

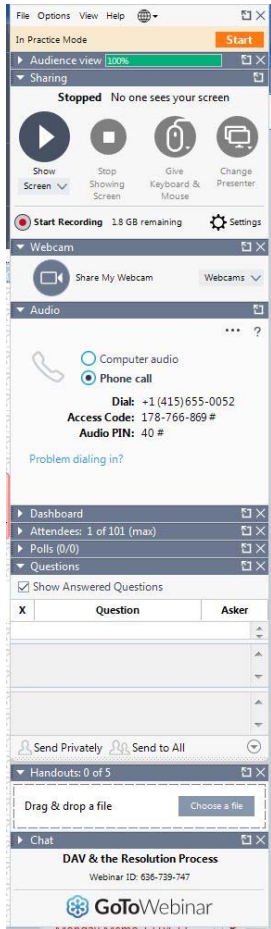
WEBINAR

- We **will be recording** this webinar once I start the presentation.
- Everyone's **microphones will be muted**



WEBINAR

- You can ask questions via **text/message** using tool bar
- At the end I will stop recording and **try to address many of your questions.**





The Basics of the Legislative Process in Congress

Shane Liermann

Deputy National

Legislative Director for Benefits

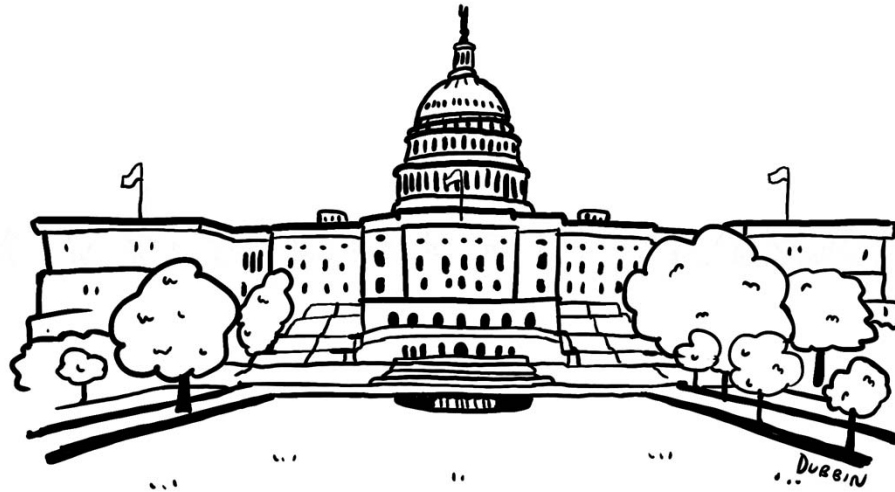
Basics of Legislation in Congress

As a DAV leader, you can be an effective advocate for ill and injured veterans and their families when you familiarize yourself with how the public policy process works and the times in which your advocacy can have the greatest impact.

