What is LegSim?

• Ready-made lawmaking simulations since 2001
• 24/7 access via computers, tablets and phones
• Easy setup and low cost
• Assignments, exercises and sample syllabi
• Students who are excited about learning!
Just add students for an immersive simulation
Students register and create member profiles

Ben Lennon
Michigan (MI)

Public Office > Ben Lennon

Personal
Constituency
Legislation
Groups

Personal Statement
Greetings from the Great Lakes State! My name is Ben Lennon, and I have the pleasure and privilege of representing the state of Michigan.

Our country has seen some hard times, but over the past seven years we’ve made our way back from the brink. Even with all of this progress, however, we have a long way to go. We need to continue rebuilding our economy based on sustainable practices that will allow us to be prosperous for generations to come. We need to protect American jobs and encourage the growth of small businesses. Finally, we need environmentally-friendly policies that will ensure that our children, and their children, can enjoy this beautiful land and all of its resources.

Governing a country of our size presents its fair share of challenges, but we can’t continue with the same styles of partisan politics. That’s why I will make it a priority to work across the aisle on issues we can all agree on. No, we might not see eye-to-eye on every issue, but we can set some common goals, such as providing a world-class education for our children, that will guide our work.

Things like providing for our families, putting our kids through college, and cultivating a successful career are challenging tasks that help us develop to our full capacity. They shouldn’t be easy, but they should be a little easier than they are now. I want to work together to lower the barriers that stand in our way, and I believe that working with Congress can be a great place to start. As a wise political philosopher once said, “When politics goes well we know a good in common that we cannot know alone.”
Tutorials and on-line quizzes get them up to speed on congressional procedures

Senate Rules of Procedure
The Big Picture
How a Filibuster Works in LegSim
Member Tutorial
Committee Chair Tutorial
Chamber Leader Tutorial
House Rules of Procedure
Sidebars provide instructions and links to additional information

CRS Report for Congress
Received through the CRS Web

“Dear Colleague” Letters: A Brief Overview

R. Eric Petersen
Analyst in American National Government
Government and Finance Division

Summary

“Dear Colleague” letters are official correspondence distributed in bulk to Members in both chambers. Primarily, they are used by one or more Members to persuade others to cosponsor or oppose a bill (generally, prior to introduction). Dear Colleague letters might also inform Members of an event connected with congressional business, of new or modified House procedures, or of some other matter. The use of the phrase “Dear Colleague” letter to refer to a widely distributed letter among Members dates at least to the start of the 20th century. New technologies and expanded use of the Internet have increased the speed and facilitated the process of preparing Dear Colleague letters. This report will be updated.
They organize the legislature by creating their own caucuses and parties.

Elephant Tea Party Caucus

Caucus Leader
Senator Perkins

Public Announcements

Caucus Description
The biggest bloc, a pragmatic, establishment-supporting wing of the party that has for years produced its presidential nominees. We are arguably the most loyal to the party and its most reliable voters, but we are conservatives first, Republicans second. On certain issues we represent the more radical Tea Party wing possessing a deep mistrust of current Democratic standings on issues. We tend to see issues in stark black and white; have an appetite for compromise, but won’t be strong-armed into anything against our principle conservative values. At times a firm stance is necessary to be heard, especially as a minority in Congress.

Issue Areas
- MOTIVATING ISSUES
  The ECONOMY
  Slash the National deficit, taxes, regulations
And by choosing leaders and committees

Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

Chair
Senator Joassim

Public Announcements
Sen.27. The Flint Water Crisis Relief Act has been reported out of Committee.

Committee Description

Our Committee is in charge of Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. This involves legislating on matters such as aging, biomedical research and development, higher education, occupational safety and health, private pension plans, public health, student loans, wages and hours of labor, equal employment opportunity as well as individuals with disabilities and arts and humanities.

The HELP Committee jurisdiction encompasses most of the agencies, institutes, and programs of the Department of Health and Human Services, including the Food and Drug Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, the Administration on Aging, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Furthermore, it has jurisdiction over various issues related to education and workforce development, including Head Start, the No Child Left Behind Act, Higher Education, Job and Vocational Training and the Workforce Investment Act. The HELP Committee also has primary jurisdiction over the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation through the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974.

Issue Areas

In recent years, the Committee has been presented with issues as diverse as mental health research, tobacco and marijuana use, newborn screenings, promoting access to college to students with disabilities, retirement plan options for small businesses, Lyme disease, the No Child Left Behind Act, the Paycheck Fairness Act, the Every Child achieves Act and of course the common core set of standards and the Affordable Care Act.

