

KCRW newsletter

Note from the President

We enjoyed Barbara Larson’s legislative update at our January luncheon. Barbara gave us a great overview of proposed legislation and their impact in addition to providing us with websites so that we can follow bills of interest. If you missed the meeting, Norma Duncan has updated our website KCRWTX.com with links to those websites. We thank Barbara for sharing so much info and insight with us! Bonnie Miertschin has sent out invitations for the February luncheon at Fair Oaks Country Club to the membership. I am excited to announce that the Honorable Cyndi Taylor Krier, former two-term Texas Senator, first woman and Republican elected as Bexar County Judge and past University of Texas Regent will be our featured speaker! The topic of her speech will be “What Republicans need to do today to be relevant”. Please RSVP as soon as possible to Jana Rogers at janar@gvtc or 830-537-4322. I hope to see all of you there!

The month began at record speed with the commencement of the 82nd Texas legislative session on January 11, 2011, same day as our first regular KCRW meeting. The house voted that day to keep Speaker of the House Joe Straus and he won by a wide margin. On January 17, New Braunfels Republican Women and Canyon Lake Republican women joined the Bulverde Area Republican Club to install their 2011 officers. Sue Lynch, NFRW President was the guest speaker and also performed the installation. Toni Anne Dashiell received special recognition by Sue Lynch for the workshops that Toni Anne conducted in Nigeria and Bosnia last year. Then January 18 marked the inauguration of Governor Rick Perry and Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst. Both speeches by the Governor and Lt. Governor reflected the theme “Texas: where opportunity still looms large”. Despite the challenges of the budget and many other issues on the horizon, the event was uplifting and upbeat!

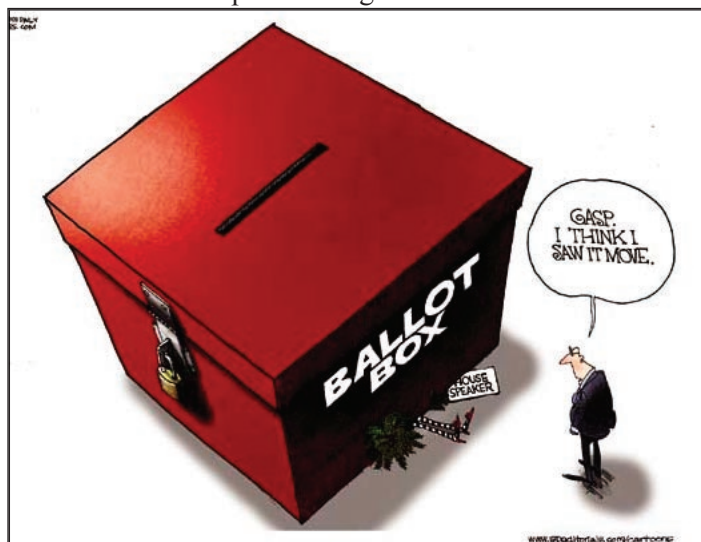
Just a reminder: We will update the KCRW directory March 1st for distribution via email. Please renew your membership if you have not done so that you will be included in the directory and continue to receive the KCRW updates. Our regular meetings/luncheons occur on the second Tuesday of every month, except July and August. We are meeting at Ye Kendall Inn (except February) and reservations are made to Jana Rogers at janar@gvtc.com.

With new chairs in place, you have many opportunities this year to participate in events that will help our efforts in the 2012 election year. If you have talents to lend such as “fundraising” or “telephone” or anything else, please contact me or any of the chairs listed on the website. This is a good way to earn some volunteer hours towards special recognition at our December luncheon! On that note . . .
please turn in your volunteer hours to Besa Martin.

