



# US Senate Rules of Procedure

# Section I: General Rules

## Scope and Application

These rules of procedure (“Senatorial Procedure”) are applicable to the United States Senate at SMUS Model United Nations 2025, during all scheduled and extraordinary sittings. No other rules of procedure apply.

The term “Senate” in the Senatorial Procedure refers to the entire upper house of the United States Congress. “Senators” refer to any member of the United States Senate, regardless of party. A “sitting” is the equivalent of a SMUSMUN committee session.

The Director of the US Senate is the President of the US Senate in this case Vice President JD Vance. To address the President of the Senate, Mr. President shall be used.

These rules may be adapted by the Committee Staff at their discretion.

## Conduct of Members of the Senate

Senators shall be courteous and respectful to all staff and delegates. The Chair will immediately call to order Members who do not abide by this rule. Members of the Senate who feel that they are not being treated respectfully are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Dias team or Secretariat.

English will be the only official and working language of the United States Senate. **Senators may not use affected accents during committee.** National costumes are not permitted. Members of the Senate must wear Western Business Attire during all sittings of the Senate.

Senators are expected to be present at the beginning of every scheduled committee session, at which point roll call will be taken. Senators who will not be present for part or all of a committee session should inform the Dias team verbally or by email prior to any such absence; it is a delegate’s responsibility to ensure their absence is duly noted.

## Electronic aids

During a sitting, internet resources and electronic devices, such as Google Docs and laptop computers, are permitted only to aid in the composition of bills; prior to the conference, delegates should ensure they have access to these platforms if they wish to use them during committee sessions. Delegates are highly encouraged to limit their use of internet and electronic devices to the specified substantive and academic purposes during the conference.

## Section II: General Procedure

### **Addressing the Chamber**

All speeches in the Senate shall be addressed to the Dias. In this iteration of the US Senate, “Mr. President” will be used. The Dias may, at their discretion, impose time limits on speeches, but has the final decision on when to call a senator to order.

Only the Dias may be directly addressed in a sitting of the Senate. All other senators must refer to their fellow Members in the third person, by state or district. For example, the Senator from Indiana must be referred to as the “Senator from Indiana.”

### **Parties and Caucuses**

The two sole political parties represented in the United States Senate at SMUS Model United Nations 2025 shall be the Republican Party and the Democratic Party. Independents are represented in the Senate and may choose to caucus with either political party. No other political parties will be permitted unless voted on by the Senate with approval from the Dias.

A senator may apply to change their party or caucus affiliation if they can demonstrate that the views of their constituents no longer align with those of their party or caucus. All applications for party changes must be approved by the Dias and the destination party or caucus leader (e.g. Majority Leader, Minority Leader, etc.). At the discretion of the Dias, a party or caucus may vote to remove a Member of the Senate from the party or caucus if they can demonstrate that the Member does not align with the party or caucus’ views.

## Section III: Rules of Senatorial Debate

### **Quorum and Roll Call**

Quorum denotes the minimum number of Members of the Senate who need to be present in order to open debate. The Dias may declare the chamber in session when at least one-third of the Members of the chamber are present. A quorum will be assumed to be present unless specifically challenged and shown to be absent. At the beginning of each committee session, the Chair will conduct roll call. Senators must state themselves as “present,” which the Chair will then record. Members of the Senate who are not recorded during roll call will not be recognized to speak nor permitted to vote on any matter. Members of the Senate who arrive after roll call should send a message to the Dias to be listed as present.

## **Pledge of Allegiance and Agenda of the Day**

Once the Chair has completed calling the roll and a quorum is present, Senators and Dias shall recite the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

*“I pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”*

After the recitation of the Pledge at the beginning of each sitting, the President of the Senate shall then publish the Agenda of the Day to all senators, listing the bills and other business on the floor which the chamber shall debate.

## **General Floor Debate**

Once the Majority and Minority Leader have addressed the chamber, the President of the Senate shall open the floor to General Floor Debate. During General Floor Debate, the floor is open for all senators to speak on their beliefs towards the Topic Area currently being considered, address any bills on the floor, or any other Senatorial business. A Member of the Senate may raise their placard to be recognized by the Chair to speak. The time allocated to General Floor Debate is at the President of the Senate’s discretion. General Floor Debate is the default activity of the chamber; if no motions or other business are on the floor, the chamber shall return to General Floor Debate at the President of the Senate’s discretion.

