

# Chamber Officer Script

Based on Robert's Rules of Order (Newly Revised)

## Opening a Chamber Session

**Chair:** **GAVEL RAP x3 "This Chamber will now come to order. The Clerk will now call roll."**

**Clerk:** Calls Roll marking who is present and who is not and gives to College Staff or Advisor in the room.

**Chair:** **"Thank you, Clerk."**

**"If everyone would please stand and face the flag for the Pledge of Allegiance." GAVEL RAP x2**

Start the pledge by speaking into the microphone or loud and clear enough for everyone to hear. Do not do the entire pledge over the microphone.

**"I pledge allegiance..."**

**"Thank you. Please be seated." GAVEL RAP x1**

In the first session of each House and Senate chamber the PO should speak on the purpose of the chamber and encourage the delegates

**"The Clerk will now read any messages for the chamber."**

**Clerk:** Clerk proceeds to read bill status report followed by messages from the Governor, Y Staff, Committees, or other Chambers. If there are no messages then:  
*"There are no messages for the chamber."*

**DO NOT CONTINUE AFTER THIS POINT ON FRIDAY. THERE WILL BE NO JOURNAL TO ADOPT**

**Floor Leader:** Raises placard to be recognized

**Chair:** **"The chair recognizes the floor leader."**

**Floor Leader:** *"Thank you chair, I'd like to make a motion to dispense with the reading and approve the journal."*

**Chair:** **"A motion has been made to approve the journal, is there a second."**

Chamber: *"Second!"*

**Chair:** **"Seconded, are there any objections?"**

*\*Silence\**

**"Hearing none this motion carries unanimously. "**

Ignore objections on Saturday, if time permits on Sunday and an objection is made; state that the ayes" have it and do not recognize a division."

## Bill Author Opening

**Chair:**        **"This Chamber will now revert to the order of consideration of Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_\_."**  
**"Are the authors of Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_\_ present?"**  
**"Will the Senators/Representatives/Forum Representatives please come forward?"**

Once the authors are present...

**"The Clerk will now read Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_\_."**

The Clerk reads the bill, inserting amendments while reading. A motion may be made to only read the purpose of and amendments to the bill being presented, if this is done during the first session then each time afterwards you should say:

**"The Clerk will now read the purpose of and any amendments to Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_\_."**

**Clerk:**        Reads bill inserting amendments as needed **OR** only the purpose of and amendments to the bill.

**Chair:**        **"Thank you, Clerk. The Chair recognizes Senators/Representatives/Forum Representatives \_\_\_\_\_ for their three (3) minute opening statement."**

**Authors:**     *"Thank you, Mister/Madam Speaker/President."*

Before speaking, the Authors may reserve the right to yield their remaining time to their closing summation.

*"I reserve the right to yield any remaining time to my closing summation."*

**Chair:**        **"That is your right."**

**Authors:**     *"Thank you."*

The Authors give their opening statement.

The Authors may yield any remaining time to their closing summation if they reserved the right.

*"We yield any remaining time to our closing summation."*

The Authors may also yield their remaining time to the floor.

*"We yield any remaining time to the floor."*

**Chair:**        **"Thank you, Authors. You have yielded \_\_\_\_ minutes and \_\_\_\_ seconds to your closing summation."**

If the time for the Authors opening elapses before the Authors yield, the Chair must immediately interrupt the speaker.

**"I'm sorry, Authors, but the time period for your opening statement has elapsed."**

## Budget Analyst

When a Budget Analyst arrives, they will approach the clerk and let them know which bill they are representing.

**Chair:**        **"Is there a Budget Analyst present for this bill?"**

There can be one Budget Analyst speaking for each bill. If no Budget Analyst is present, proceed immediately to Non-Debatable, Technical Questions.

**"The Chair now recognizes the Budget Analyst for Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_\_ for his/her one (1) minute budget analysis."**

**Analyst:**     *"Thank you, Mister/Madam Speaker/President. I believe this bill is fiscally responsible OR fiscally irresponsible..."*

After speaking, the budget analyst yields to the floor.

*"I yield my time to the floor."*

**Chair:**        **"Thank you, Budget Analyst"**

If the time for the Budget Analysis elapses before the analyst yields, the Chair must immediately interrupt the speaker.

**"I'm sorry, Budget Analyst, but the time period for your analysis has elapsed. Thank you for your time."**

## Non-Debatable, Technical Questions

**Chair:** **"We will now move into a five (5) minute period of non-debatable, technical questions. Are there any such questions on the floor?"**

Technical questions to bill author(s) must be germane (relevant to the bill), brief, direct, and factual in nature. Technical questions can be asked in a series of multiple questions. There is no longer a distinction between points of information and technical questions, and they are not restricted to an "Is it or is it not true..." format.