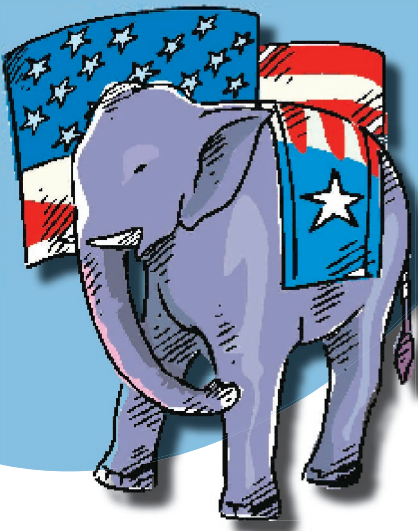
Fran Graves, KCRW President

KCRW - 2011 Officers

| | | |
|----------------|------------------------|--------------|
| President | <i>Fran Graves</i> | 830-230-5220 |
| Vice President | <i>Jana Rogers</i> | 830-537-4322 |
| Secretary | <i>Susan Dietzmann</i> | 210-488-4851 |
| PAC Treasurer | <i>Sheryl D’Spain</i> | 830-249-9124 |



UPDATES



How a Bill Becomes Law

I would like to thank Amy Clark for the following article. She had this information in a power point presentation and very graciously converted it to a Word document for me. Thank you, Amy, for sharing this information and changing the format for us.

Barbara Larson

Come on, let's admit it. It has been a NUMBER of years since we were sitting in our high school civics class, hasn't it? We all know we that *should* remember what we learned about the workings of our government, but sometimes we're a little foggy on the details. For some, the *School House Rock* lyrics of "I'm Just a Bill Sittin' Here on Capitol Hill" might be the most we remember about the federal legislative process! But that's all about to change. If you are willing, take just a moment to read the next few paragraphs and re-educate yourself on the process that is so vital to the future of our country.

"We the people, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

With those simple words began the grandest political experiment known to mankind—a nation unlike any other on the face of the earth. For the first time in history, free men had created a national government. A government contained, *restrained* and provided for within the pages of this Constitution—the oldest written, working constitution in use in the world today.

I highlight the word "restrained" because I believe that is key. Our legislature is duly elected by the people of the various states, and they are sent to Washington, D.C., to represent us. The legislative process is clearly set forth in the Constitution, and few would argue that every step of every bill should be put forth in the light of day. Unfortunately, this was not always the case in 2009. The more the American people understand the process, they more they will be able to stand up for the cause of the country and the Constitution, defending their rights and freedoms every step of the way.

In the Beginning...

Let's begin with the progress of a bill through the House of Representatives. A bill is a piece of suggested legislation that may originate from any member, delegate or even the resident commissioner of Puerto Rico. Bills may be introduced at any time, with no permission required. Bills may not be submitted anonymously--the member introducing the bill must sign it, and then becomes known as the bill's Primary Sponsor. Additionally, other members of the House may serve as cosponsors.

The next step is the bill's entry into the Journal and printing in the Congressional Record. It is assigned a legislative number by the Clerk—in the House, the number will have a "H.R." designation before the number. At this point, copies of the bill is printed in its original form and made available to both Houses, as well as the public.

Bill goes to a House Committee

The bill is then sent to the appropriate House committee by the Speaker of the House. This is where the real work is done on a bill, as well as where public input on a bill may be offered. There are 19 standing committees in the House, each with a jurisdiction over certain matters. Membership in the

UPDATES

How a Bill Becomes Law

continued

committees is divided between the two parties. Generally, a member may only be assigned to two committees and four subcommittees. The Speaker may assign a bill to more than one committee, but he must designate primary jurisdiction over the bill to one committee.

The committee's function is to review the bill, and to seek input from various agencies or departments, or often the GAO. It is important to note, however, that these reports are not binding on the committee when deciding the action they will take on a bill. The committee may also set a date for public hearings on the bill. Committee hearings are required (except in very special circumstances) to be open to the public.

After hearings are completed, the subcommittee reviews both sides of the issue, in what is known as the "markup session." At this point, there must be a vote as to the action of the subcommittee on the bill. Each member has one vote. The proposed actions for the subcommittee are:

- *Report the bill favorably to the full committee (with or without amendment.)
- *Report bill unfavorably.
- *No recommendation.

The subcommittee then makes a report on the bill at the full committee meeting.

