

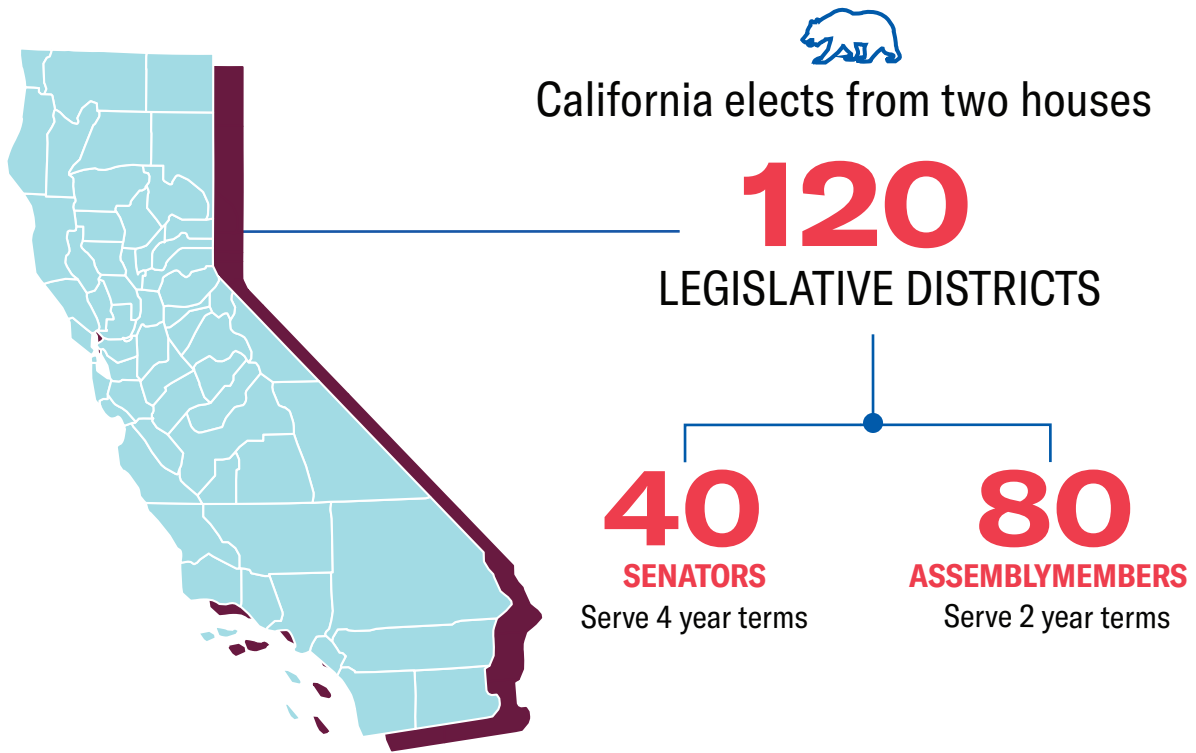
A Guide to the California Legislature

# EXERCISE YOUR POWER

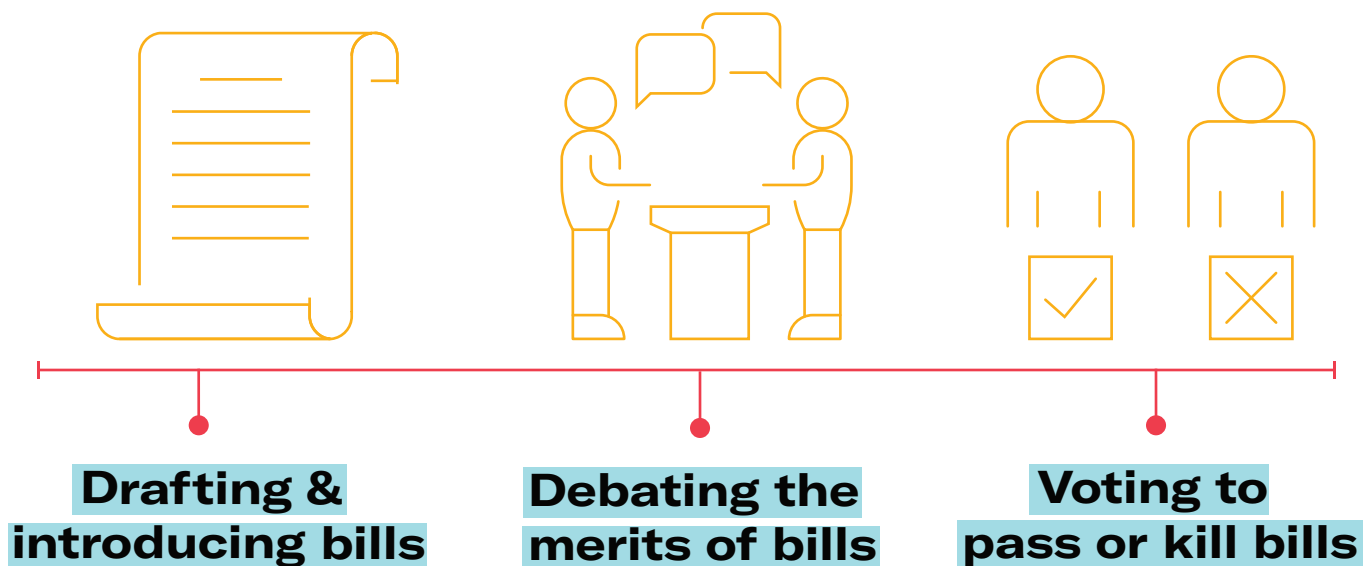
**WE THE PEOPLE**



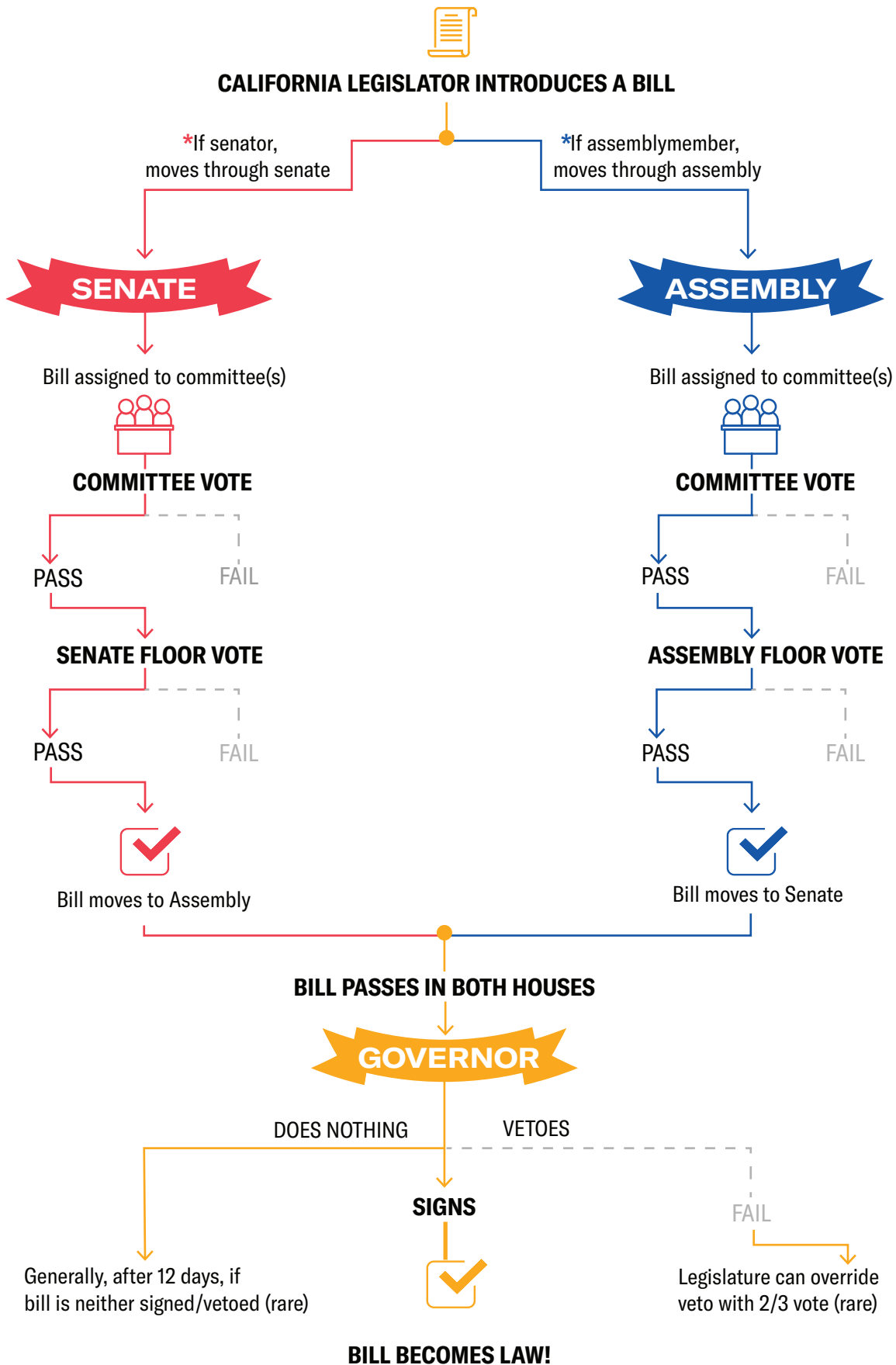
# HOW THE LEGISLATURE WORKS



## LEGISLATORS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR



# HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW



\*Bills that start with “SB” are introduced in the senate

\*Bills that start with “AB” are introduced in the assembly

# THE STATE BUDGET PROCESS

**Governor releases proposed budget for next fiscal year**

**BY JANUARY 10**



Senate & assembly budget committees & subcommittees review the gov.'s budget & craft their own version.

**Governor releases revised budget proposal**

**BY MAY 14**



Senate & assembly budget committees & subcommittees review the revised budget & work to finalize their version.



