



# Oregon Senate



## Protocol & Decorum

Office of the Secretary of the Senate

*“Rules are basically protectoral and purposeful and not mere fluff. They reflect the observance of mutual respect and consideration for each other in an atmosphere of courtesy and friendliness. It is this behavior that is most favorable to achievement, to understanding and cooperation.”*

Cecil L. Edwards

Secretary of the Senate (1965-1975)

Legislative Historian (1975-1993)

# PROTOCOL & DECORUM

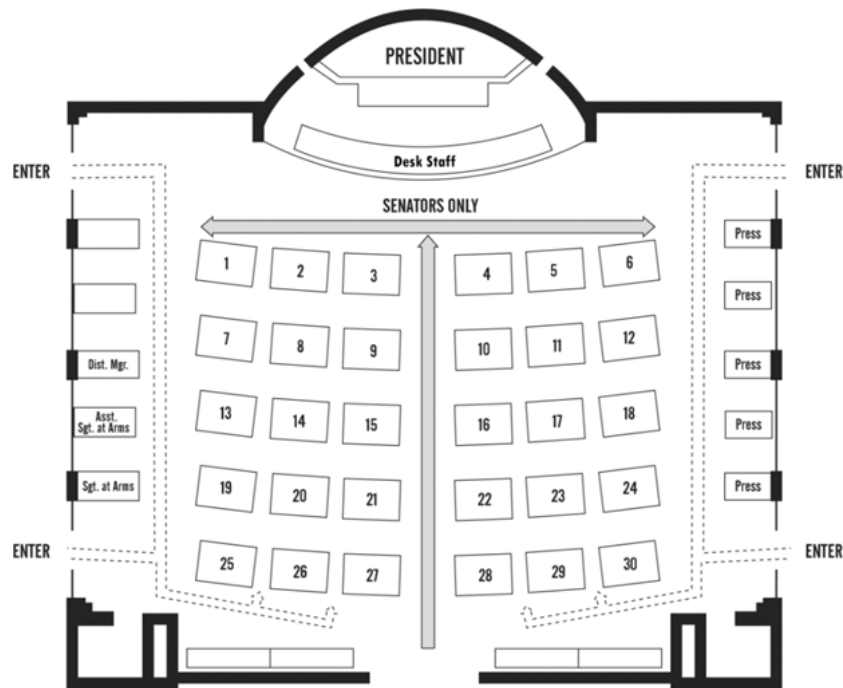
**CONVENING** The clerk will begin the roll call promptly at the time set for convening. Chimes will ring five minutes before session throughout each floor of the Senate Wing to alert Senators to attend.

**ORDERS OF BUSINESS** The Orders of Business for each floor session follow a precise order. (See a list of Orders of Business on page 20).

**ALWAYS ON CAMERA** Remember you are *always* on camera in the Chamber. Actions and conversations may be recorded. The Senate floor sessions are recorded and broadcast live in the Capitol and on the Internet.

**QUIET CONVERSATION** Please be mindful of fellow Senators as they give floor speeches. Please carry on conversations quietly at your desk or at the back of the Chamber.

**THIRD READING LIST** The daily “Third Reading List” is posted online and is emailed to each Senate office. This list is prepared before each session, enabling you to know the specific bills up for a vote during session.



**WALKING IN THE CHAMBER** Only Senators, the Secretary of the Senate, or staff acting under the direction of the Secretary, may walk in the center aisle or “T” that runs the length of the floor in front of the rostrum. Members may access the rostrum to speak with the President. Staff should enter the Chamber from the back side aisles and proceed to a member’s desk by walking down the aisles between desks. As required by rule, no one should walk between a Senator who is speaking and the President at the rostrum.

**ACCESS TO THE CHAMBER FLOOR** All 90 members of the Legislature, as well as Senate desk and floor personnel, may access the Senate floor. Members’ staff, caucus staff, presiding officer’s staff, certain committee staff and authorized guests are permitted as well. Lobbyists are prohibited on the Senate floor, side aisles, and adjacent areas during session.