Full Committee action on House Bill

The next step is for the bill to return to the full committee. At this point, "germane" amendments may be offered. Note that these amendments remain only "proposals" at this point, as they are still subject to acceptance/rejection by the full House.

The full committee then votes to report the bill favorably, unfavorably or without recommendation. The committee may report the bill to the House without amendments, or submit a "clean bill"—a new bill incorporating all the amendments made in the committee. It may also decide to report the original bill with one "amendment in nature of a substitute," consisting of all the amendments previously adopted. Of course, if a committee tables a bill or takes no further action on it, they can effectively "kill" it.

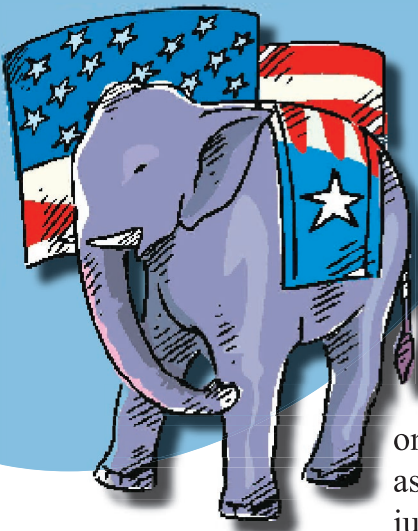
Bill returns to full House

If a bill passes favorably out of committee, a committee report is written describing the purpose and scope of the bill. All changes in existing law must be indicated in the report and the text of laws being repealed must be set out. Committee amendments also must be set out at the beginning of the report and explanations of them are included. Executive communications regarding the bill may be referenced in the report.

Committee reports are a valuable source of the legislative history of a law. They are used by the courts, executive departments, and the public as a source of information regarding the purpose and meaning of the law.

House Bill is assigned to Calendar

The House has five calendars for use in conducting its business. When a bill passes favorably out of the committee, it is given a calendar number and is assigned to either the Union or the House calendar—the two principal calendars of business in the House. The Union calendar holds the majority of public bills and resolutions. The House calendar hosts bill that do not involve a cost to the



UPDATES

How a Bill Becomes Law

continued

government (or often resolutions providing special orders of business.) It is important to remember that business is not necessarily conducted in the order the bills were listed on the calendar.

House Bill is considered by the full House

All bills on the Union Calendar must first be considered by the “Committee of the Whole”—a process used to expedite the consideration of the vast numbers of bill appearing before the House. A quorum for the Committee of the Whole is only 100 members. After general debate, the bill undergoes a second reading. At this time, germane amendments may be made to the bill.

When the Committee of the Whole “rises,” it reports back the bill and any amendments that have been adopted. At this point, it once again becomes the full House. Within the full House, the bill undergoes debate, and then is read for the third time (this time, by title only.) The full House votes on the bill. If it passes, it heads to the Senate.

House Bill heads to Senate

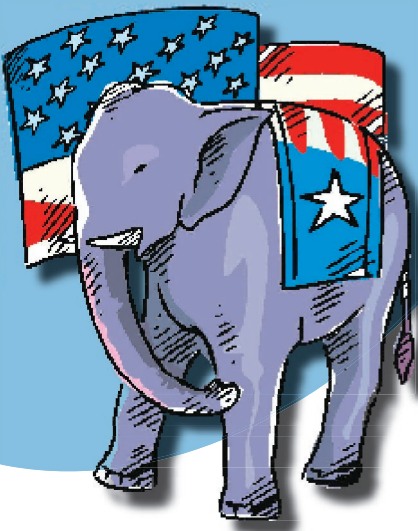
An exact copy of the bill as it was passed in the House (“engrossed”) is prepared by the Clerk of the House. At this point, the bill is now referred to as an “Act.” It is sent to a Senate committee (there are 16 standing committees) by the Parliamentarian, acting on behalf of the President of the Senate (the Vice President of the U.S.) The bill is then reported out of committee with or without amendment, favorably or unfavorably. In the Senate, minority reports may also be filed. Again, all committee meetings and hearings are open to the public, with special exceptions.

