



New Jersey Youth and Government Junior Legislation Manual

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What is Junior Legislation?

Since 2010, the New Jersey Youth and Government Program has invited middle school students to build a legislative experience of their own. Junior Legislators lead one another as they learn to write bills and have thoughtful, respectful, and exciting discussions about current issues. Collaboration and community help all delegates to create a powerful, empowering experience.

The Junior Legislators will be primarily writing and defending their own bills as well as the bills of their peers. NJYAG gives them the opportunity to share their beliefs and inspire change in the future of New Jersey and above all, NJYAG promotes learning.

This year's conference will place a larger emphasis on Skill Building alongside our Bill Debate. We hope to take advantage of the virtual format in order to better prepare our delegates for their high school careers in Youth and Government.

We can't wait to meet the newest generation of delegates!

Responsibilities

- Before Pre-Legislative Conference
 - Have an open mind!
- During Pre-Legislative Conference
 - Learn about what a bill is and how to write one
- During Conference
 - Debate bills
 - Participate in mini lessons
 - Learn about parliamentary procedure, debating and listening skills
- At all times
 - Learn
 - Listen
 - Be respectful
 - And most importantly... Have fun!

What Will We Do?

Pre-Leg

- Icebreakers
- Introduction to bill writing
- Debate activities

Bill Sharing Group Weeks

- Group meetings to work on bills
 - Optional One on One Meetings

Tuesday

- Opening Ceremony
- Icebreakers
- Mini-Lesson
- Discussion Based Bucketing Groups

Saturday

- Interactive activities
- Bill Debate
- Mini Lesson
- Bill Debate continuation

Sunday

- Interactive Activities
- Mini Lesson
- Bill Debate
- Reflections
- Round Table

YAG Essentials

Signing up for YAG can be daunting. What do you need?

We recommend having:

- Charged device
- Water bottle
- A positive attitude
- Even though it's Zoom: Don't forget pants!

Parliamentary Procedure

Parliamentary Procedure (often shortened to parli-pro) is essential for all delegates. Here's a helpful cheat sheet!

Introduction: You use this **every time** you speak

Name

Delegation

Thank you, Chair

Making a motion: You can make two motions every time you speak. The most common are asking the bill author questions and then speaking afterwards. After your introduction say:

Will the author yield to a series of questions? [yes/no]

I reserve my right to speak thereafter

Then ask your questions and give your opinion on the bill!

You can also yield speaking time. You can yield to another delegate or the author's closing statement. To do this you must reserve your right. After your introduction say:

I reserve my right to make a motion [that is your right]

I reserve my right to yield time to a fellow delegate

OR

I reserve my right to yield time to the author's summation

Then speak! After you are done say:

I yield the remainder of my time to [delegate name] **OR the author's summation**

Afterwards, you do not need to yield your time to the chair.

After you are done speaking say:

I yield the remainder of my time to the chair

Parli-pro seems complicated at first, but don't give up! Soon it will be second nature. Don't be afraid to ask questions or make mistakes.

Flow of Debate

There are several components of bill debate:

- Author's opening statement
 - Here is where the author can introduce and explain their bill. Having a prepared speech may help, but isn't necessary. If you aren't the one presenting, pay attention!
- Non-debatable technical questions (NDTQs)
 - Here you can ask the author questions that are not debatable. Ex: Definitions, clarifications, or statistics.
- Con-Pro debate
 - Con-Pro debate is where you can state your opinion on the bill and sway others to your side. You can also ask questions and make motions.
 - Con=disagree and Pro=agree.
- Author's closing statements
 - The author will address any unanswered questions and make any clarifications. This is the final push for the author to sway fellow delegates to vote for this bill.

How to Write a Bill

(You can copy and paste this into a doc!)

Sponsor: Your first and last name

Delegation: Your delegation name

Title: An ACT to...**insert bill topic here**

- The title clause should briefly describe the purpose of your bill. What change do you want to make that your bill will address? State it here.
- Examples:
 - An ACT to increase the minimum wage
 - An ACT relating to rebuilding infrastructure

Enactment Clause: Be it enacted by the Youth Model Legislature of the State of New Jersey that...

