

Presiding Officer

Overview

Order of Procedure

1. If you give a candidacy speech for election, state that you will be fair and work to make sure time is best spent giving speeches.
2. After you are elected, say "this chamber will come to order." State that you will use your best effort to recognize speakers around the chamber in a fair and balanced manner. Describe gavel time signals. Explain procedures clearly: i.e., how you will recognize speakers, etc., that you **will not call for motions at any time** (speakers should seek your attention when they wish to rise to move something), and that when it is clear that debate has exhausted on a bill/resolution, you will ask the chamber if they are ready for the question, rather than waiting for the *previous question* (which should be reserved for forcing end to debate that has become one-sided or repetitive in arguments). Always stand when addressing the chamber (to project authority). Use a calm, controlled and caring voice to show a genuine interest in the chamber's business.
3. When you are ready to begin, say "Who would like to sponsor the first legislation?" When you recognize speakers, use the third person: "The chair recognizes..."
4. When a speaker concludes, say "That speech was ___ minutes and ___ seconds; questioners, please rise." *Call on one legislator at a time, until the questioning period is over. You should keep track of questions to allow a fair distribution.*
5. *You may gesture for questioners to sit down when it is apparent time is running out.* Afterwards, say "The questioning period has concluded, and the speaker may be seated."
6. "Those wishing to speak in opposition, please rise." *Call on a speaker, using **recency** and balancing areas of the room as much as possible.*
7. "That speech was 2 minutes and 15 seconds; questioners, please rise."
8. When you have called on the last person who wishes to speak on a bill/resolution, say "since this is the last senator/representative who wishes to speak on this issue, if no one objects following his/her speech, we will immediately move the question following his/her speech." (That way, a separate vote to call *previous question* is unnecessary).
9. When it is time to debate the next legislation, say "The next item of business is —" (say the legislation's title).



General Notes

Legislators should refer to you as: Mr./Madam chair, *Speaker*, or *President*. Legislators may not approach the front table without rising to a point of personal privilege.

Handling Motions

- **Recognizing Members:** "The chair recognizes..." or "State your point/question." Say their title (Representative or Senator) and last name.
- **Second:** (if the chamber is silent) "Is there a second?" ➤ **Stating Motions:** "It is moved and seconded that..."

Taking Votes

- **Negative votes and abstentions** are **only** counted for *recorded votes* (such as the main motion, i.e., legislation); votes taken where a fraction of members are needed are based on those casting a vote each time.
- **Voice Vote** - "On the motion to [read the motion title] those in favor, say aye. (Pause) Those opposed, say no." *If the result is not clear, especially evidenced by particularly loud members, **or** if a member moves for a **Division** of the vote, then a standing vote is taken.* Do not call for abstentions, since a voice vote is not recorded.
- **Rising Vote** (*You may substitute "raise hands"*) "Those in favor of the motion to [read the motion title] will rise [or, "stand"]." [Count vote.] "Be seated. Those opposed will rise." [Count vote.] "Be seated." Calling for abstentions is unnecessary, except for the main motion (legislation).
- Voting for individuals (presiding officer, awards) is done by **secret ballot**.

Announcing the Result: "On the motion to..."

- **Voice Vote** - "The ayes have it and the motion is adopted [or "carried"]." Or, "The noes have it and the motion is lost." *If you are unsure of the prevailing side, announce that you will take a rising vote (before someone asks for a division... to save time).*
- **Counted Rising Vote or Show of Hands Vote** - "With a vote of 51 in the affirmative and 23 in the negative, the affirmative has it [or, "there are two-thirds in the affirmative] and the motion is adopted." Or, "There are 29 in the affirmative and 33 in the negative. The negative has it and the motion is lost."

Discipline

- **Motion Out of Order or Motion Not in Order** "The chair rules that the motion is out of order [or "not in order"] because . . ."
- **Member Out of Order** (serious offense) "The member is out of order and will be seated."

Presiding Officer: Steps for Opening a Session

1. If you give a candidacy speech for election, state that you will be fair and work to make time is best spent giving speeches.
2. After you are elected, say "this session will come to order." State that you will use your best effort to recognize speakers around the chamber in a fair and balanced manner. If "gaveling" time signals have not been explained previously, demonstrate how you will conduct them. Explain procedures clearly ahead of time to save time later. Always stand when addressing the chamber (to project authority). Use a calm, controlled and caring voice to show a genuine interest in the chamber's business.
3. When you are ready to begin, say "Who would like to sponsor the first item of legislation?" When you recognize speakers, use the third person: "The chair recognizes..."
4. When a speaker concludes, say "Time of that speech was __minutes and __seconds. Questioners, please rise." Call on one legislator at a time, until the questioning period is over. You should keep track of questions to allow a fair distribution.
5. You may gesture for questioners to sit down when it is apparent time is running out. Afterwards, say "The questioning period has concluded, and the speaker may be seated."
6. "Those wishing to speak in opposition, please rise. Call on a speaker, using precedence and equity for all legislators. It is appropriate to first recognize speakers who have consecutively sought to speak earliest.
7. When you call on the last person seeking recognition to speak on a bill/resolution, say "since this is the last senator/representative who wishes to speak on this issue, if no one objects following his/her speech, we will move to the immediate previous question following his/her speech." (That way, a separate vote to call "previous question" is unnecessary).
8. When it is time to debate the next legislation, say "The next item of business is —" (say the legislation's title). Legislation should be considered in the order established on the agenda, unless it is laid on the table. Laying on the table should only be done to allow a legislator time to construct a speech to continue two-sided debate, or introduce new information. It should not be abused to allow another legislator an earlier opportunity to get to a later agenda item. Time and prudence is spent by the entire chamber to set a fair and balanced agenda to give everyone an equal opportunity to debate their own legislation, and attempts to circumvent this should not be allowed.
9. Use of the motion for previous question should be discouraged, particularly when legislators have something new to contribute to discussion. When debate or discussion becomes repetitive, allow the previous question without reservation. When debate becomes one-sided, the previous question may be considered immediately, and should be encouraged.