Senate rules of procedure differ from those in the House. A simple majority vote carries an amendment or passes a bill. Also, there is generally no “germaneness” rule.

A vote is taken after third reading (by title only.) Generally, the voice vote method is employed. A bill is passed either amended or unamended. The original “engrossed” House bill, along with the engrossed Senate amendments (if any) or the original engrossed Senate bill, is returned to the House stating the action taken by the Senate. If the Senate has adopted amendments, there is a request that the House agree to them.

At this point, the amended bill is placed with the Speaker of the House, awaiting House action. Most Senate amendments require the consideration of the House Committee of the Whole. If the bill with Senate amendments is agreed to, it is ready for presentation to the President.

If the Senate amendments to the house bill are numerous or controversial, a conference with the Senate may be requested or agreed upon to resolve the disagreement between the two Houses. The leadership of each house appoints conferees—the size of the committees are not necessarily the same. This conference committee is often referred to as the “Third House of Congress.”



UPDATES

How a Bill Becomes Law

continued

Conference Committee

The rules of the House demand that one conference meeting be open, unless voted in open session to be closed to the public. Four forms of recommendations that are open to the conference committee:

1. Senate backs away from some or all of its amendments.
2. House backs away from its disagreement to some or all of the Senate amendments (and agrees thereto.)
3. House backs away from its disagreement to some or all of the Senate amendments and agrees thereto with amendments.
4. House backs away from some or all of its amendments to the Senate amendments or its amendments to the Senate bill.

Most often, a compromise results, with one House substituting its own bill as a single amendment. However, if no agreement is reached, the conferees report this back to their Houses and the amendments may be disposed of. Often, new conferees are appointed at this point, and may be given instructions by their Houses as to the positions they are to take.

A Bill becomes a Law

A bill may not become a law until both Houses have approved it in *identical* form. When this happens, it is presented in “enrolled” form for the President, and is signed first by the Speaker of the House, and then the Vice President (President of the Senate.)

The President has a 10-day period in which to take action on a bill—either signing it for approval, or returning it with objections. A bill may become law without presidential signature if the President has not returned it with objections in the 10-day period. The Constitution provides that a 2/3rds affirmative vote in House and Senate can override the Presidential veto.

Now let’s take a quick look at a bill that originates in the Senate...

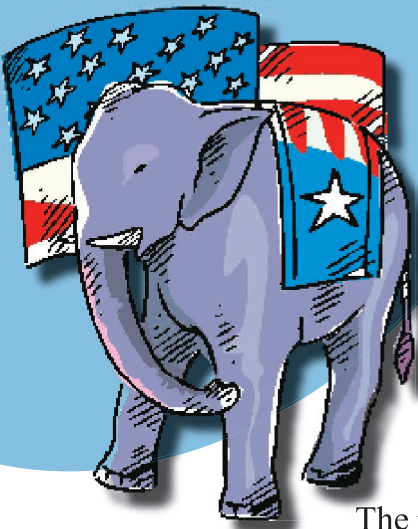
Bill originating in the Senate

When a bill originates in the Senate, it goes through much the same process as described above, but in reverse. A bill that is eventually passed in Senate (known as S.##) is sent to House for consideration. One exception to this a bill that is held by unanimous consent to become a “vehicle” for a similar House measure when and if passed by House.

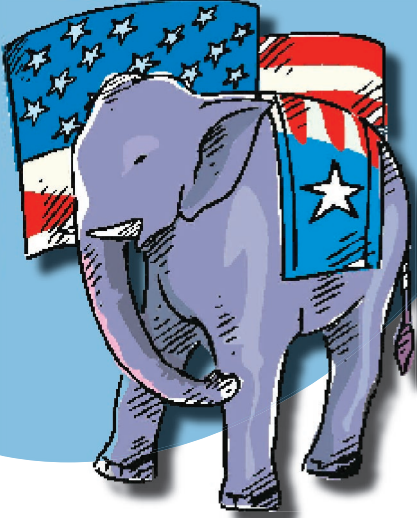
Senate Bill is referred to appropriate House committee for consideration or held by Speaker for possible amendment after action on a companion House bill. When the Senate bill is passed out of the committee and into the full House, it is ready for “enrollment” if there are no amendments.

