The Legislative Process & How Advocacy Fits

A Physical Therapy Advocacy in Action Microlearning
Objectives

• Describe the process for how a bill is developed and becomes a law in PA
• Discuss how advocacy fits into the legislative process
Vocabulary

• **General Assembly** – refers to both the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and the Pennsylvania Senate

• **Chamber** – refers to only one of the two (House or Senate)

• **Speaker of the House** and **President Pro Tempore** – presiding officers of their respective chambers
Introduction of a Bill

• Legislator(s) submits idea for a bill to the Legislative Reference Bureau

• Bill filed for introduction
  • In the House: filed with Chief Clerk of the House, given it to Speaker of the House
  • In the Senate: filed with the Secretary/Parliamentarian of the Senate, given to President Pro Tempore of the Senate
Bill Sponsorship

- The primary legislator to introduce a bill in the Pennsylvania General Assembly is the **Prime Sponsor**
- Bills generally have numerous **Cosponsors** who add their name in support of the bill
  - Greater number of cosponsors equals more support and more likely passage of bill
- Cosponsors can be added prior to the drafting of the bill and throughout the legislative process
Referral to Committee

• Bill is referred to a standing committee
  • May be referred to sub-committee
• Examples of committees for bills related to PT:
  • Professional Licensure (House)
  • Insurance (House)
  • Consumer Protection & Professional Licensure (Senate)
  • Banking & Insurance (Senate)
Responsibilities of Committee

• Role of committee is to review and prepare bills to be reported to their respective chamber
  • May hold public hearings

• Possible actions of committee:
  • Report to the floor as committed (i.e. without change)
  • Report to the floor as amended
  • Refer the bill to another committee
  • Take no action on the bill
Consideration of Bills

• Each bill is considered on 3 different days in each chamber before a vote on its final passage
• First Consideration: bill is reported from committee to the full Chamber
  • *bills are NOT subject to amendment, debate, or vote in this stage
• Second Consideration: bill subject to debate & amendment
• Third Consideration: final debate & passage of the bill
Movement Between Chambers

• After passing the vote in the initial Chamber, a bill is then sent to the other Chamber
  • Similar process with committee review & three considerations on the Floor
• If amendments are added, the bill must return to the Chamber in which it originated for a vote.
• Signed by Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate
After Passing Both Chambers

• Bill sent to the Governor
• Approve & sign $\rightarrow$ bill becomes law
• Veto $\rightarrow$ bill returns to its house of origin
  • General Assembly can pass with two-thirds vote
• No action $\rightarrow$ bill automatically becomes law
  • After 10 days if General Assembly still in session
  • After 30 days if General Assembly adjourned
Where Do I Come in as an Advocate?

• Get to know your legislator!
• Recommending legislation to your legislator
• Bills needing co-sponsors
• Bills in committees
  • Advocating to committee member
  • Attending public hearing
• Bills on the floor
  • Senate vs House
Resources

• The Biography of a Bill

• Making Law in PA
Listen to upcoming PPTA advocacy webinars to learn more about the advocacy process & how you can get involved.

Please email office@ppta-hq.org with any questions or concerns.