

Committee Rules for 2023-2024
Senate Environmental Quality Committee

Senator Ben Allen, Chair

Except as otherwise provided in the Standing Rules of the Senate, these rules will govern the Senate Environmental Quality Committee during the 2023-2024 Legislative Session:

OFFICERS

- (a) The Officers of the Committee shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, and Assistant.
- (b) The Chair shall preside at meetings when present except when the Committee is considering a bill of which the Chair is the sole author or the lead author. Whenever the Chair is not presiding, the Vice Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair. In the absence of both, a member designated by the Chair shall preside.
- (c) The Assistant shall keep a record of the meetings and actions taken by the Committee. Bills favorably acted upon shall be reported to the Senate as expeditiously as the reports can be prepared.

MEETINGS

- (d) The Committee shall meet in regular session on the day and hour designated by the Rules Committee. Adjourned meetings or special meetings shall be held at the time fixed in the adjourning motion, or on the call of the Chair for the special meeting.
- (e) Special meetings may be called by the Chair, with the approval of the Rules Committee, by giving reasonable notice to all members of the Committee either in writing or by telephone, specifying the purpose of the meeting, the time and place thereof, and the matters to be considered at the special meeting.

Notice of hearing of bills as provided by subdivision (a) of Joint Rule 62 shall also be given in the Daily File. A matter shall not be considered at the special meeting unless specified in the notice.

A special meeting shall be scheduled so as to permit all members of the Committee to attend without conflict with other scheduled committee meetings.

QUORUM

- (f) A majority of the membership of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. A vote of a majority of the membership of the Committee shall be required to table a bill, remove it from the table, or reconsider a vote on a bill.

(g) Action may not be taken on any measure outside of a duly constituted Committee meeting.

CALENDAR

(h) (1) Pursuant to the Chair's authority, Committee staff shall be responsible for preparing Committee hearing agendas. Bills referred to the Committee shall be set for hearing as soon as practicable and in a manner that enables the Committee to meet its workload and schedule. A bill may not be considered in the absence of the author without his or her consent, except if presented by the author's representative who is authorized in writing.

(2) Pursuant to Joint Rule 62(a), a bill may be set for hearing only three times. A bill is "set" whenever notice of the hearing has been published in the file for one or more days. If a bill is set for hearing and the hearing is postponed at the committee's initiation and not the author's, the setting for hearing of the bill shall not be counted as one of the three times a bill may be set.

(i) The Committee or a subcommittee thereof, by a majority vote of the membership of the Committee, may meet in executive session for any purpose authorized by Section 9029 of the Government Code. Otherwise, all meetings shall be open and public.

(j) The Chair shall direct the order of presentation of the arguments for and against matters for consideration by the Committee, and shall permit questions to be asked by members of the Committee in an orderly fashion and in keeping with proper decorum.

RECONSIDERATION

(k) Further consideration of a bill that has been voted out of the Committee or defeated shall be by reconsideration only as follows:

(1) A motion to reconsider a vote by which a bill is voted out shall be in order, and shall be voted upon at the same meeting. If the motion is carried by a vote of a majority of the membership of the Committee, the bill may be considered at that meeting, provided the author is present, or at a subsequent meeting.

(2) The procedure for reconsideration of a bill that has been defeated shall conform to the requirements of subdivision (a) Joint Rule 62. Any bill as to which reconsideration has been granted pursuant to this paragraph may not be heard again until a subsequent meeting of the Committee, after being calendared in the Daily File.

TABLED BILL

(l) Any bill that has been laid on the table and is removed from the table at a later meeting may not be heard again until a subsequent meeting of the Committee, after being calendared in the Daily File and after notice.

AMENDMENTS

(m) When the Committee adopts proposed amendments to a bill, the bill may be taken up for vote at that meeting or, if the Committee or author requests, sent out to print before final action. If the amendments are not in proper form, they shall be prepared and submitted to the Chair for approval before being reported to the Desk.

BILL REFERRAL

(n) A bill may not be set for hearing, nor may any notice thereof be published, by the Committee until the bill has been referred to the Committee by the Committee on Rules.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED TO COMMITTEE

(o) When a bill is referred to the Committee, the Committee shall forward to the author a background information request to aid in the preparation of the Committee analysis. Unless otherwise requested by the Committee, within five Legislative days of the background information request having been sent to the author, the author shall:

(1) Provide an electronic copy of the requested materials to the Assistant and minority consultant, as identified in the background information request.