Delegate holds up placard to seek recognition.

**Chair:** **"The Chair recognizes Senator/Representative\_\_\_\_\_."**

Delegate: *"Thank you, Mister/Madam Speaker/President."*  
*"Will the Authors yield to a question/series of questions?"*

The delegate must seek permission through the Chair.

**Chair:** **"Authors, do you yield?"**

Authors: *"No." or "Yes."*

**Chair:** For "No:"

**"The Authors will not yield. Please be seated."**

Delegate sits, and the Speaker moves onto the next delegate seeking recognition.

OR

For "Yes:"

**"The Authors will yield."**

Delegate asks question:

Delegate: Delegate states their informational question.  
Authors answer question. Answer must be brief and to the point.  
The Chair must limit the Authors' answer.

**Chair:** If an author answers too elaborately, interrupt and say,

**"Thank you, author."**

OR if a delegate asks a debatable question, interrupt and say,

**"I'm sorry; that's debatable."**

If time elapses for non-debatable, technical questions, the chair will end debate without a motion.

**"I'm sorry, delegates, but the time period for non-debatable, technical questions has elapsed. "**

## Lobbyists

When a Lobbyist arrives, they will approach the clerk and let them know which bill they are representing.

**Chair:** **"Is there a Lobbyist present for this bill?"**

There can be one Con and one Pro Lobbyist speaking on each bill. If no Con Lobbyist is present, proceed to the Pro Lobbyist. If no Pro Lobbyist is present, proceed to con/pro debate.

**"The Chair now recognizes the Lobbyist for Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_ for a one (1) minute presentation."**

Lobbyist: *"Thank you, Mister/Madam Speaker/President..."*

After speaking, the lobbyist yields to the floor; they may not yield to other speakers.

*"I yield my time to the floor."*

**Chair:** **"Thank you, Lobbyist"**

If the time for the Lobbyist elapses before the Lobbyist yields, the Chair must immediately interrupt the speaker.

**"I'm sorry, Lobbyist, but the time period for your presentation has elapsed. Thank you for your time."**

Repeat for Pro Lobbyist.

## Con/Pro Debate

**Chair:** **"We will now move into a eight (8) minute period of con/pro debate. Bill Authors, you may be seated."**  
**"The Chair will now entertain a con speaker. Is there such a speaker on the floor?"**

A delegate raises his/her placard and gains recognition.

**"The Chair recognizes Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_."**  
 Each speaker will receive one (1) minute.

Delegate: *"Thank you, Mister/Madam Speaker/President. I would like to speak in opposition of this bill."*

**Chair:** **"That is your right."**

Con speakers may choose to yield remaining time to another delegate. In order to invoke that right, the con speaker must first reserve that right. All speakers may yield time to the floor without reserving the right.

Delegate: *"I reserve the right to yield my time to Delegate \_\_\_\_\_."*  
 The delegate speaks. After speaking, the delegate must yield his/her time.  
*"I yield my time to the floor OR Delegate \_\_\_\_\_."*

**Chair:** **"Thank you, Senator/Representative. The Chair will entertain a pro speaker. Is there such a speaker on the floor?"**

A delegate raises his/her placard and gains recognition.

**"The Chair recognizes Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_."**

Delegate: *"Thank you, Mister/Madam Speaker/President. I would like to speak in favor of this bill."*

**Chair:** **"That is your right."**

Pro speakers may choose to yield remaining time to another delegate or to the authors' closing summation. In order to invoke that right, the pro speaker must first reserve that right. All speakers may yield time to the floor without reserving that right.

Delegate: *"I reserve the right to yield my time to Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_ OR the authors' closing summation."*  
 The delegate speaks. After speaking, the delegate must yield his/her time.  
*"I yield my time to the floor OR Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_ OR authors' closing summation."*

Please note that any time yielded to the authors' closing summation should be recorded and announced when recognizing the Bill Authors for their closing.

To end debate the eight (8) minute time period must elapse or there must be a motion to move the previous question. **DEBATE MUST END ON A CON.**

**Chair:** If time elapses for con/pro debate, the chair will wait for a final con speaker and end debate without a motion.

**"I'm sorry, delegates, but the time period for con/pro debate has elapsed. "**

## Closing

**Chair:** **"Will the Bill Authors please step forward. Authors, you are recognized for your \_\_\_\_ minute and \_\_\_\_ second closing summation."**

Please remember that the clerk should include time yielded to the authors' closing summation during con/pro debate. The authors receive three (3) minutes in addition to any yielded time.

