

## Y2. BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS OF SENATE AND HOUSE

[Bills and resolutions of the 2 Houses of Congress are not sent to libraries. The only provision of law requiring their preservation is sec. 82 of the general printing act of Jan. 12, 1895, which provides that 4 sets shall be bound, of which 2 are deposited in the Senate document room and 2 in the House document room at the Capitol. Many large libraries, however, consider them of historic interest and value, and therefore attempt to preserve bills and resolutions in their libraries.]

The files of Senate and House bills and resolutions in the Public Documents Library are very incomplete and no attempt is made here to list them. The few that it does have are arranged by the number of the Congress and session.

All bills and resolutions are printed in bill form, and, unless specially ordered by either House, are printed only when referred to a committee, when favorably reported back, and after their passage by either House. The number of bills and resolutions presented to each Congress is enormous. Since the period covered by this Checklist the practice has been changed so that there are fewer prints of bills and resolutions. The present practice (1911) is to print the bill or resolution 4, or in some cases, 5 times (instead of 6). These prints are, 1st, at the time of introduction and reference to the committee of the House in which the bill originates; 2d, when reported by that committee; 3d, when introduced and referred to the corresponding committee in the other House; 4th, when reported by that committee, the 5th print being only in case of appropriation bills, where the amendments are very numerous. A Senate bill has now rarely more than 4 prints. When a bill has passed both Houses it is prepared on parchment for the President's signature.

A bill is a "bill" as long as it remains in the House in which it originates; it becomes an "act," when it has passed that House of Congress and been referred to the other House; it does not, however, become an "act" or "statute" in the legal sense of the term until it has passed both Houses and been approved and signed by the President. For further information concerning the stages of the progress of a bill, the reader is referred to p. 487-492 of the 1909 edition of the House Manual (Y4.R861:909), and to later House manuals. Bills are either of a public or private nature. The term "private bill" is construed by law to mean "all bills for the relief of private parties, bills granting pensions, bills removing political disabilities, and bills for the survey of rivers and harbors."

Bills and joint resolutions are presented to the President for signature and become law on his approval.

If the President disapproves, he returns the bill, with his objections, to that House in which it originates, and if both Houses on reconsideration pass the bill by a two-thirds vote, the bill becomes a law over the President's veto. If any bill is not returned by the President within 10 days (Sundays excepted) after it is presented to him, the same becomes a law in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their adjournment prevents its return, in which case it does not become a law.

Resolutions are of 3 kinds, namely, simple, joint, and concurrent. The enacting clause of a simple resolution of either House is the one word "Resolved." Resolutions of inquiry addressed to the heads of Executive Departments are usually simple rather than concurrent in form and are never joint resolutions. A simple resolution becomes operative on its passage by the House in which it originates. It does not go to the other House, nor does it go the President for signature. Simple resolutions can apply only to subjects which are in the jurisdiction of the one House of Congress involved.

Joint resolutions have as their resolving clause the words "Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled." Amendments to the Constitution are proposed in the form of joint resolutions, which have their several readings and are enrolled and signed by the presiding officers of the 2 Houses. With the exception of joint resolutions of that nature, all joint resolutions are sent to the President for approval and have the full force of law. They are used for what may be called the incidental, unusual, or inferior purposes of legislating, as, for example, extending the national thanks to individuals, notice to a foreign government of the abrogation of a treaty, declaration of intervention in Cuba, correction of an error in an existing act of legislation, special appropriations for minor and incidental purposes, etc. At one time they were used for purposes of general legislation; but the 2 Houses finally concluded that a bill was the proper instrumentality for this purpose. A joint resolution may be changed to a bill by amendment. The only difference between the enacting clause of a bill and the resolving clause of a joint resolution is that the bill reads "Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled," whereas the joint resolution substitutes in the foregoing phrase the word "Resolved" for "Be it enacted."

The resolving clause of a House concurrent resolution is "Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring)," and in the case of a Senate concurrent resolution "Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring)." In the modern practice concurrent resolutions have been developed as a means of expressing fact, principles, opinions, and purposes of the 2 Houses. For example, joint committees are authorized by resolutions of this form. A concurrent resolution is binding on neither House until agreed to by both. It is not sent to the President for approval unless it contain a proposition of legislation, which is not within the scope of the modern form of concurrent resolution. Money can not be appropriated by simple or concurrent resolutions.

Bills and simple, joint, and concurrent resolutions which are introduced in one session of a Congress may be considered at a later session of the same Congress; but the bill or resolution dies with the expiration of that Congress. The same bill may of course be reintroduced with a new number in a later Congress.

Readers who are desirous of tracing the legislative history of any particular bill or resolution are referred to the history of such bill or resolution as listed in the numerical arrangements incorporated in the indexes to the Congressional record, and in the Senate or House journals. See also entries under Y1.3:B49 Cong. sess.,.]