Basics of Legislation in Congress

- Congress
- How a Bill becomes Law
- DAV Resolutions

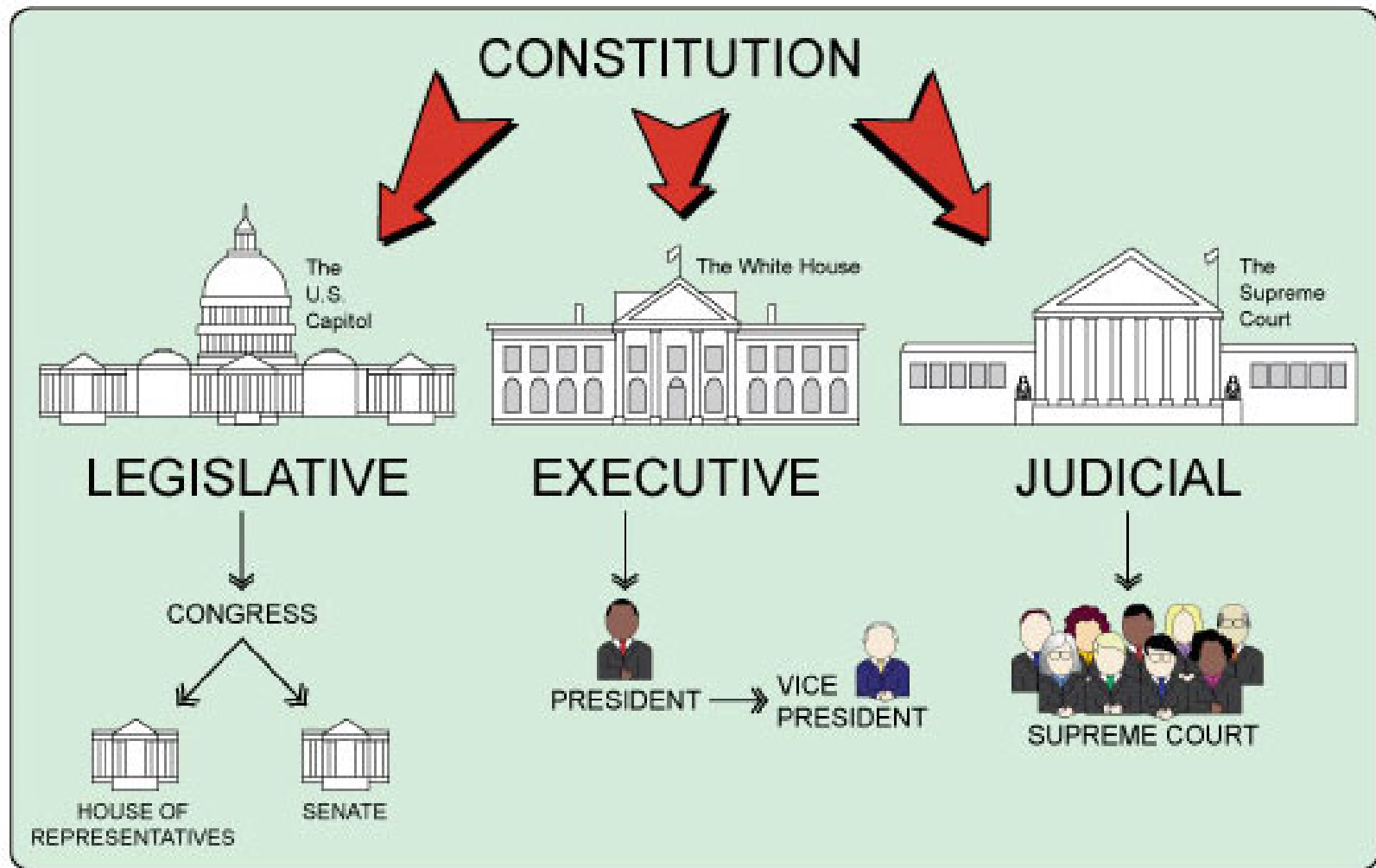
CONGRESS



Congress

Per the U.S. Constitution, our federal government is separated into 3 branches, that provide checks and balances on each other.

1. Executive
2. Legislative
3. Judicial



Congress



*I hear so much
different terminology,
that it can be
confusing, so what is
Congress?*

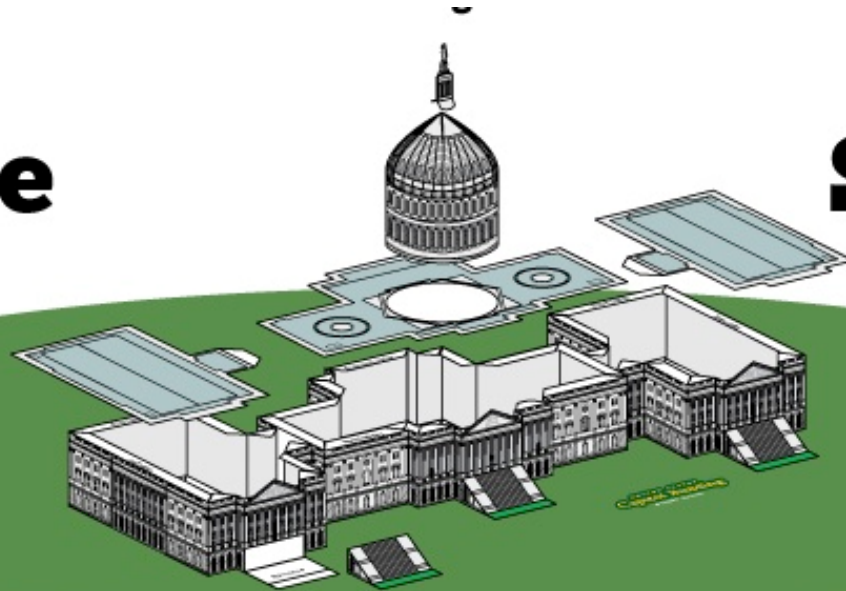
Congress

Congress is the Legislative Branch and is comprised of a bi-cameral system. In other words, 2 chambers. Bills must pass both chambers to become law:

