

Important Terms

Find a complete glossary of legislative terms on pp. 32-35 in PSE's Washington State Legislative Process booklet.

- BIENNIUM:** Two-year period. The Washington State fiscal biennium is from July 1 of odd-numbered years to June 30, two years later.
- BILL REPORT:** Summary of background and effect of bills, prepared by non-partisan committee staff.
- BLUE/PINK SHEETS:** Document signed by House (blue) or Senate (pink) members wishing to sign on as prime-sponsor or co-sponsor of proposed legislation prior to introduction.
- CAUCUS:** A meeting of members of a body who belong to the same political party. *(Note: It's not completely clear how the Senate Majority Coalition Caucus will hold caucus meetings.)*
- COMPANION BILL:** A bill introduced in the same form in both the House and Senate. There will be two bill numbers for legislation that started out identical. May eventually be amended and become separate proposals.
- CUTOFF DATES:** Time certain set by the Legislature for specified action such as bill introduction, committee action, or passage of bills by either house.
- EMERGENCY CLAUSE:** A provision in a bill that allows a measure to become effective immediately upon the signature of the Governor. Used typically to avoid having a bill referred to a vote of the people.
- EXECUTIVE ACTION:** 1. Final consideration of a bill (vote) by a committee. Votes taken during Executive Session of a committee.
2. Action taken by the governor on a bill passed by both houses.
- FISCAL NOTE:** A fiscal note is an estimate of expected costs a measure may have to state and/or local government. Please note: Legislators may ask if there is a fiscal note for the measure(s) you discuss with them.
- GALLERY:** Areas of both House and Senate chambers where public visitors may observe the Legislature in session.

HOPPER:	Box located in the bill drafting area in which legislative measures are deposited for introduction.
INB:	Irv Newhouse Building (Senate Members) is a two-story building with is southeast of the Legislative Building. The INB houses office space for senators and staff, and was formerly called the Institutions Building.
JAC:	John A. Cherberg Building (Senate Members) is a four-story building directly southeast of the Legislative Building. Here you will find Senate members' and staff offices, hearing rooms, and other Senate offices.
JLOB:	John L. O'Brien Building (House Members) is the four-story building southwest of the Legislative Building. Here you will find House members' and staff offices, hearing rooms, and other House facilities.
LA:	Legislative Assistant. This person is the primary staff person for each legislator who answers the telephone, opens and responds to all constituent mail, schedules appointments, etc.
OFM:	Office of Financial Management. The chief executive agency for evaluating the budget, preparing fiscal notes, and providing fiscal policy analysis to the Governor. Also known as the Governor's Budget Office.
OPR:	Office of Program Research. The House research and committee staff located in the John L. O'Brien Building. Equivalent to Senate Committee Services.
PRIME SPONSOR:	The originator or first name on a bill or amendment that has been introduced.
RCW:	Revised Code of Washington. These are all the current laws and statutes for the State of Washington.
SINE DIE:	To conclude a regular or special session without setting a day to reconvene.
STRIKING AMENDMENT:	Amendment removing everything and inserting a whole new bill.
THIRD HOUSE:	Unofficial term for all the professional, registered lobbyists in the state.