If the House makes amendments to the Senate bill, it is returned back to the Senate for review and action on the House amendments. As in the process mentioned above, the Senate either agrees to the House amendments, or requests a conference committee.

So there you have it — a quick look at our federal legislative process. More information about Congress can be found on the Library of Congress website: thomas.loc.gov.



UPDATES



Upcoming Events:

February 5, 2011

Regional TFRW Conference/Workshop
New Braunfels, TX

February 8, 2011

Ronald Reagan Birthday luncheon
Fair Oaks Country Club

March 2, 2011

Texas Independence Day / TFRW Fundraiser
Driskill Hotel - Austin, TX

March 3, 2011

Legislative Day
Austin, TX

March 4, 2011

TFRW Dd/DP Meeting & Exec. Committee
and Board of Directors meeting
Austin, TX

March 9-11, 2011

NFRW Board Meeting
Washington, DC

May 12-13, 2011

TFRW Executive Committee
& Board of Directors Meeting
Austin, TX

August 4-5, 2011

TFRW Executive Committee
& Board of Directors Meeting
Austin, TX

Sept. 29 - Oct. 2, 2011

36th Biennial NFRW Convention
Kansas City, MO

November 16-20, 2011

TFRW Convention
Fort Worth, TX



Bulverde ARC Installation
Janet Blum, Sue Lynch, Toni Anne Dashiell
& Fran Graves



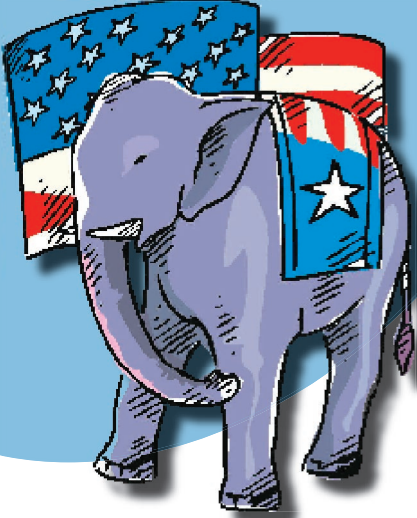
Perry / Dewhurst inauguration



Sandra Northam & Fran Graves
at a Perry/Dewhurst inauguration event



UPDATES



MONTHLY MEETING Luncheon & Silent Auction

Tuesday, February 8th - 11:00 a.m

Fair Oaks Country Club

\$25 per person

(payment by check, made out to KCRW, is preferred)

RSVP by noon Thursday, February 3rd



Barbara Larson & Fran Graves



Theme

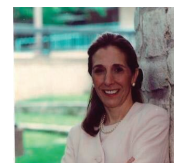
“Ronald Reagan Centennial Tribute”

“ If we ever forget that we are One Nation Under God, then we will be a nation gone under”

-President Ronald Reagan



Benny Waskom, Kerrie Williams,
Susan Dietzmann & Lorrie Agold-Rich



Speaker : Honorable Cyndi Taylor Krier

An attorney, former Republican Texas State Senator, former Bexar County Judge and a former Regent for the University of Texas system

Topic : “What Republicans need to do today to be relevant.”

MENU

Garden Green Salad w/choice of Ranch or Balsamic Vinegar

Chicken Alexandria

(breast of chicken filled with artichoke hearts, tomatoes, spinach, cheese)

Wild Mushroom Risotto with White Wine Sauce

Fresh Baked Rolls and Butter

Iced Tea/Coffee

Cash Wine Bar

For reservations or information, please contact Jana Rogers

830-537-4322 or at janar@gvtc.com



Lorrie Agold-Rich, Sheryl D’Spain
& Fran Graves

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Don't forget to pick up an Individual Report Form and turn in your Volunteer Hours

TFRW Website:
www.tfrw.org

NFRW Website:
<http://www.nfrw.org>



www.kcrwtx.com

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