Authors: *"Thank you, Mister/Madam Speaker/President."*  
 Authors give their closing summation.  
*"We yield our time to the floor."*

**Chair:** **"Thank you, authors."**

OR If they run out of time.

**"I'm sorry authors, your time has elapsed."**

## Voting

**Chair:** "We will now revert to the passage of Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_/carriage of this motion. Are there any objections to the passage of Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_/carriage of this motion?"

If there are no objections, the bill/motion passes unanimously/carries unanimously.

**"Hearing none; Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_ passes unanimously/this motion carries unanimously."**

***Gavel x2 for bill, x1 for motion***

If there are objections:

**"Objection noted. We will now vote on the passage of Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_/carriage of this motion."**

**"All those in favor of this bill/motion, please stand and in a normal speaking voice say "Aye."**

Delegates: "Aye."

**Chair:** "All those opposed, please stand and in a normal speaking voice say "Nay."

Delegates: "Nay."

**Chair:** "In the opinion of the Chair, the "ayes" have it.

***Rap Gavel x1; pause for division***

If no division is called "Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_ passes/this motion carries."

***Rap Gavel x2 for bill, x1 for motion***

OR

**"In the opinion of the Chair, the "nays" have it.**

***Rap Gavel x1 pause for division***

If no division is called "Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_ fails/This motion does not carry."

***Rap Gavel x1 for order. NO APPLAUSE***

## Division

Any member of the chamber may call out "division" during the pause between the first and second Gavel raps to contest the Chair's decision. It is at the discretion of the Chair to:

- Hear and warrant the division
- Hear and not warrant the division
- Ignore the call for division

If division is warranted, the entire chamber must cast votes by standing and being counted. This process should be done by both Presiding Officers (or, in the absence of a second Presiding Officer, by a Clerk) as efficiently and as accurately as possible.

**Chair:** "Division is heard and not warranted."

Do not count. Chair's original decision is final.

***Gavel rap x1 for motion or failed bill, x2 for passed bill.***

OR

**"Division is heard and warranted, all those in favor of this bill/motion please stand."**

Count accurately and record favorable vote.

**"Reverse your positions."**

Count accurately and record unfavorable vote.

**"By a count of \_\_\_ to \_\_\_, this motion/Senate/House/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_ passes/carries/fails."**

***Gavel rap x1 for motion or failed bill, x2 for passed bill.***

If clapping occurs on a failed bill, please reprimand the chamber. Clapping after a bill fails is disrespectful and is not acceptable at any time.

## Moving the Previous Question

This is how to move on to the next section of procedure. It can be used during non-debatable, technical questions or con/pro debate. In con/pro debate, a motion for the previous question can only be entertained at the end of or immediately after a con speech and can be made by any delegate.

**Chair:**            **"The Chair recognizes Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_."**

Delegate:         *"Thank you, Mister/Madam Speaker/President. I move the previous question."*  
Any delegate can move the previous question.

**Chair:**            **"There is a motion on the floor for the previous question. Is there a second?"**

Chamber:         *"Second!"*  
Any delegate can say "second." Only one second is needed.

**Chair:**            **"The motion has been properly seconded. Are there any objections to the carriage of this motion?"**

If there are no objections, the Chair will state this and move on with procedure.

**"Hearing none; this motion carries." Rap Gavel x1 "We will now..."**

If there is an objection, the Chair will note this objection and move to vote on passage of the motion.

**"Objection noted. We will now revert to the carriage of this motion."**

Refer to voting section for scripted procedure.

Division may be called on a motion to move the previous question, however only warrant it if there is an appropriate amount of time left in chambers and it is in regards to debate being extended or not. A motion for the previous question requires a two-thirds vote (Rule 22).

## Amendments

Amendments may be given to the Clerk up to 3 minutes before the end of debate (Rule 29). Amendments will be presented for debate in the order that the authors make their respective motions.

Any proposed amendment must be germane, meaning it must:

- Be related to the same subject as the original measure
- Be a natural and logical expansion of the subject matter of the original legislation
- Not raise a new, independent issue

If a member does not think the amendment is germane, he or she may bring it to the Chair's attention by raising a Point of Order. The member raising the Point of Order has the burden of showing that the amendment is not germane.

