

# How An Idea Becomes Law

The legislative process is governed by rules, laws, and procedures. Although the process is long and complex, all laws begin as ideas. An idea for a law can come from anyone—an individual or group of citizens, a legislator or legislative committee, the executive or judicial branch, or a lobbyist. By statute, state agencies must pre-session file bills. During session, only a legislator or a legislative committee can introduce a measure to the House or Senate for consideration.

## Types and Purposes of Legislative Measures

The Legislative Assembly may take action through the following types of measures:

- Bill
- Memorial
- Resolution

**Bill.** A bill may be introduced in either house; however, revenue-raising bills may be introduced only in the House of Representatives. (See section 18, Article IV of the Oregon Constitution.) A bill may be amended, passed or rejected by either house. If passed by both houses, the bill is submitted to the Governor.

A measure intended to have the effect of statutory law must be enacted as a bill and be passed by both houses of the Legislative Assembly. A bill is used to:

- Create new law.
- Amend or repeal existing law.
- Appropriate money.
- Prescribe fees.
- Transfer functions from one agency to another.
- Provide penalties or take other action.

**Memorial.** A memorial is adopted by either the House or the Senate and is not submitted to the Governor. If a memorial is to be adopted by both houses of the Legislative Assembly, it is called a Joint Memorial.

A memorial is used to make a request of or express an opinion to Congress, the President of the United States, or other officials or agencies. It is not used to commemorate the dead.

**Resolution.** A resolution is adopted by a single house of the Legislative Assembly and is not submitted to the Governor. If a resolution is to be adopted by both houses of the Legislative Assembly, it is called a Joint Resolution or Concurrent Resolution. A **resolution** is used to:

- Take action affecting its own concerns or procedures, such as appointing a committee of its members.
- Express an opinion or sentiment on a matter of public interest.

A **joint resolution** is used to:

- Propose constitutional amendments.
- Create interim committees.
- Provide for the printing of legislative publications.
- Give directions to a state agency or officer.
- Express legislative approval of action taken by someone else or to authorize some kind of temporary action to be taken.
- Authorize expenditures out of the legislative expense appropriations.