(2) Provide two hard copies of all background information documents exceeding 20 pages, if any.

(p) Amendments shall be submitted by an author to the Committee no later than 12:00 p.m., 14 calendar days prior to the set hearing date, which shall include the signed original, eight copies, and the in-context amendments.

(q) The Committee reserves the right to postpone, or not to set, a bill for hearing if the author fails to provide:

(1) Background materials in compliance with subdivision (o).

(2) Amendments in compliance with subdivision (p).

(r) In order to be included in a Committee analysis prior to being heard in Committee, position letters shall be submitted electronically to the Committee via the Advocacy Portal or received in hardcopy form by mail, as identified on the Committee website no later than 12:00 p.m., seven calendar days prior to the hearing of the legislation. If received after the deadline, the letters may be included in subsequent Committee analyses on the bill and also recorded in the official Committee record. In order to be listed in the Committee analysis, position letters shall:

(1) Clearly reference the bill and indicate only a position of “support” or “oppose”.
Letters of conditional support or opposition (i.e. support if amended) will not be listed

on committee analyses. Letters which indicate a position of “oppose unless amended” will be considered letters of opposition. “Letters of Concern” are not reflected on Committee analyses.

- (2) Include, for letters from organizations, the name of each organization represented on the letter, as well as a named individual responsible for that organization’s position on the bill. Each organization listed on a letter needs to be entered into the Advocacy Portal in order to be reflected on Committee analyses.
- (3) Include, for letters from individuals, the writer’s full name and residential address, including zip code.

(s) Any document pertaining to legislation brought for distribution at a Committee hearing shall be subject to approval by Committee staff prior to distribution.

SUBCOMMITTEES

(t) The Chair may appoint, with the permission of the Committee on Rules, subcommittees of one or more members to consider and recommend to the full Committee action on matters as may be assigned to the subcommittee for consideration from time to time by the Chair. The Chair may assign and reassign members of, and matters to, the various subcommittees. The recommendation of a subcommittee may be accepted by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Committee.

OTHER RULES

(u) In all cases not provided for by this rule, the Senate Rules, or the Joint Rules of the Senate and Assembly, or statute, the authority shall be the latest edition of Mason’s Manual.

CONSENT CALENDAR

(v) The following rules govern the placement of bills on the Committee’s Consent Calendar:

- (1) The proposed Consent Calendar shall be provided to Committee members, authors, and the public prior to commencement of the committee hearing.
- (2) Any Committee member may withdraw any bill from the Consent Calendar at any time. Members may notify the Committee Assistant before the hearing or withdraw a bill at the hearing. The Committee Assistant shall notify the bill’s author.
- (3) A bill is eligible for the Committee’s Consent Calendar if it:
 - (A) Has no recorded opposition.

(B) Does not contain amendments that create a new bill or rewrite the bill in accordance with Senate Rule 28.3.

(4) At the Chair's direction, the Committee shall vote on the Consent Calendar during the hearing.

THIRD READING and UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(w) For measures that are heard in this Committee and recommended to the floor and measures amended in the Assembly and returned to the Senate floor for concurrence, it is the responsibility of the author's office to provide all letters to this Committee **two days prior to measures reaching the Third Reading or Unfinished Business files**. If updated letters are not submitted, the Committee will state that updated support and opposition could not be verified and, therefore, will not be listed in the floor analysis. Given that measures on the Senate floor may remain on file for several weeks prior to a vote, it is also the responsibility of the author's office to **immediately provide** this Committee with any additional position letters it receives during the period of time the measure appears on the Senate Daily File. The analysis will be updated to reflect the additional support or opposition accordingly.

COMMITTEE RECORDS

(x) The Committee Assistant is the custodian of the Committee's legislative records. Pursuant to Section 9080 of the Government Code, the Committee Assistant shall preserve the Committee's current legislative records and may lodge the Committee's older legislative records with the State Archives. The Committee's legislative records that are in the possession of the Committee Assistant are open to inspection and copying by the public, by appointment, in the Committee's office, 1021 O Street, Suite 3230, during the normal office hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Committee's legislative records that are lodged with the State Archives are open to inspection and copying by the public, subject to the procedures established by the Secretary of State.

Adopted by the Senate Environmental Quality Committee
March 15, 2023

Senator Ben Allen, Chair