1. U.S. Senate
2. U.S. House of Representatives

House

Senate



**% Population in
each state**

Representatives

Each state receives repre-

435 100

**50 x 2 Senators
per State**

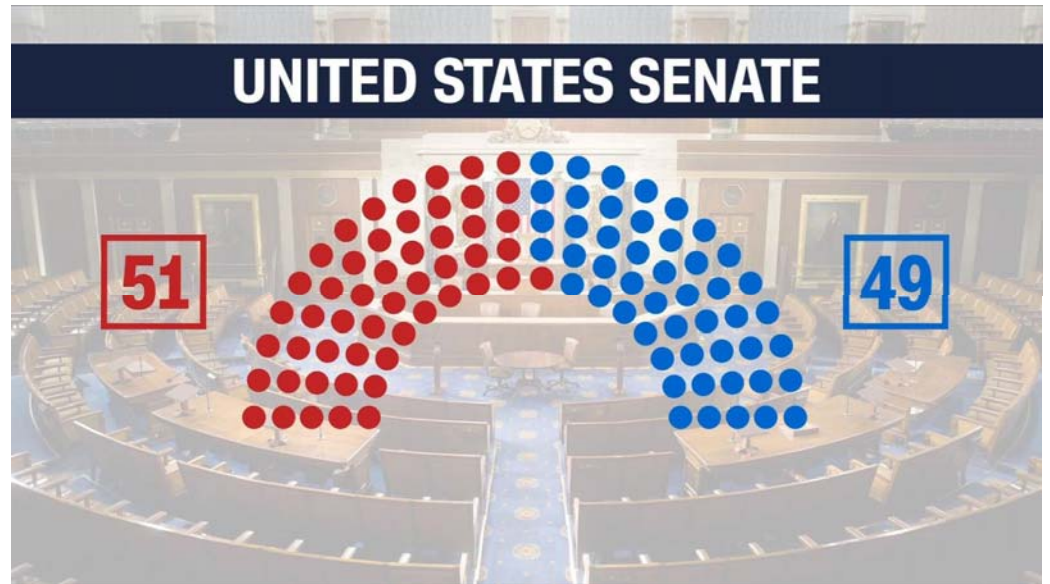
Senators

U.S. Senate

- The Senate is the upper house/chamber of Congress. 100 Members.
- Each Senator serves a six-year term. The Senate can be slower and consider the long-term effects of laws.

U.S. Senate

Only 1/3 of the senate seats are elected every two years. So only 34 or 33 senators are up for election at one time.



U.S. Senate

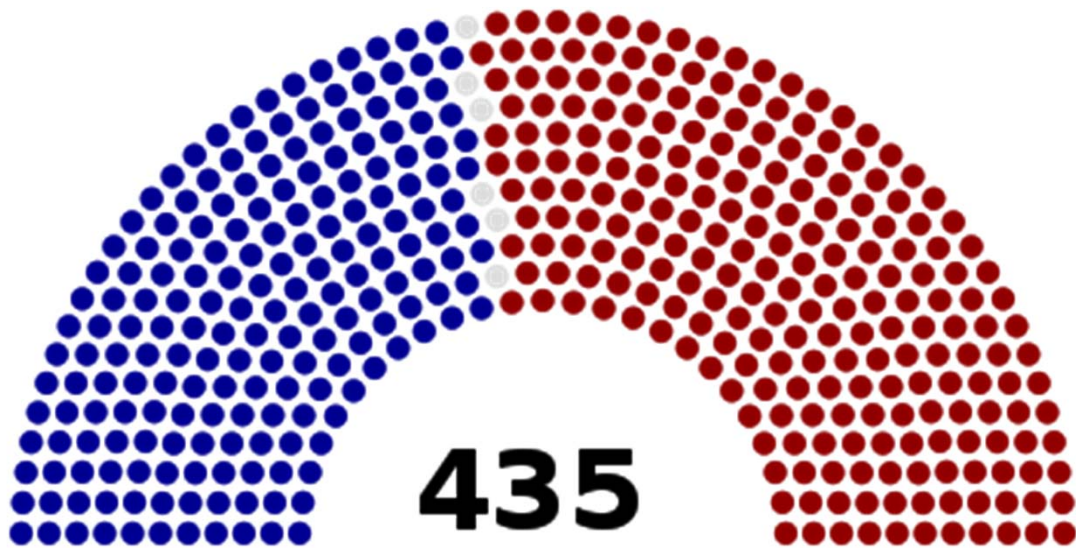
The Senate is comprised of 16 Committees. Each Committee has a Chair and a Ranking Member.