The most polemical issues of the past few years have been about public school and charter school funding, GI bills, the drug company industry’s patent monopolies, the age of retirement...
They research and sponsor bills

Submit Legislation > Propose legislation for consideration by the chamber

A bill cannot be withdrawn or edited once it has been submitted. Please draft bills offline and proofread carefully before you submit. A sample bill can be found under the instructions tab.

Types of Legislation.

(S.) Bills that become public law revise the U.S. Code (below). Bills can vary dramatically in terms of their importance.

(S. Res) Simple Resolutions do not have the force of law. They are often used to make statements of support or opposition, and are also used to propose changes in internal legislative procedures.

(S. J. Res) Joint Resolutions become law in the same manner as public bills. The exceptions are Joint Resolutions that propose amendments to the Constitution, which require 2/3rds support of Congress to be referred to the states for ratification.
With guidance from provided tutorials
Committees review, markup and report
Floor scheduling captures chamber dynamics
The Senate (or House) decides

Vote Regarding S.21 > Cloture

Vote on Motion Regarding S.21

Type: Cloture

Starts: March 9, 2016 10:44 PM
Concludes: March 10, 2016 10:44 AM

Vote Threshold: 60%

FAILED: 10 Yes / 3 No / 1 Present

Motion Text


Sponsor: Senator An
Submitted: February 14, 2016 10:08 PM
Cosponsors: 3
Proposed Amendments: 3

Debate Status
This motion is being considered under limited debate and cannot be filibustered.

Ballot Overview

Vote Type | Cast | Percentage
---|---|---
Yes | 10 | 71.43%
No | 3 | 21.43%
Present | 1 | 7.14%
No Vote | 20 |

Ballot Details

Member
Senator Abid

Vote
YES
The President weighs in

President > Pres. Obama (not really)

Pres. Obama (not really)
ovaloffice@wh.net
Edit Profile

President's Desk

Enrolled Legislation
- H.R.11: Livestock Antimicrobial Act
  - Sign
  - Veto

Signed Legislation
- H.R.16: Protection of Veteran Education Benefits Act
- H.R.18: Benefit Families and Homeowners Act of 2014
- H.R.30: Rightful Americans Act
Behind the scenes, the instructor customizes and administers
Assignments ensure that students ask the right questions

Committee Request Assignment

Under Committees you can indicate committee preferences to the leadership and to other legislators. Committee assignments are important because they signal your policy priorities to constituents, and they provide opportunities for extraordinary influence over legislation within particular policy areas. Committees have negative and positive agenda control. With rare exceptions, only bills that are favorably reported from committee are taken up on the floor. In addition, the committee’s version of a bill (not the bill as introduced) is usually the focus of debate when a bill is taken up on the floor.

In one single spaced page, explain the motivations behind your committee requests and how they relate to your representational and policy goals.
Overview: Balance the Budget

Legislating is not easy. This lesson about democracy takes time for students to appreciate. Citizens and the legislators who represent them have conflicting values and policy priorities. Legislatures enable societies to move forward despite intense conflicts, by providing a framework for making collective choices.

The budgeting exercises described below can be illuminating and fun starting points, especially for students who have never participated in a collective decision-making exercise such as LegSim. Through these exercises they will learn more about:

- government spending and taxing priorities, deficits and debts
- how government priorities compare to their own
- the importance of agenda setting, negotiation, and compromise in democratic processes
“I found LegSim to be the most valuable pedagogical tool for teaching the legislative process that I’ve come across. The feedback from students has been tremendous and I witnessed some serious learning (lots of “oh yeah” moments) going on during class. I learned quite a bit, especially regarding procedures (something I always avoided like the plague) which surprised me.”

Professor Jeff Peake
Clemson University

“I have never taken a class like this before in my entire life, and probably will never have this much fun in a class ever again!”

“There’s only so much you can learn about Congress, but LegSim adds more and keeps you on your feet. Something about actually legislating and looking at bills that a 300 page textbook just can’t convey.”

Anonymous students
How much does it cost?

Colleges and Universities
Students pay a $16 fee during registration

High Schools
School pays a $250 annual site license
How to order

For more information contact support@legsim.org

To order a session

• 1. Your name and email address
• 2. The preferred name of your LegSim session (e.g. U of Washington Summer 2010)
• 3. Version (e.g. U.S. House or U.S. Senate)
• 4. Approximate start and end dates for the class
• 5. Payment method: Student pays ($16) or School Pays

Thank you for taking the time to learn about LegSim!
RE-ELECT
Rep. Brian Mann

MA (7) Tax Money Destination

And know exactly where your hard-earned tax dollars end up