**Chair:**            **"The chair recognizes Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_."**

Delegate:         After being recognized by the chair.  
*"Thank you Mister/Madam Chair. I move to amend House/Senate/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_\_."*

**Chair:**            **"The clerk will read the amendment on the floor."**

**Clerk:**            *Reads amendment*

**Chair:**            **"The motion on the floor is to amend House/Senate/Forum Bill Number \_\_\_\_\_. Is there a second?"**

If no one seconds the amendment, then proceed to the next speaker in debate. Otherwise,

**"And properly seconded. The chair recognizes the amendment author for a one (1) minute statement."**

Author:            *"Thank you chair. This amendment is necessary..."*

Note that the speech is on the amendment, not the bill. The amendment author may be called out of order for discussing the bill in a manner unrelated to the amendment.

**Chair:** "The chair will now entertain a con speaker on the amendment for a one (1) minute con speech. Is there such a speaker on the floor? The chair recognizes Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_."

Con speaker: "Thank you chair, I am opposed to this amendment..."

As with the amendment author, the con speaker must confine his/her remarks to the merits of the amendment, not the bill in general.

**Chair:** Refer to voting section for scripted procedure.

**Note that the bill authors do NOT get a chance to speak on the amendment.**

## Out of Order

You must be very attentive in chambers watching everyone and listening to everything they say. You do not want someone to call a Point of Order and embarrass you in your own chamber. If at any point during the chamber session someone is out of order the chair must immediately interrupt the speaker and call him/her out of order.

What is out of order?

- Profanity
- Rude gestures
- Lack of relevance (not germane)
- Making *ad hominem* arguments/attacks (e.g., referring to a previous speaker's qualifications)
- Speaking pro on a con during debate and vice versa
- Referring to another House/Senate/Forum Member by name or title other than Representative/Senator
- Using props (includes audience, i.e. no one may request a show of hands)
- Forgetting to thank the Chair
- Speaking without being recognized
- Asking multiple questions without specifically asking "Will the authors yield to a series."
- Authors overelaborating during technical/non-debatable questioning
- Asking opinion/debatable questions during Technical/Non-Debatable Questions
- Yielding time to another delegate without reserving the right
- Being disruptive in any way during chambers (i.e. talking too loudly, abusing electronic devices, rough housing, etc.)

Note that the above list is representative, not exhaustive.

If it is necessary to call a member out of order, the Chair should use the following language:

**Chair:** "I'm sorry, the Representative/Senator/Forum member is out of order and will be seated.

If the offense is minor, the chair may omit the direction that the offender be seated and allow him/her to continue talking. If it is not readily apparent what the member did, the Chair should explain the offense to the assembly, avoiding any use of "you" or the offender's name.

Also, the Chair has the right to interrupt at any moment to call order to the chamber. If delegates are getting loud, playing with their phones, or being generally obnoxious the Chair may call them out. You may directly address someone or make a general statement.

**Chair:** Rap Gavel x1 if interrupting someone  
**"I'm sorry Representative/Senator, please do not \_\_\_\_\_ during chamber sessions."**  
 OR  
**"The chair would like to remind the delegates to not \_\_\_\_\_ during chamber sessions."**  
 OR  
**"The chair would like to remind the delegates to please be respectful when someone else is speaking."**

Sometimes a hard rap of the gavel and a firm "Order, please" is enough to get people to settle down.

If you do interrupt someone apologize directly to the speaker, make your statement, and ask him/her to continue. Make certain your clerk is on the timer if this happens; whenever he/she hears the gavel rap in the middle of someone talking, the timer should be paused immediately.

## Special Circumstances

### Governor's Entrance

**Chair:** "The chair recognizes the Sergeant at Arms."

**Sergeant at Arms:** *"Thank you Mister/Madam Speaker/President. The Governor (and his Cabinet) await admittance into the chamber."*

**Chair:** "Thank you Sergeant. Please rise for the Honorable Governor \_\_\_\_\_ (and his Cabinet)."  
 Rap Gavel x2  
 Rise and applause by all members of the chamber.  
 Rap Gavel x1 for order  
 "Thank you. Please be seated."

### Postponing a Bill

A motion to postpone delays the bill until a specified time or event; it requires a simple majority to pass. Why might a bill be postponed?

- Bill authors are not present, a motion should be made to postpone the bill by the floor leader.
- Bill Authors wish to do more research on their bill or a question brought up by a fellow delegate.
- Debaters wish to do more research on a bill or a question brought up by a fellow delegate

**Chair:** "The chair recognizes the floor leader/bill author/Senator/Representative\_\_\_\_\_."  
 Delegate: *"Thank you Mister/Madam Speaker/President. I'd like to make a motion to postpone Senate/House Bill Number \_\_\_ until the bill authors arrive/in interest of further research/in the interest of time."*  
**Chair:** "There is a motion to postpone the bill on the floor, is there a second?"  
 Chamber: "Second!"  
**Chair:** "Are there any objections?" \*Silence\* "Hearing none this motion carries unanimously."  
 Rap Gavel x1  
OR See voting section for scripted procedure.

