

Conference Committee FAQs

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Related Categories: Conference Committees

As the end of session draws near, the below information on conference committees may be helpful.

What is a conference committee?

From the [Guide to Texas Legislative Information](#): "When a bill that has been amended by the opposite chamber is returned to the originating chamber, the originating chamber must concur with all of the amendments made by the opposite chamber before the bill can be enrolled. If the originating chamber does not concur with some or all of the opposite chamber's amendments, it may request the appointment of a conference committee to resolve the differences between the House and Senate versions of a bill."

How do I know if a bill goes to conference committee?

The [bill history](#) indicates if a bill goes to conference committee. In the list of actions, look for "House appoints conferees" or "Senate appoints conferees." These actions indicate that the chamber has agreed to go to conference committee and has appointed members to the committee. Bill histories can be viewed in the [Texas Legislature Online](#).

How can I see who was appointed to a particular conference committee?

Conference appointees are entered into the [Texas Legislature Online](#) system as they are appointed and will be listed on the bill details page just above the actions on the history tab--see [HB 1](#) (82nd R.S.) as an example.

How can I view conference committee reports?

After the committee has reached an agreement, a report is submitted to both chambers for approval or disapproval. The report must be approved by at least three conferees from each chamber and must contain the text of the bill as approved by the conference committee, a side-by-side analysis comparing the text of the compromise bill to both the House and the Senate versions, and the signatures of those members of the conference committee who approved the report.

The Legislative Library scans and links conference committee reports as soon as they are made available. Once linked, they can be found on the library website at:

<http://www.lrl.state.tx.us/legis/conferencecommitteereports.cfm>

In addition, conference committee reports are added to the [Texas Legislature Online](#).

What if the conference committee wants to add language to the bill that is not included in either the House or Senate versions?

To add language to the bill that is not included in either the House or Senate versions, the conference committee obtains approval to suspend the language limitation found in the House and Senate rules by passing simple resolutions delineating the information they would like to include. In the bill history of the bill that went to conference committee, look for the actions "House adopts resolution to go outside bounds" and/or "Senate adopts resolution to go outside bounds." See [HB 1796](#) (81st R.S.) as an example. [HR 2975](#) (81st R.S.) and [SR 1099](#) (81st R.S.) were passed to add additional language to the conference committee report.