## **Leader Time**

Upon opening of debate at the beginning of each sitting, the Dias shall recognize the Majority and Minority Leader in the Senate to address the chamber for no longer than one minute. The Majority and Minority Leader may designate another Member to speak in their place. The Majority and Minority Leaders may speak on the business of the day, the topic at hand, or other important matters. Majority and Minority Leaders are the delegates representing John Thune and Charles Schumer respectively, as outlined in the country matrix.

## **Flow of Debate**

When the General Floor Debate has concluded, the Dias will open the floor to points or motions from senators. A Member of the Senate attempting to make a point or motion must wait to be recognized by the Chair, at which point they should rise. No Member should raise their placard or hand while a speaker is speaking. The chamber shall revert to General Floor Debate if no points or motions are on the floor.

## **Moderated Caucus**

The purpose of a moderated caucus is to facilitate substantive discussion at critical junctures in the debate. During a moderated caucus, the Dias will depart from General Floor Debate and call

on senators who raise their placards to speak. A motion for a moderated caucus is in order at any time when the floor is open. The Member making the motion must specify a time limit for the caucus, a time limit for the individual speeches, and a topic of discussion for the caucus (example: a ten to one moderated caucus on pizza- meaning ten minutes total and one minute speaking time). A motion for a moderated caucus requires a simple majority to pass. If a motion is passed, the senator making the motion will be called upon by the Chair to give the first speech of the moderated caucus. Alternatively, the Member making the motion may request last speaker's rights; in this case, the Chair will reserve a time period before a moderated caucus elapses for the Member to speak. No motions or yields are in order between speeches during a moderated caucus. If there are no senators wishing to speak during a moderated caucus, the caucus immediately ends. Speeches must address the set topic of the moderated caucus; senators whose remarks are not pertinent may be called to order by the Dias.

### **Unmoderated Caucus (Full Chamber)**

A senator may move for an unmoderated caucus at any time when the floor is open. The Member of the Senate making the motion must specify a time limit, not exceeding twenty minutes, and an intended topic of discussion or other purpose for the caucus. At the Dias' discretion, the motion will be put to a vote, requiring a simple majority to pass. In the case of multiple motions for unmoderated caucuses, the Dias will order the motions in ascending order of length. During an unmoderated caucus, senators may freely interact among all members of the chamber to lobby in a more informal setting or to collaborate on bills.

### **Party Caucus**

A senator may move for a party caucus at any time when the floor is open. A party caucus shall divide the chamber into two separate caucuses—the majority and minority party caucus. Members of the Senate of the same caucus may freely interact among their fellow caucus members to determine party or caucus strategy, exchange views within the party, or collaborate on bills in the chamber. The senator making the motion must specify a time limit and an intended topic of discussion or other purpose for the caucus. At the Dias's discretion, the motion will be put to a vote, requiring a simple majority to pass. In the case of multiple motions for a party caucuses, the Dias will order the motions in ascending order of length. Independent members may choose to caucus with either party and may also move between party caucus'.

### **Suspension or Adjournment of the Chamber**

The suspension of the sitting of the chamber means the postponement of all chamber functions until the next scheduled sitting of the Senate. The adjournment of a sitting of the chamber means the postponement of all chamber functions for the duration of the conference. A motion for suspension of the sitting of the chamber is in order only when no more than ten minutes remain in the sitting. Either motion may be ruled out of order at the discretion of the Dias.



## **Postponement (Tabling) & Resumption of Debate**

Whenever the floor is open, a senator may move for the postponement of debate on a bill or amendment currently on the floor. This motion, otherwise known as “tabling,” requires a two-thirds majority vote to pass, and will be debatable to the extent of two speakers in favour and two against. A motion to resume debate on a tabled bill or amendment requires only a simple majority to pass and is not debatable.

## **Speeches and Time Limits**

If practical, the Dias shall recognize a senator to speak, alternating between the majority and minority caucus. The Dias may suspend this practice during debate over bipartisan bills or amendments, or at their discretion whenever necessary.

No senator may address the committee without being first recognized by the Dias. The Chair may call a Member to order if their remarks are impertinent. The Chair will limit the time allotted to each speaker, and may entertain motions to set the speaking time. Speaking time begins as soon as the speaker begins their speech. If a senator exceeds their allotted time, the Chair will call the speaker to order; however, the Chair, at their discretion, may allow a Member to complete their thoughts beyond their speaking time.