- Veterans' Affairs
- Armed Services

U.S. House of Representatives

- The “House” is the lower house/chamber.
- Each serves a 2-year term. 435 Members.
Laws dealing with revenue must start in the House.

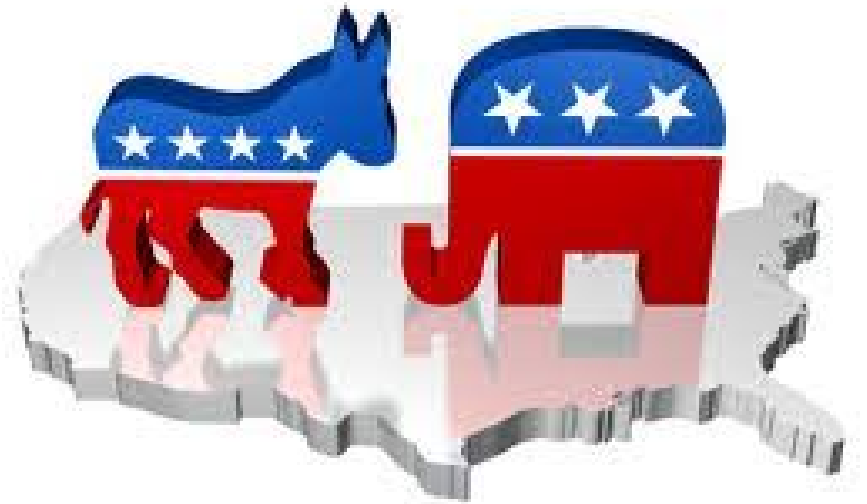
U.S. House of Representatives



All 435 seats in the House are up for reelection every two years. The next election for all Representatives is November 2020.

House of Representatives

The House is comprised of 21 Committees. Each Committee has a Chair and a Ranking Member.



House of Representatives

In the House, Committees are broken down into subcommittees, Veterans' Affairs:

- Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs
 - Economic Opportunity
 - Health
- Oversight and Investigations
- Technology Modernization

Congress

The U.S. Congress operates in 2-year terms called Congress.

Currently we are in the 116th Congress (2019-2020).



Congress

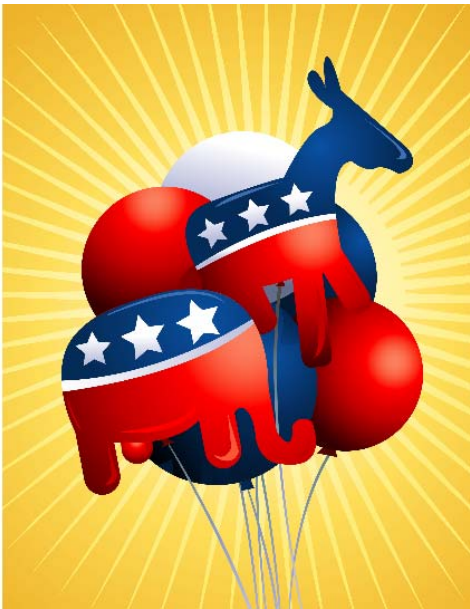
- Each “congress” is divided into two sessions and currently we are in the 1st session of the 116th Congress.
- The 116th Congress started in January 2019 and will end in December 2020.