### Motion to Recess

A motion to recess is only made when business is not concluded but a session time period has ended and the chambers need to switch, it's time for lunch, or the sessions are over for the day; it requires a simple majority to pass.

**Chair:** "The chair recognizes the floor leader"  
**Floor Leader:** *"Thank you Madam/Mister Speaker/President, I would like to make a motion to recess until \_\_\_am/pm today/tomorrow"*  
**Chair:** "A motion has been made to recess until our next session at \_\_\_am/pm today/tomorrow. Is there a second?"  
 Chamber: "Second!"  
**Chair:** "Are there any objections?" \*Silence\* "Hearing none this motion carries unanimously."

### OR

Chamber: "Objection"  
**Chair:** "Objection(s) heard but not warranted; this motion carries."  
 Rap Gavel x2

### Motion to Adjourn

A motion to adjourn is the last motion made in the chamber before proceeding to the Joint Session on Sunday; it requires a simple majority to pass.

**Chair:** "The chair recognizes the floor leader."  
**Floor Leader:** *"Thank you Madam/Mister Speaker/President, I would like to make a motion to adjourn this session of the 2017 \_\_\_\_\_ Chamber."*  
**Chair:** "A motion has been made for our adjournment, are there any seconds?"  
 Chamber: "Second!"  
**Chair:** "Are there any objections?" \*Silence\* "Hearing none this motion carries unanimously. We will reconvene in a Joint Session with the Senate/House at \_\_\_ am tomorrow"  
 Rap Gavel x2  
 If objections are made, ignore them.



Extension of Debate (Rule 21)

Sometimes when there is a hot topic on the floor, debate can end before everyone has had their say. If time allows the floor leader or any other delegate may make a motion to extend debate. Only one extension can be made per bill and it can only be for ten (10) minutes. A motion to extend debate requires a simple majority to pass.

**Chair:** "The chair recognizes Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_"

Delegate: "Thank you Mister/Madam Speaker/President, I'd like to make a motion to extend debate for ten (10) minutes."

**Chair:** "A motion has been made to extend debate, are there any seconds?"

Chamber: "Second!"

**Chair:** "Are there any objections?" \*Silence\* "Hearing none this motion carries unanimously."  
Rap Gavel x1

If objections made follow basic voting procedure, only entertain a division if absolutely necessary.

Appealing the Chair's Decision (Rule 27)

This motion is made very rarely but when it is you need to be prepared. Anyone who makes this motion is going to do so purposefully and knowledgeably, so you should be able to respond in kind. A majority vote against sustaining the chair's decision is necessary to overturn it.

**Chair:** "The chair recognizes Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_"

Delegate: "Thank you Mister/Madam Speaker/President, I appeal from the ruling of the chair."

**Chair:** "There is an appeal from the decision of the chair, please explain your reasoning if you so choose."

Delegate: "Thank you chair, I am appealing the chair's decision because..." or "I do not wish to explain."

**Chair:** "Thank you Senator/Representative, are there any seconds?"

Chamber: "Second!"

**Chair:** "And properly seconded. We will now vote on the appeal.

"All those in favor of sustaining the chair's decision, please stand and in a normal speaking voice, say 'Aye'"

Chamber: "Aye."

**Chair:** "All opposed, please stand in a normal speaking voice say Nay."

Chamber: "Nay."

**Chair:** "In the opinion of the chair the ayes/nays have it. The decision of the chair is sustained/overturned."

Rap Gavel x1

Point of Order (Rule 27)

Also a rarity, but again, you must be prepared.

Delegate: "Point of Order."

**Chair:** "State your point."

Delegate: Explains to the chair what was overlooked.

**Chair:** Chair decides whether or not the delegate is correct:

"Thank you. You may be seated. The point of order is well taken because..." the Chair then explains why the delegate was correct, if necessary, and reprimands appropriate parties.

OR

"Thank you. You may be seated. The point of order not is well taken because..." the chair then explains why the delegate was incorrect.

Objection to the Consideration of the Question

Extremely rare; used to object to a main motion that is grossly improper but not out of order, such as introducing a ridiculous bill from the floor. It may not be applied to a secondary motion, such as an amendment.

Delegate: Delegate does not wait to be recognized.

"I object to the consideration of the question!"

**Chair:** "The consideration of the question is objected to. We will now vote on whether to consider the motion. All those in favor of considering the motion ..."

Use standard voting procedure. A two-thirds majority against consideration is required to sustain the objection and prevent the motion from being considered.