**WHERE TO SIT** There are two chairs at each desk. The chair with arms is for the member's use only.

**FLOOR DESKS** Your floor desk is your personal space during the session. Additional staff or guests may be seated in the side aisle or gallery. The Chamber is cordoned off when session is out, but the desks remain unlocked. Do not leave anything confidential or valuable at your Chamber desk.

**LEAVING DURING SESSION** You may leave the Chamber for short periods of time as long as the body is not under a "Call of the Senate," in which case all Senators must remain present. Before leaving the floor it is customary to notify the Secretary of the Senate, or Desk Staff, and your caucus personnel.

**BEFORE AND AFTER SESSION** The side aisles and double center doors are closed for fifteen minutes before and after session. During this period, all rules of protocol are observed as if the Senate is in session. During a recess, the doors remain closed and access rules prevail as during session.

**FOOD AND WATER** Only water is permitted in the Chamber.

**CELLPHONES AND LAPTOPS** Cellphone calls should only be made in the phone booths at the back of the Chamber. Phone booths are for members only. Laptops are permitted for members and staff. No device should make an audible noise in the Chamber.

**HOUSE FLOOR SESSIONS** A television is located in the Hannon Reading Room directly off the Chamber to enable observation of House proceedings. A House Third Reading List is available next to the television.

**INVOCATION** The invocation is given daily during session. Please do not enter the Chamber during the invocation. If you would like to give the invocation or would like to recommend someone, please contact the Reading & Journal Clerk (Ext. 6-1853).

**COURTESIES AND GUESTS** Guests may be introduced under the order of “Courtesies.” It is customary to wait until debate and voting on a bill is completed before asking for permission to return to the order of Courtesies. Any guest on the floor or in the side aisle cannot be currently advocating for or against particular legislation. When introducing a guest with access to the floor or side aisle, a member **should not** indicate any issue the guest supports or opposes. Guests on the floor should not wear or display visible indications supporting or opposing any issue or legislation. Signs are prohibited at all times anywhere in the Chamber.

**REMONSTRANCES** Remonstrances have a two-minute time limit (no yields). A member may only speak one time per floor session under Remonstrances. Under this order of business, a member may voice objections, observations, or “protests.” The motives or integrity of another member of the Senate or House may not be impugned.

**VISUAL AIDS & READING FROM WRITTEN**

**MATERIAL** A member must ask for unanimous consent to use a visual aid. By contrast, a member may read from written material without first asking for permission. Another member may object to what is being read. If an objection is made, the matter will be put to an immediate vote.

**SCRIPTS** When you have a speaking part in a floor session, the Secretary of the Senate’s staff prepares the script and places it on your Chamber desk. If you would like an additional script beforehand, please contact the Secretary of the Senate.

**ADDRESSING A MEMBER** Simply use the title of “Senator” only or “the Senator from [district number or other description provided on the reference list at your desk]” to address a member. For example, say “the Senator from District 23” or “the Senator from Baker County.” Do not use the Senator’s name. This rule helps maintain decorum during debate.

**QUESTION OF THE CARRIER** If you have a question for the carrier of a bill, press your button to be recognized by the President. When recognized, tell the President you have a “Question for the Carrier.” The President will then ask if the carrier will answer a question. The question should then be addressed to the President, not the carrier. Likewise, the answer to the question should be addressed to the President, not the member who asked the question. This rule helps maintain decorum during debate.

*“The most precious thing in the world is friendship.”*

*- Cecil L. Edwards*



**DECLARING A CONFLICT OF INTEREST** You should declare the conflict of interest before you vote. You only need to announce the conflict one time per floor session or committee meeting if multiple votes are taken on the issue that day. Ask to be recognized during debate and before the closing statement. If you forget to declare a conflict of interest and the vote has been taken, you can ask for unanimous consent to declare your conflict after the vote. When declaring a conflict, please remember to state the nature of the conflict.

*“We did have some controversies....  
But they were handled without too much fuss,  
and nothing was embarrassing for the Senate.”  
- Maribel Cadmus*

**VOTING** Votes are taken orally in the Senate. To vote, members must be “within the bar” and outside the telephone booths. Please **audibly** respond when your name is called and check the display boards to ensure your vote is recorded correctly.

