary objective of the conference is to engage in meaningful discussions, develop critical thinking skills, and have a positive learning experience. It is essential for participants to approach the procedures with a sense of enthusiasm and a willingness to engage in constructive debate. The rules are designed to facilitate the process, but it is equally important to maintain a spirit of caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility throughout the conference. Ultimately, the goal is to create an environment where delegates can learn, grow, and have fun while participating in the legislative process.