



LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

ENGAGING IN ADVOCACY WITH LAWMAKERS:
A COMMUNITY MEMBER'S GUIDE

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The Mississippi legislative session is a critical time when laws, policies, and budgets that impact every aspect of life in the state are decided. It's not just for politicians to make decisions—it's an opportunity for communities to demand accountability, push for equity, and advocate for meaningful change.

Use this guide to effectively engage with lawmakers and promote the issues that matter most to your community.

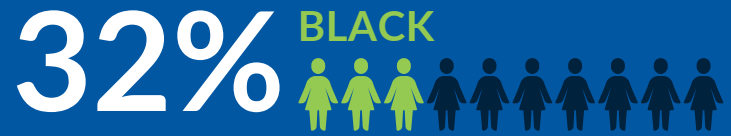
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Get to Know you Legislators

The Mississippi Legislature is the state's legislative body, consisting of two chambers: the Mississippi House of Representatives and the Mississippi State Senate.

The House of Representatives has 122 members, while the Senate has 52 members. Both Representatives and Senators serve four-year terms, and there are no term limits for either chamber. You can find your legislator on the Mississippi State Legislature website:

<https://www.legislature.ms.gov/>.



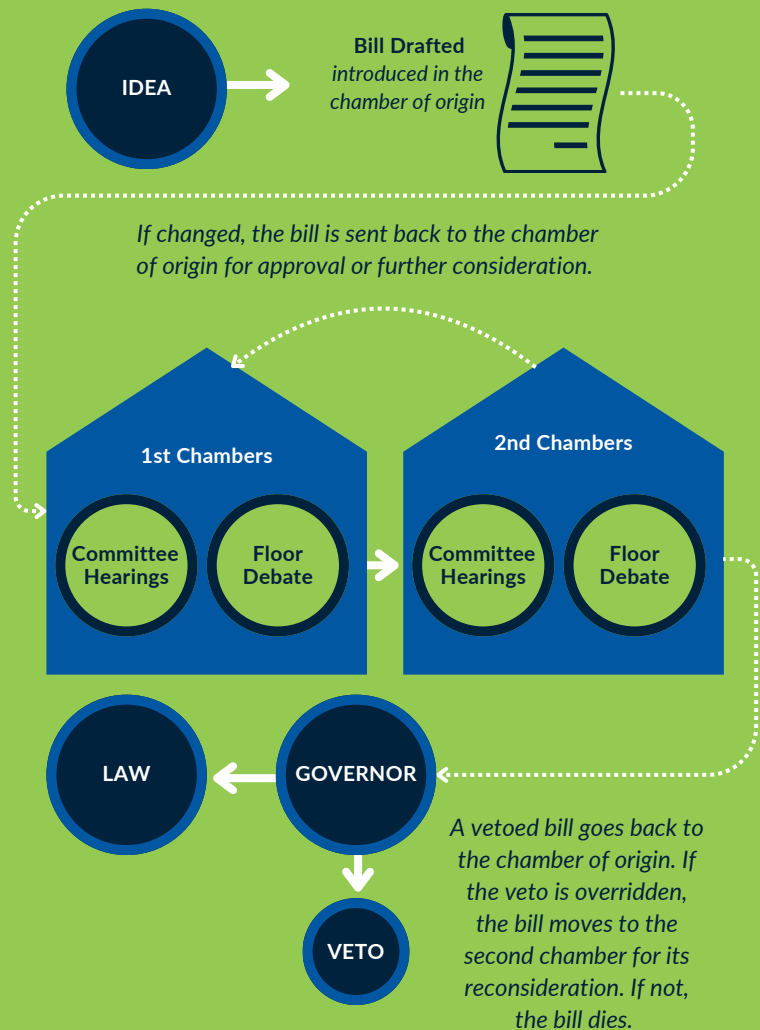
Understand the Legislative Process

Mississippi's legislative process begins with lawmakers introducing bills during the annual legislative session, which typically runs from January to early spring. Bills are assigned to committees, where they are reviewed, debated, and may be amended. If a bill passes out of committee, it moves to the floor of the originating chamber (House or Senate) for further debate and voting. If approved, the bill is sent to the other chamber to undergo the same process. Both chambers must agree on the final version of the bill before it is sent to the governor, who can sign it into law, veto it, or allow it to become law without a signature.

You can track important deadlines for bill submissions, committee hearings, and votes on the Mississippi State Legislature website: <https://www.legislature.ms.gov/>.

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State Legislative Process



Source: National Conference of State Legislators

Engage & Advocate

Community involvement in the legislative process is essential to ensure that lawmakers' decisions reflect the needs and priorities of all Mississippians, especially those from our communities. Here's how you can help:



Subscribe to Alerts: Sign up for updates from advocacy organizations like One Voice.



Understand the Issues: Be prepared to explain how a policy impacts your community.



Visit the Mississippi State Legislature website: Learn more about your legislators, the legislative process, and watch live webcasts.



Mobilize Your Community

- **Share What You've Learned:** Share information with your friends, family, and community. Encourage them to get engaged.
- **Organize Meetings:** Host gatherings in your area to educate others on key issues.
- **Leverage Networks:** Partner with other groups to amplify your efforts.



Communicate with Lawmakers:

- **Meet in Person:** Schedule a meeting
 - **Be Respectful:** Approach conversations with an open mind.
 - **Stay Connected:** Develop a year-round relationship with your legislators. Attend town halls, public hearings, and community events to maintain visibility.
- **Call, Text, or Write:** Reach out via phone, email, or letters to express your views.
 - **Keep It Brief:** State your issue, your stance, and what action you're requesting.
- **Engage on Social Media**
- **Visit the Capitol:** Schedule a tour, attend an advocacy day, participate in a rally, watch a vote, or attend a hearing.
- **Helpful Tips:**
 - **Share your Story:** Personal experiences can make your message more impactful.
 - **Offer Support:** Share information or resources that might help lawmakers understand your position.
 - **Advocacy is a Process:** Change takes time; be patient and consistent. Acknowledge small victories to keep momentum going.
 - **Keep Learning:** Stay updated on new developments and refine your strategies.



For More Information or Support: Contact One Voice at info@onevoicems.org or visit www.onevoicems.org. Together, we can make a difference!



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