**VOTE EXPLANATION** For any roll call vote, members may give an oral vote explanation, a written vote explanation, or both. For an oral vote explanation, immediately after the result of the vote is announced, press the button at your desk and, when recognized, ask to provide your vote explanation. Your vote explanation may not be longer than two minutes. Written vote explanations must be submitted to the Secretary of the Senate by 5:00 p.m. on the next session day after the vote. It is helpful if they are submitted electronically. Only written vote explanations are recorded in the Journal.

**VOTE COUNTS** Vote counts are available at the rostrum after each roll call vote.

*“The process works, which I think shows  
how important it is.”  
~ Maribel Cadmus*

**CHANGING YOUR VOTE** Before the gavel has fallen you may change your vote. Please promptly notify the Secretary. If the gavel has fallen and the vote is over, then before adjournment you must ask for unanimous consent to change your vote and state whether your change will affect the outcome.

**IF YOU MISS A VOTE** If you are absent or excused when a vote is taken, you may ask, before adjournment, for unanimous consent to record your vote. When you ask for unanimous consent, please state whether your vote will affect the outcome.

*“Rules should be designed to make it possible for members of the assembly to express themselves fully to try to sway each other and to vote as equals when a time for decision is reached.”*  
- Cecil L. Edwards

**RECONSIDERATION** A motion to reconsider asks the body to undo a previous action. If the motion to reconsider carries, the original question is back in front of the body as if the previous action never occurred. If the motion to reconsider fails, the previous action stands. The body may be asked to reconsider a vote only once. To move for reconsideration, you must have voted on the prevailing side on the previous action. For example, if a bill fails, you must have voted “no” in order to move for reconsideration. Often, a member will need to change their vote to be on the prevailing side to move for reconsideration. If possible, you should change your vote before the gavel falls. Otherwise, you will need to ask for unanimous consent to change your vote after the gavel has fallen. After the gavel falls and the result of the vote is announced, you should then give notice of possible reconsideration. After giving notice you may then move to reconsider. (For details, see pages 17 and 18).

*“One of the first things I think that a legislator has to keep in mind is that for a bill to pass there needs to be consensus and compromise, and one way to do that is to get to know the members and to establish relationships with them so that a compromise and consensus can come about.”*

*~ Maribel Cadmus*

## COMMONLY USED MOTIONS

*Before making a motion, it is often useful to advise the Desk Staff to ensure the motion is handled appropriately.*

### **UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO CHANGE A VOTE AFTER THE GAVEL HAS FALLEN**

Senator: I request unanimous consent to change my vote from **AYE** to **NAY** (or vice versa) on SB/HB \_\_\_\_\_. It will not change the outcome.

President: (Repeats motion.)

President: If there is no objection, so ordered.  
(Gavel.)

~

**NOTE:** This is a rules suspension, so it is an undebatable motion. If there is any objection, it takes 20 affirmative votes to suspend the rules. This request must be made before adjournment on the day the vote was taken.

**UNANIMOUS CONSENT TO BE  
RECORDED AS VOTING**

(Undebatable)

Senator: I request unanimous consent to be recorded as voting **AYE** or **NAY** on SB/HB\_\_\_\_. It will not change the outcome.

President: (Repeats motion.)

President: If there is no objection, so ordered.  
(Gavel.)

~

**NOTE: This is a rules suspension, so it is an undebatable motion. If there is any objection, it takes 20 affirmative votes to suspend the rules. This request must be made before adjournment on the day the vote was taken.**

## TAKE AND PLACE

(Debatable)

Senator: I move that consideration of SB/HB \_\_\_ be taken from its place on today's calendar and be placed on the **(day, date specific)** calendar.

President: (Repeats motion.) Recognize Sen. \_\_\_\_\_.

Senator: (Explains motion.) (Discussion.)

President: If there is no further discussion, Sen. \_\_\_\_\_, do you wish to close?

The question is on taking SB/HB\_\_\_ from today's calendar and placing it on the **(day, date specific)** calendar.

~

**NOTE:** Requires a majority of members present. May be done by a voice vote unless a roll call is demanded by two members.