## **Yields**

A senator recognized to speak during General Floor Debate must yield the remainder of their time when they are finished speaking; note that Members should not yield in moderated caucuses. A senator who uses the entirety of their speaking time does not technically need to yield, but should yield the remainder of their time to the Chair as a courtesy.

Unlike the four types of yields present in the standard Rules of Procedure of SMUS Model United Nations, there are three different types of yields in the United States Senate.

### **Yielding to the Chair:**

The remaining speaking time of the delegate will be absorbed by the Chair. A delegate must yield to the Chair if they do not wish to yield to another delegate or have their speech open to questions or comments.

### **Yielding to another senator:**

A senator may yield the entirety or remainder of their speaking time to another Member. The Member of the Senate being yielded to is given the option to accept or decline the yield. Should the Member accept the yield, the Chair will recognize the delegate for the remaining time. It is not possible to yield on a yield.

### **Yielding to questions:**

Senators who wish to pose a question to the speaker will be selected by the Chair, unless the Chair grants that right to the speaker. Senators may only ask one question when they are selected by the Chair; follow-up questions are not permitted, though Senators may raise their hand multiple times if they have more than one question. The Chair will call to order delegates whose questions are rhetorical, leading, and/or not designed to elicit information. The speaker may refuse to answer a question at their discretion. Only the speaker may respond to questions, and only the speaker's answers count towards the time limit (while a question is being asked, the speaking time is not counting down).

## Section IV: Senatorial Voting and Bills

### **Introduction of a Bill**

A working paper must be formatted as a Senate resolution paper and must be approved by the Dias team before delegates may refer to it in a speech. Bills or other documents which have not been formally submitted to the President of the Senate cannot be formally or directly referred to during debate. The Dias shall ensure the working paper correctly follows the conventions outlined in Section VII of Senatorial Procedure. Subsequently, a number will be attached to the working paper. It will henceforth be known as a bill, and will be added by the Dias to the Agenda of the Day at the beginning of the next sitting; bills originating in the Senate will be known as a "Senate Resolution" (S.R.).

More than one bill may be on the floor at once. A bill will remain on the floor until it is tabled, until a bill on that Topic Area has been adopted, or until it is rejected during substantive voting procedure. Senators must refer to each draft resolution by its official title, including the origin chamber and designated number ("S.R. 1.2;" "Senate Resolution 1.2"). However, no Member of the Senate may refer to a bill until it is formally introduced.

Once the President of the Senate has approved a bill, a sponsor of the bill may move that the chamber resolve itself into the Committee of the Whole by rising and saying "Honourable Dias, I move to resolve this chamber into the Committee of the Whole." Should the motion pass by simple majority, the chamber shall enter the Committee of the Whole and the Reading of the bill will begin.

The Dias will temporarily suspend Senatorial procedure in order to invite no more than five sponsors of the bill to read out the bill to the chamber and summarize the bill's intent. At the discretion of the President of the Senate, the chamber shall enter General Floor Debate to debate the bill on the floor for a limited period. This period of General Floor Debate should cover any proposals for amendments; amendments should be completed and ready for presentation during

this time. After General Floor Debate, a Member of the Senate may motion that the chamber entertain amendments by saying: “Honourable Dias, I move that the Clerk present amendments now.” If the motion passes with a simple majority, the bill shall enter Amendment Reading.

## **Amendment Reading**

In the Amendment Reading of the bill, the President of the Senate or a designee will read out the title of each section of the bill to the chamber. If a senator wishes to offer an amendment to the bill, the Member must motion to offer an amendment once the title of the section which the amendment aim to alter is read; the Member will say: “Mr. President, I move to introduce an amendment to Section [#].” A written copy of the amendment must then be submitted to the Dias (This can be done by asking a Dias member to print a copy). If a Member of the Senate is unable to motion to introduce an amendment at the appropriate time during the reading of the bill, they may submit a written copy of the amendment to the President of the Senate for consideration.

After the Dias has read all of the titles of each section of a bill, the Dias will present the chamber with the amendments motioned for during Amendment Reading. In order of section affected, the Chair will read out each amendment to the chamber again.

When the amendment is read out to the chamber, the sponsors will be asked by the Chair to deem the amendment “friendly” or “unfriendly.” If the sponsors deem the amendment “friendly,” the amendment shall be adopted and inserted into the bill without a vote of the chamber.