Congress

*Why is it important to
know that the 116th
Congress ends in
December 2020?*



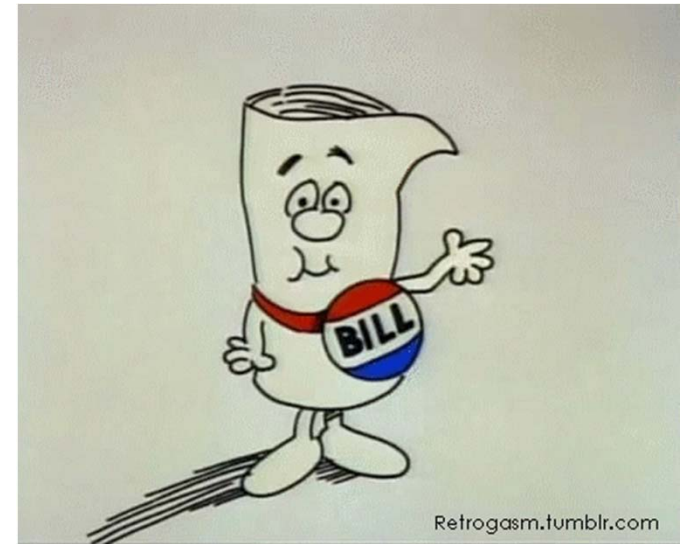
Congress



Any bills introduced during the 1st session of the 116th Congress (2019) have until December 2020 to be acted upon. New bills introduced have approximately 14 months to be considered.



How a Bill becomes Law



Bill to Law

There are 7 basic steps for a bill to become law. Before we discuss, let's put this process into some perspective:

- 115th Congress (2017-2018)
 - 11,474 bills were introduced
 - 443 of those bills became law--Only 3%

Bill to Law

STEP 1: The Creation of a Bill

Members of the House or Senate draft, sponsor and introduce bills for consideration by Congress. Only Members of Congress can introduce bills. After introduction, the bill is usually assigned to a Committee.

Bill to Law

STEP 2: Committee Action

Often a committee or subcommittee may request reports from government agencies, hold hearings so experts and interested parties have an opportunity to offer testimony regarding the issue, “mark up” or revise the bill.

Bill to Law

STEP 2: Committee Action

The full committee may make a recommendation to pass the bill, to revise (i.e., mark up) and release the bill (also known as reporting the bill out of committee), or to lay the bill aside (also known as tabling the bill).

Bill to Law

STEP 3: Floor Action

The bill is returned to the full House or Senate for further debate and approval. At this point members may propose amendments to the bill, add additional text, or otherwise alter the bill.

Bill to Law

STEP 4: Vote

House and Senate members vote on their respective versions of the proposed bill.



Bill to Law

STEP 5: Conference Committees

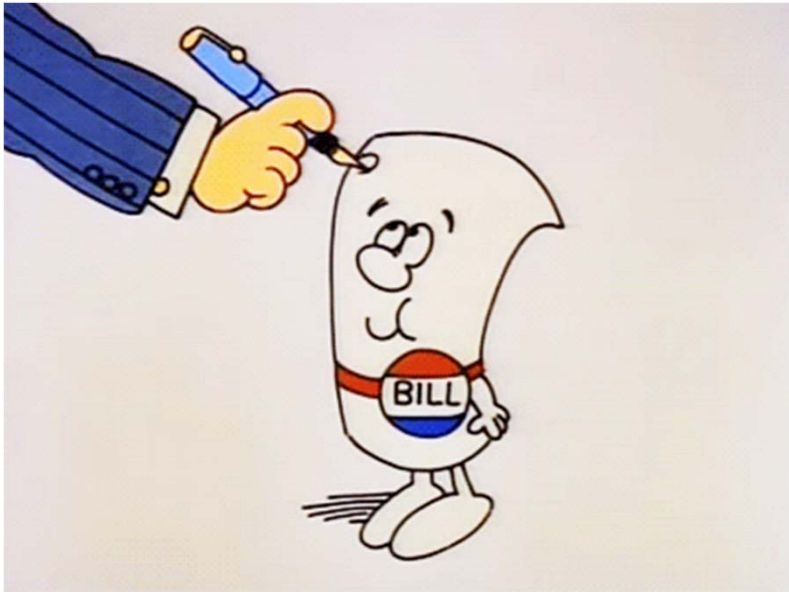
A bill must be approved by both Chambers of Congress. If passed by the House, the bill will be referred to the Senate and assigned to the Committee of Jurisdiction, vice versa.