**REFER OR RE-REFER TO COMMITTEE**  
(Debatable)

Senator: I move that SB/HB \_\_\_ be  
(re)referred to the Committee  
on\_\_\_\_\_.

President: (Repeats motion.) Recognize  
Sen. \_\_\_\_\_.

Senator: (Explains motion.) (Discussion.)

President: If there is no further discussion,  
Sen.\_\_\_\_\_, do you wish to  
close?

The question is on (re)referring  
SB/HB \_\_\_ to the Committee  
on \_\_\_\_\_.

~

**NOTE:** Requires a majority of members  
present. May be done by a voice  
vote unless a roll call is  
demanded by two members.



## LAY ON THE TABLE

(Undeatable)

Senator: I move that SB/HB \_\_\_ be laid  
on the table.

President: (Repeats motion.)

President: The question is on laying SB/HB  
\_\_\_ on the table.

~

**NOTE:** Requires a majority of members  
present. May be done by a voice  
vote unless a roll call is demanded  
by two members.

**NOTICE OF POSSIBLE  
RECONSIDERATION**

*Notice should be given after the gavel falls and the result of the  
vote is announced.*

President: Recognize Sen. \_\_\_\_\_.

Senator: Having voted on the prevailing  
side, I serve notice of possible  
reconsideration.

~

**NOTE:** Notice must be given before adjournment  
on the day the vote was taken. After giving  
this notice, the member may then move for  
reconsideration. The motion to reconsider  
must be made the day the vote was taken, or  
the next session day.

## RECONSIDERATION

(Debatable)

Senator: Having served notice, I move that the vote whereby the Senate (passed/failed to pass) SB/HB \_\_\_ be reconsidered.

President: (Repeats motion.)

Senator: (Explains motion.) (Discussion.)

President: Is there any further discussion? If not, Senator\_\_\_\_\_, do you wish to close?

~

**NOTE:** If the motion carries, the vote is reconsidered and the measure is automatically up for final consideration or other action such as re-referral to committee or postponement to another day. If the motion fails, the previous action stands and the motion to reconsider cannot be renewed. During a regular session, a majority of members present is required to reconsider a vote. When considering interim executive appointments, a constitutional majority (16) is required to reconsider the vote.

## WITHDRAW A BILL FROM COMMITTEE

(Debate limited to motion; no debate on the merits.)

Senator: I move that SB/HB\_\_\_\_ be  
withdrawn from the Committee  
on\_\_\_\_\_.

President: (Repeats motion.)

Senator: (Explains motion.)

### *Reference ~ Mason's Section 491(4)*

*It is not in order to discuss the merits of a bill upon a motion to . . . withdraw the bill from committee. Debate in such cases must be confined strictly to the purpose of the motion, for if this were not true, the merits of any question could be forced under discussion merely by such a motion to withdraw.*

President: Is there any further discussion? If not, Senator\_\_\_\_\_, do you wish to close?

~

**NOTE:** A constitutional majority (16) is required to withdraw a bill from committee. As a matter of courtesy, it is customary to notify the Presiding Officer at the beginning of session before the motion is made to ensure that it is handled appropriately.

# ORDERS OF BUSINESS

ROLL CALL

HONORS TO THE COLORS AND THE PLEDGE OF  
ALLEGIANCE

INVOCATION

COURTESIES OF THE SENATE

REMONSTRANCES

MESSAGES

REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

PROPOSITIONS AND MOTIONS

ACTION ON EXECUTIVE APPOINTMENTS REQUIRING  
SENATE CONFIRMATION

INTRODUCTION AND FIRST READING OF SENATE  
MEASURES

SECOND READING OF SENATE MEASURES

THIRD READING OF SENATE MEASURES

FIRST READING OF HOUSE MEASURES

SECOND READING OF HOUSE MEASURES

THIRD READING OF HOUSE MEASURES

OTHER BUSINESS OF THE SENATE

ANNOUNCEMENTS





*“It’s the third branch of  
government - equal to both the  
Executive and Judicial.  
And it’s the voice of the people,  
which I feel is the most  
important.”*

Maribel Cadmus  
Secretary of the Senate (1976-1987)