If the amendment is deemed “unfriendly,” the Dias shall recognize two speakers each from the majority and minority caucus to debate for and against the amendment. After the committee has heard at least two speakers for and two speakers for and against the amendment, the Chair will put the amendment to a voice vote. The sponsor of the amendment may request a recorded vote if they deem the voice vote inconclusive. Alternatively, once debate on the amendment has concluded, a senator may move to close debate on the amendment via adjourning debate, which will then move the chamber directly to substantive voting procedure on the bill.

Should the amendment garner a simple majority of the chamber via a placard vote, voice vote, or recorded vote, the amendment will be included in the bill and the chamber will return to the next amendment on the floor to repeat the process; if no amendments are on the floor, the floor shall be open to a motion to enter Voting Procedure. A Member of the Senate may motion that the chamber enter Voting Procedure by saying: “Honourable, I move that the Clerk move the committee to Voting Procedure now.” If the motion passes with a simple majority, the bill shall enter Voting Procedure.



## **Voting Procedure**

In Voting Procedure, the Chair shall read the full title of the bill to the chamber. The Dias will then order a vote on the final passage of the bill. The bill is adopted with a simple majority. Only one resolution may be adopted for the Topic at hand. If a bill has passed the Senate, it shall be sent to the House of Representatives, controlled by the Republicans, and then to the President of the United States for consideration. In the 119th United States Senate, the President of the United States is Donald J. Trump of the Republican Party.

## **Sponsors and Co-Sponsors**

Sponsors of a bill are the senators who write the content of the bill. Sponsors may be invited by the Dias to read out the bill to the chamber during the Introduction of a Bill. There is no limit to the number of Members who may be listed as sponsors of a bill. Co-Sponsors of a bill are Members of the Senate who wish to see it put to a vote. In the Senate, 7 co-sponsors are required before a bill can be presented to and approved by the President of the Senate. There is no limit to the number of Members who may be listed as co-sponsors of a bill, and senators may be listed as co-sponsors on multiple bills on the floor.

## **Procedural and Substantive Voting**

Voting on all matters other than the final passage of a bill and amendments is considered procedural. Procedural votes may only be decided by unanimous adoption, a placard vote, or a voice vote. Substantive voting refers to voting on the final passage of a bill and the passage of unfriendly amendments. Substantive votes may be decided by unanimous adoption, voice vote, or recorded vote. Senators who do not vote are considered to have abstained. Senators may also vote “present” during recorded votes—the equivalent of an abstention. All senators have one vote.

## **Methods of Voting**

Four methods of voting will be used in the United States Senate. Recorded votes are only in order for substantive votes.

### **Unanimous Adoption:**

Upon voting on a motion, the Chair will ask the chamber “does the chamber wish to adopt this motion?” If there are no dissenting voices, the motion is carried without vote. If there are dissenting voices, the Chair shall move to the voice vote or the recorded vote.

### **Placard Vote:**

When voting on a motion, the Chair will ask all those in favour of the motion to raise their placard and then ask all those against the motion to raise their placard. The Chair will count the

number of votes in favour and the number of votes against, and announce the decision to the chamber. A so-called placard vote shall be the default method of voting for the majority of procedural votes or substantive vote, if voice votes are determined to be impractical.

**Voice Vote:**

When voting on procedural matters, the Chair shall say “All those in favour of adopting this motion say ‘aye,’ all those against say ‘nay.’” When voting on the final passage of a bill or an amendment, the President of the Senate shall say: “does the chamber wish to adopt Senate Resolution [#]? All those in favour say ‘aye,’ all those against say ‘nay.’” In both situations, the President of the Senate will then decide whether the ayes or the nays are the majority opinion of the chamber and announce the decision to the chamber. If five or more Members of the Senate rise to object to the decision of the Director by saying “Mister President, I demand a recorded vote,” a recorded vote will take place (only for substantive motions).

**Recorded Vote:**

The Chair will call for a two-minute caucus before a recorded vote. During this time, the majority and minority caucus may discuss voting strategy. After this two-minute period, the Chair will call the roll of senators in the chamber alphabetically. Senators will respond with their vote. Members may vote “aye,” “nay,” or “present.” A vote of “present” is equivalent to an abstention.