Bill to Law

STEP 5: Conference Committees

When either Chamber approves a bill that was passed by the other Chamber, the two Chambers must resolve any legislative differences between the House and Senate versions of the bill by way of a conference committee.

Bill to Law



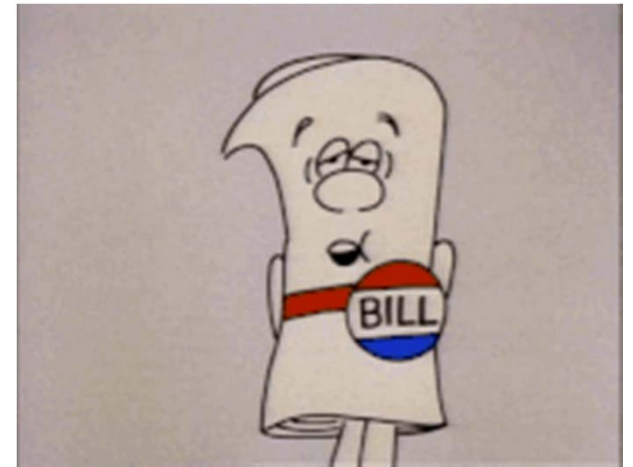
STEP 6: Presidential Action

After the bill is passed by both Chambers, it is sent to the President for approval or signature, which, if granted, creates a Public Law.

Bill to Law

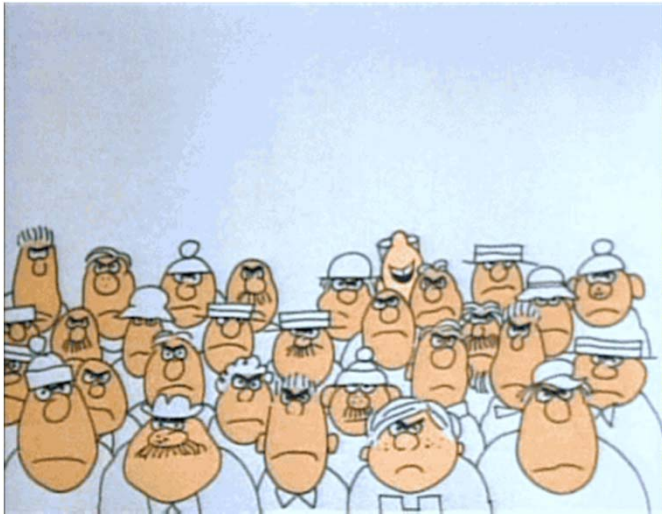
STEP 6: Presidential Action

When a President comments on and refuses to sign a bill it is known as a veto. A vetoed bill may return to Congress for reconsideration and requires 2/3 majority to override a veto.



Bill to Law

STEP 7: The Creation of a Law



The Office of Federal Register assigns the Public Law a number (i.e. P.L. 109-1) and the Government Printing Office prints it.

Bill to Law

*Can you give
us an example
of the
process?*



Bill to Law

HR 299 Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Step 1 Introduction

- 1-8-19 Introduced in the House and Referred to the Veterans' Affairs Committee.
- 2-1-19 Referred to DAMA Subcommittee.

Bill to Law

HR 299 Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Step 2 Committee Action

- 5-1-19 DAMA Held hearings. DAV testified.
- 5-8-19 Full Committee Mark-up, vote held and was reported out of Committee.

Bill to Law

HR 299 Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans

- **Step 3 Floor Action** 5-14-19 HR 299 went to the floor of the House for debate.
- **Step 4 Vote** 5-14-19 Roll Call vote and passed out of the House (410-0).