Legislative leaders meet with the governor to iron out any issues and finalize a budget.

**Legislature must pass a balanced budget**

**BY JUNE 15**



Budget passes & goes to governor for a signature.

**Start of the next fiscal year**

**JULY 1**

# LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY



**ELECTED OFFICIALS**

**CONSTITUENTS**

Legislators' job is to represent the interests of their constituents. That means they work for you. **Here's how you can contact them:**



**CALL & WRITE THEM**



**MEET THEM IN PERSON**

✓ **TIP 1**

Know the name of your legislator.

✓ **TIP 2**

Plan out what you will say. Be prepared to provide your home address.

✓ **TIP 3**

Remember to mention the bill number & why you are contacting your legislator. (i.e. "Vote yes on SB xxxx!")

✓ **TIP 4**

Make it short and sweet.

✓ **TIP 5**

Tell a personal story, if you have one.

✓ **TIP 6**

Frame the problem, solution, & action.



**STEP ONE**

Schedule your meeting.



**STEP TWO**

Be flexible & patient.



**STEP THREE**

Prepare, educate yourself, & establish a clear goal.



**STEP FOUR**

Make a clear ask (i.e. "Vote yes on SB xxxx") & take notes.



**STEP FIVE**

Follow up & say thank you!

## RESEARCH YOUR LEGISLATOR

[aclucalifornia.org/legislative-scorecard](https://aclucalifornia.org/legislative-scorecard)



Not sure who your legislators are?

[www.findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov](https://www.findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov)



## CONNECT WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS EARLY & OFTEN

Make sure you sign up for our e-mail action alerts at [aclu.org](https://aclu.org) for timely opportunities to contact your legislators.

# MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD.

Your participation  
strengthens our democracy.



**ACLU**  
CALIFORNIA  
ACTION