**Tied Votes**

In the United States Senate, if the votes are tied for a recorded vote, the President of the Senate, J.D Vance of the Republican Party will cast his vote to break the tie (In this case, the Director of the Committee).

## Section V: Points

**Point of Order**

During the discussion of any matter, a senator may rise to a Point of Order to indicate an instance of improper procedure. The Dias will rule on the Point of Order in a manner that best facilitates debate, at their discretion; the Dias’ ruling is not subject to appeal. A senator rising to a Point of Order may not speak on the substance of the matter currently under discussion. A Point of Order may not interrupt a speaker. Additionally, the President of the Senate has the right to address a Member directly if proper procedure is not being followed.

**Point of Parliamentary Inquiry**

When the floor is open, a senator may rise to a Point of Senatorial Inquiry to ask the Dias a question regarding Senatorial Procedure. A Point of Senatorial Inquiry may not interrupt a

speaker. Members with substantive questions should not rise to this point, but should rather approach the Dias during an unmoderated caucus or send a message.

### **Point of Personal Privilege**

Whenever a senator experiences personal discomfort or danger, which impairs their ability to participate in the proceedings, they may rise to a Point of Personal Privilege to request that the discomfort be corrected. A Point of Personal Privilege may only interrupt a speaker if the Member is in dire discomfort or danger.

## **Section VI: Crises**

### **Crisis Situations**

In the case of a domestic or international emergency, the Chair may call for a motion to lay on the table all Senatorial business currently on the floor. The Dias will then, at their discretion, suspend standard Senatorial procedure until a resolution for the crisis has been achieved.

### **Crisis Motions**

Written crisis motions that authorize government agencies to take actions must be made to resolve an emergency. This is the Senatorial equivalent of a crisis directive. In order to be considered for debate, they must be submitted in writing to the Dias. The Dias is responsible for ordering the motions for debate. As with all motions, they are debated upon when made and are voted upon when the Dias orders the vote.

## **Section VII: Bills**

After lobbying and debate, senators with similar stances and ideas will begin to come together to form working groups, in which Members will combine ideas and proposals to create bills. Bills are pieces of legislation passed in the United States Senate affecting all Americans.

### **Prewritten Bills**

All bills introduced on the floor should be written and compiled in their entirety during sittings of the Senate at SMUS Model United Nations 2024. The use of content created prior to the conference is prohibited and will not be accepted by the President of the Senate.

### **Bill Number, Sponsors, Co-sponsors**

The name and title of a bill is determined by which chamber of Congress the bill originates in, as well as the number assigned to it by the Dias. Since all bills in SMUS Model United Nations 2025 originate in the Senate, it is known as a “Senate Resolution” (S.R.).

The Dias will assign a number to the bill once it has been approved and is on the floor (e.g. Senate Resolution 1.0; S.R. 1.0). The short form of the bill number (e.g. S.R. 1.0) is listed at the top of the bill document. Sponsors and co-sponsors are listed in a sentence format with their surname and the appropriate prefix (e.g. Mr. McConnell, Ms. Murkowski), with sponsors being listed first (as having introduced the bill) and co-sponsors listed second. The name of each sponsor and co-sponsor should be followed by the party affiliation, state, and/or district in parentheses (e.g. D-NH, R-TX).

## **Bill Titles**

The function of the bill must be described within the following template clause: “To \_\_\_\_\_, and for other purposes.” This sentence should briefly describe what goal the bill aims to achieve and how it aims to achieve this goal. A short title for the bill (e.g. Solar Energy Investment Act) should be included in Section 1 of the bill, within the following template sentence: “This Act may be cited as the ‘\_\_\_\_\_ Act.’”

## **Bill Body Clauses**

Body clauses are the substantive element of the bill—the specific actions which the bill takes, in accordance with the purpose described at the beginning of the bill. Body clauses should be specific and realistic, considering the material and legal capabilities of the United States federal government.

- » Always cite the appropriate federal departments or agencies to execute actions (e.g. the Department of the Interior will direct the National Park Service to... ).
- » When amending or repeating previous Acts of Congress, specify the clauses of the Act affected (e.g. Section 103(a) of the Affordable Care Act of 2010 is replaced with... ).
- » All clauses are numbered or lettered and in full sentences (ending with a period).
- » Sub-clauses are also to be in full sentences and are listed alphabetically.

