

Bill & Resolution Structure & Form

Legislation for Congress can be written in the form of a Bill or a Resolution. In Student Congress, students will write their own Bills and Resolutions.

BILLS

A bill's purpose is to make a law. A law requires action that is binding and carries consequences if it's not obeyed. Legislation can be submitted that just affects the state of Tennessee or affects the whole country (federal law). Below is the format for each type of legislation.

Topics of Bills submitted in past JV Student Congress events include:

A bill to require people walking dogs to put them on leashes.

A Bill To ban energy drinks for anyone under the age of 18.

Bill to require a public bounce house in every city in this state.

A Bill to require the FDA to have stricter standards for what goes in our food.

A bill to promote music education for all students.

A bill to make ocean swimming safer.

A Bill to require all the plastic bags are made from recycled materials.

Example Bill:

A bill to ban chewing gum on public sidewalks in Tennessee

(Bills have different sections that each have a purpose.)

Section 1 – (This is the part where you put everything that you want the legislation to do (mandates). You don't have to explain why you are mandating something. That will go into your sponsorship speech. You can have multiple mandates.)

Be it enacted that chewing gum will not be allowed on public sidewalks in the state of Tennessee.

Those violating this law will receive a citation with a \$20.00 fine per offence.

Section 2 – (Definitions - Define any terms in your mandates that might not be clear or have multiple meanings depending on the context.)

Chewing gum - Sticky substance made for prolonged human mastication.

Public sidewalks - paved pedestrian lanes off of city streets that are maintained by a governmental agency rather than a private party.

Section 3 – (Talk about the funding necessary for your legislation in this section. You might not need any funding, which is fine. Just state that no funding is needed.)

No extra funding needed for this legislation.

Section 4 – (Enforcement - Who is going to make sure that this happens?)

This bill will be enforced by the local police department.

Section 5 – (Making other laws null and void. You don't have to add this, but it's kind of fun to say.)

All laws or parts of laws in conflict with this bill are hereby declared null and void.

RESOLUTIONS

A resolution's purpose is to propose an idea to be adopted. For example, you could write a resolution to make April 1 National Hide a Mouse Day. Nobody would have to do that if they didn't want to, but it would be acknowledged as an official day if the resolution were passed. This type of legislation has clauses that describe what you want the resolution to do.

These clauses also give reasons in support of the resolution. The first clause begins "whereas," and all remaining clauses begin with "and whereas." The resolution is ended with the phrase "be it resolved" that is followed by a statement about what you would like to see adopted.

Example Resolution:

Whereas, (state the current problem - this needs to be accomplished in one brief sentence) **April 1 is currently known to the general public as "April Fools Day" in which practical jokes of all kinds are welcome and encouraged,**

and whereas (Describe the scope of the problem cited in the first whereas clause - this clause needs to flow logically from the first) **mice are cute, relatively harmless creatures that tend to give people the willies,**

and whereas (Explain the impact and harms allowed by the current problem - once again, the clause needs to flow in a logical sequence) **things that give people the willies tend to make great components of practical jokes,**

and whereas (add more clauses if needed for clarification) **hiding a mouse for the purpose of giving someone the willies goes well with the already established theme of April Fools Day,**

now, therefore, be it resolved by this Congress that: (state your recommendation for dealing with the problem - the resolution should be a clear call for action) **April 1 be declared National Hide a Mouse Day;**

and be it Further Resolved, that (an optional additional recommendation can be added here; if not used, end the previous clause with a period).