How a Bill Becomes a Law in Virginia

The following steps are the typical process by which bills become laws:

1. **Beginning of a Bill**
   - Billy Bill begins as just a little idea in someone's brain.

2. **Introduce a Bill**
   - A bill to each you!
   - Bill is introduced in either the House of Delegates or the Senate.
   - Bill is assigned a number and then the bill is referred (sent) to the proper committee.

3. **Send to Committee**
   - Committee studies the bill to see if it would make a good law.
   - The committee makes the final decision on whether to advance the bill or not.

4. **Committee Studies Bill**
   - This is when the public has a say.
   - If the committee agrees the bill would make a good law, the committee reports the results to the House of Delegates or the Senate.

5. **Bill is Reported**
   - If the committee agrees, the bill is introduced in and read or printed in the House three times.
   - If the bill passes both chambers, it is then sent to the Governor for approval.

6. **Floor Actions**
   - Time to Vote!
   - On the third reading, the bill is read and put to a vote.

7. **Vote on the Bill**
   - If a bill passes in the House of Delegates, it goes through a similar procedure in the Senate.

8. **Refer to Senate**
   - If a bill passes in the House of Delegates, it is then sent to the Senate.

9. **Governor’s Action**
   - If the Governor agrees, the bill becomes law.

10a. **Signs the Bill**
    - If the Governor signs the bill, the Governor then approves it. The Governor signs it.

10b. **Changes the Bill**
    - If the Governor changes the bill, it must be returned to the Senate or House of Delegates for approval.

10c. **Vetoes the Bill**
    - If the Governor vetoes the bill, the Governor returns the bill to the House of Delegates or Senate.

10d. **No Action**
    - If the Governor takes no action, the bill becomes law.

**Date of Passage**

- **July 1**: Bills become law.
- **July 15**: Bills become effective.

**Additional Notes**

- Bills become law after passing both chambers and receiving the Governor’s signature or approval.
- Changes made by the Governor must be approved by the House of Delegates or Senate.
- Bills become effective on July 1 of the following year.
- Bills that are vetoed by the Governor must have the Governor’s reasons for vetoing the bill recorded.

**Conclusion**

Congratulations! The bill has become a law.

**Additional Information**

- The bill number is assigned at the beginning of each legislative session.
- The bill goes through committee review and public hearing before final passage.
- Amendments can be made during the legislative process.
- The Governor has 10 days to sign or veto the bill, unless the bill has an emergency clause, in which case the Governor has 2 days.
- Bills that are not acted upon by the Governor within the specified time period automatically become law.

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*Note: The diagram simplifies the legislative process and does not indicate the full scope of legislative procedures.*