## **Bill Template**

**S.R. #**

For Authors: Mr./Ms. [Last Name - R/D-State Abbr] introduced the following bill;

For Sponsors: Co-sponsored by Mr./Ms. [Last Name - R/D-State Abbr.]:

### **A BILL**

To [explain reason here], and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

#### **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “\_\_\_\_\_ Act.”

**SEC. 2.** [\_\_\_\_\_].

(a) [clause “A”]

(1) [sub-clause “A-1”]

(b) [clause “B”]

**SEC. 3.** [\_\_\_\_\_].

## **Bill Example**

### **S.R. 1.0**

Mr. Inhofe (R-OK), Mr. Cornyn (R-TX), and Ms. Sinema (D-AZ) introduced the following bill; co-sponsored by Mr. Cruz (R-TX), Mr. Rubio (R-FL), Mr. Schumer (D-NY), Ms. Murkowski (R-AK), and Mr. Ossoff (D-GA):

### **A BILL**

To strengthen American immigration policy by restricting asylum and refugee claims to the United States to persons who can provide appropriate documentation, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

#### **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the “Asylum and Refugee Review Act.”

#### **SEC. 2. ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICE OF ASYLUM AND REFUGEE REVIEW.**

(a) The United States federal government shall establish the Office of Asylum and Refugee Review (OARR), jointly administered by the Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security.

(1) The OARR shall be allocated funding as determined by the Department of Justice and Department of Homeland Security on an annual basis.

(b) The Office of Asylum and Refugee Review (OARR) shall be the sole recipient of all asylum and refugee claims by persons entering or present in the United States.

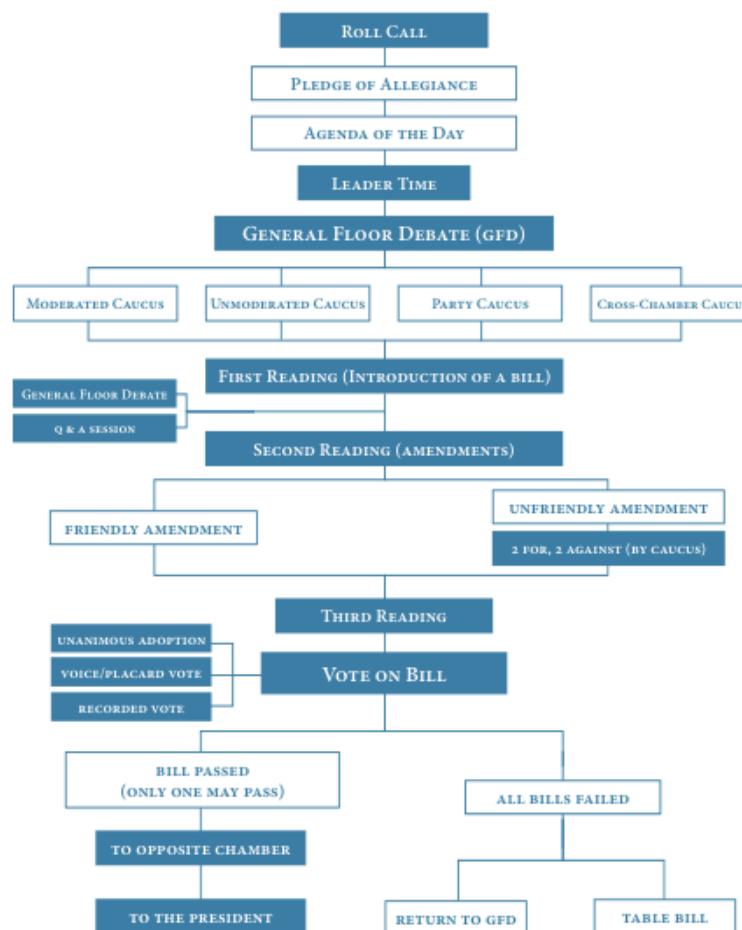
#### **SEC. 3. REVIEW OF ASYLUM AND REFUGEE CLAIMS.**

(a) The Office of Asylum and Refugee Review (OARR) shall only consider and process cases of refugee or asylum claims if the claimant can provide proof of legal entry into the United States,



proof of their identity, and adequate evidence that they are at risk of war, persecution, or violence if they return to their home country.

(b) Claimants who cannot prove legal entry into the United States will be deported to the safest country in which they hold legal status.





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