Presiding Officer: Motions and Voting

- ✦ *Recognizing Members:* (for speeches) "The chair recognizes [Sen./Rep. last name]" or (for motions) "State your point/question."
- ✦ *Second:* (if the chamber is silent) "Is there a second?"
- ✦ *Stating Motions:* "It is moved and seconded that..."
- ✦ *Taking Votes* (use recorded votes for any votes requiring other than a majority for passage (a specific fraction of members), and for the *main motion* (legislation itself), since legislators' voting records are ostensibly tracked by their constituents). All voting is done only by members present at the time the vote is taken.
 - *Negative votes and abstentions* are counted for *majority* votes; votes taken where a fraction of members are needed are based on those seated in the chamber at the beginning of the session, so counting nay votes and abstentions is unnecessary; however, never should an absentee or abstention be counted as a nay vote.
 - *Voice Vote* - "On the motion to [read the motion title] those in favor, say aye. (Pause) Those opposed, say no." If the result is not clear, especially evidenced by particularly loud members, or if a member moves for a *Division* of the vote, then a standing vote is taken.
 - *Rising Vote* (You may substitute "raise hands") "Those in favor of the motion to [read the motion title] will rise [or, "stand"]." [Count vote.] "Be seated. Those opposed will rise." [Count vote.] "Be seated."
 - Voting for individuals (presiding officer, awards) is done by *secret ballot*.
- ✦ *Announcing the Result:* "On the motion to..."
 - *Voice Vote* - "The ayes have it and the motion is adopted [or "carried"]." Or, "The noes have it and the motion is lost." If you are unsure of the prevailing side, announce that you will take a rising vote (before someone asks for a division... to save time).
 - *Counted Rising Vote or Show of Hands Vote* - "With a vote of 51 in the affirmative and 23 in the negative, the affirmative has it [or, "there are two-thirds in the affirmative] and the motion is adopted."
 - Or, "There are 29 in the affirmative and 33 in the negative. The negative has it and the motion is lost."
- ✦ *Discipline*
 - *Motion Not in Order* "The chair rules that the motion is dilatory [or "not in order"] because..."
 - *Member Out of Order* (serious offense) "The member is out of order and will be seated."

Table of Parliamentary Motions

Following is the NSDA's motion chart, annotated (non-shaded) to show motions used most often.

Type	Table of Most Frequently Used Parliamentary Motions Adapted for use in NSDA Congressional Debate		Second Required?	Debatable?	Amendable?		
	Motion	Purpose				Required Vote	May Interrupt?
Privileged	24. Fix time for reassembling	To arrange time of next meeting	Yes	Yes-T	Yes-T	Majority	Yes
	23. Adjourn	To dismiss the meeting	Yes	No	Yes-T	Majority	No
	22. Recess	To dismiss the meeting for a specific length of time	Yes	Yes	Yes-T	Majority	No
	21. Rise to a question of privilege	To make a personal request during debate	No	No	No	Decision of the Chair	Yes
	20. Call for orders of the day	To force consideration of a postponed motion	No	No	No	Decision of the Chair	Yes
Incidental	19. Appeal a decision of the chair	To reverse a decision	Yes	No	No	Majority	Yes
	18. Rise to a point of order or parliamentary procedure	To correct a parliamentary error or ask a question	No	No	No	Decision of the Chair	Yes
	17. Division of the chamber	To verify a voice vote	No	No	No	Decision of the Chair	Yes
	16. Object to the consideration of a question	To suppress action	No	No	No	2/3	Yes
	15. Divide a motion	To consider its parts separately	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
	14. Leave to modify or withdraw a motion	To modify or withdraw a motion	No	No	No	Majority	No
	13. Suspend the rules	To take action contrary to standing rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
Subsidiary	12. Rescind	To repeal previous action	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	No
	11. Reconsider	To consider a defeated motion again	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	No
	10. Take from the table	To consider tabled motion	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	9. Lay on the table	To defer action	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	8. Previous question	To force an immediate vote	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
	7. Limit or extend debate	To modify freedom of debate	Yes	Yes	Yes-T	2/3	No
	6. Postpone to a certain time	To defer action	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	5. Refer to a committee *	For further study	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	4. Amend an amendment °	To modify an amendment	1/3	Yes	No	Majority	No
	3. Amend °	To modify a motion	1/3	Yes	Yes	Majority	No
	2. Postpone indefinitely	To suppress action	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	No
Main	1. Main motion	To introduce a business	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No

Recency Table & Fractions of Voting

1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
6						
7						
8						
9						
10						
11						
12						
13						
14						
15						
16						
17						
18						
19						
20						
21						
22						
23						
24						
25						

# Votes Cast	Majority	Two-Thirds	One-Third
6	4	4	2
7	4	5	3
8	5	6	3
9	5	6	3
10	6	7	4
11	6	8	4
12	7	8	4
13	7	9	5
14	8	10	5
15	8	10	5

# Votes Cast	Majority	Two-Thirds	One-Third
16	9	11	6
17	9	12	6
18	10	12	6
19	10	13	7
20	11	14	7
21	11	14	7
22	12	15	8
23	12	16	8
24	13	16	8
25	13	17	9