- *The enactment clause is where you explain how you will bring about the change that you stated in your title. Your title is the purpose--the thing that you think is important and needs changing--and your enactment clause is where you briefly summarize how you will achieve that change. What is the best way to achieve your title's goal? State it here.*
- Examples:
 - Be it enacted by the Youth Model Legislature of the State of New Jersey that the minimum wage be raised to \$9.90 an hour for all workers.
 - Be it enacted by the Youth Model Legislature of the State of New Jersey that that a surcharge on gasoline be established to fund the improvement of infrastructure.

Section I: Define any terminology specific to the topic that your bill addresses

- *Section I is your opportunity to define words that you will use frequently within your bill. Define all of the important ones--even if you think that most people should know what they mean--because, if you provide a concrete definition, no one can debate with you on the meaning of any term that you use to support your argument. You are*

the expert on your bill topic, so help us become experts too by defining the words you'll be using, within the context of your bill.

Section II: Detail how your bill is bringing about the change that you outline in your enactment clause

Section III: Detail how your bill is bringing about the change that you outline in your enactment clause

Section IV: Detail how your bill is bringing about the change that you outline in your enactment clause

- *It doesn't matter how many Sections the body of your bill has, so long as you feel that you cover every aspect of what your bill actually does within them. This is the technical heart of your bill! How are you going to achieve the change? State it here.*

Statement of Intent: Why is this bill important? Why is it necessary? What changes will it bring to the state of New Jersey and why is that change important or significant?

Use this section to talk about why you think your bill is important! Use statistics and arguments that you feel emphasize the importance of the change that your bill brings. Keep it concise, though: you can save any arguments/stats not listed here for when you actually debate your bill at Conference, so don't give away all of the good ones! Why should New Jersey pass this bill into law? State it here.

Effective date: This bill shall come into effect on... ****insert future date here****

Make sure that the date you choose is at least well enough into the future that it is reasonable. "January 1, 2021" is usually a safe starting point, but consider your bill and topic, specifically, when coming up with an effective date.

Funds Summary:

Funds necessary for the implementation of this bill will be covered by the
insert state department here

The implementation of this bill will fall under the jurisdiction of the **insert
state department here**

*As you fill out your Funds Summary, think about which state department
would be most likely to be involved in overseeing that your bill is carried out,
and funding it.*

Bill Check-list:

- Title
- Enactment Clause
- Body (Section I, Section II...)
- Statement of Intent
- Effective Date
- Funds Summary

Flip to the next page for an example of a bill!

Sponsor: Sydney Kang

Delegation: Hunterdon Central

An act relating to food borne illness

Be it enacted by the Youth Model Legislature of the State of New Jersey that a curriculum be implemented in school health classes to educate the youth about food borne illnesses, prevention methods, and the dangers they cause

Section I: This bill refers to the awareness and education of foodborne illnesses and further prevention of them

- a) **Foodborne illnesses** are defined as any illness resulting from the food spoilage of contaminated food, pathogenic bacteria, viruses, or parasites that contaminate food

Section II: All schools' health classes must teach lessons covering all food borne illnesses and the proper ways to prevent them as well as the dangers of contracting one.

- a) The lessons will come from the Utah Education Network curriculum that covers food borne illnesses.
 - i) The aforementioned lessons will consist of a coverage on the most common food borne illnesses in the United States as well as prevention methods and proper sanitizing measures and the dangers of not following these prevention methods.
- b) The entire span of lessons will not exceed one to three classes, depending on the length of time each class is, as it is different for every school.

Section III: The aforementioned curriculum will be taught in grades 7, 9, and 11 in New Jersey.

- a) This will be taught in all public high schools in New Jersey.

Section IV: If any school fails to comply they will be fined \$1000 for every semester they fail to implement this curriculum.

- a) The Department of Education will be enforcing and collecting this fine for any public school that does not comply.

Statement of intent: This bill has the goal of preventing food borne illnesses by educating youth and implementing the knowledge with them so they understand the proper prevention methods and the risks.

Effective Date: August 2019, before the start of the 2019-2020 school year.

Financial Statement:

a) Funds summary

- i) Funds necessary for the implementation of this bill will be covered by the Department of Education.
- ii) The implementation of this bill will fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Education and all fines collected will go to the state.