Senate Bill to Law

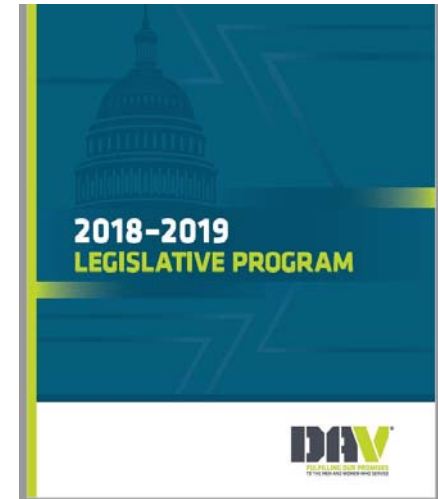
- **Step 2 Committee Action.** 5-15-19
Received in the Senate and read twice.
- **Step 3 Floor Action.** 6-12-19 Went to
Senate floor without amendment.
- **Step 4 Vote.** 6-12-19 Passed by Voice Vote-
Unanimous Consent.

Bill to Law

- **Step 5 Conference Committees.** No amendment in Senate so no Committee.
- **Step 6: Presidential Action.** 6-19-19 was Presented to President. 6-25-19 was signed.
- **Step 7 Creation of Law.** 6-25-19 HR 299 became Public Law 116-23.



DAV Resolutions



Resolutions

In previous webinars, we discussed the importance of DAV Resolutions and how they create our legislative agenda for each year. Let's discuss 2 ways our Resolutions can impact the legislative process in Congress.

RESOLUTIONS

- First, Members of Congress use our DAV Resolutions for bill introduction and/or drafting.



RESOLUTIONS

Example

Congresswoman Julia Brown (CA), introduced H.R. 444— the Reduce Unemployment for Veterans of All Ages Act of 2019.

RESOLUTIONS

Example

H.R. 444 is almost a copy of DAV Resolution No. 102, to eliminate the 12 year-period of eligibility for Vocational Rehabilitation. At the May 1st hearing, she quoted Resolution No. 102 in her testimony.

RESOLUTIONS

- Second, DAV uses our Resolutions to support and advocate for bills that are introduced.

OPERATION:
**KEEP THE
PROMISE**

RESOLUTIONS

Example

The DAV Commander's Action Network (CAN) sends out alerts to our network urging them to contact their Members of Congress.

RESOLUTIONS

Example

All of the alerts sent out through the DAV CAN, are created based on our resolutions.

RESOLUTIONS



*How Can You,
Your Chapter and
Your Department
Help?*

RESOLUTIONS

Set up meetings with your Members in your local areas to discuss our Resolution Book.

- Pick out a few Resolutions to discuss with them to introduce as bills.

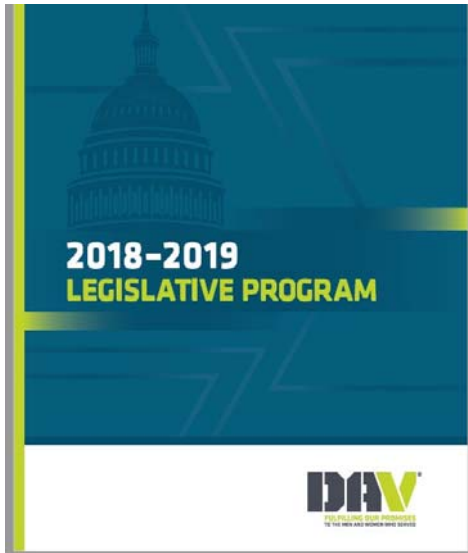
RESOLUTIONS

After the release of alerts through the DAV CAN, schedule a meeting with your Member's local office.

- Use this as a follow-up to the emails sent through DAV CAN and request they co-sponsor the bill.

RESOLUTIONS

The most recent Legislative Program, 2019-2020, will be available very soon. A list of the adopted resolutions are available.



<https://www.dav.org/learn-more/legislation/resolutions/>



Summary of the Webinar

SUMMARY

Congress

- Senate and House are the 2 Chambers
- Senators-6 years /Representatives-2 years
- Bills must pass both Chambers
- A term of Congress is 2 years
- 116th Congress ends in December 2020

SUMMARY

How a Bill Becomes a Law

- STEP 1: The Creation of a Bill
- STEP 2: Committee Action
- STEP 3: Floor Action
- STEP 4: Vote

SUMMARY

How a Bill Becomes a Law

- STEP 5: Conference Committees
- STEP 6: Presidential Action
- STEP 7: The Creation of a Law

SUMMARY

DAV Resolutions

- Resolutions to introduce a bill
- Resolutions to support bills
- How Can You Help

OPERATION:
**KEEP THE
PROMISE**



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