

Bills vs Motions – A Cheat Sheet

<p>What is a bill?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A bill is a proposed law. 	<p>What is a motion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A motion is a proposal made by a member that requires a decision from the House. If passed, a motion expresses the opinion of the House on the given topic.
<p>How does a bill become law?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ To pass, a bill must successfully go through first, second and third reading and then obtain royal assent. Typically, bills are also reviewed by a legislative committee after second reading. 	<p>How does a motion become an expression or opinion of the House?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ To pass, a motion must be introduced by a member and may then be debated by the House. Following this step, the House can then vote to agree with the motion, disagree with the motion or to amend the motion.
<p>Pros of using a bill?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A bill creates new laws, meaning that if a proposed bill is passed, it becomes enforceable as part of the official laws of the province of Ontario. ❖ Bills must be translated into both official languages. ❖ Once passed, bills are easier for members of the general public to find since they become catalogued as official laws of the province. 	<p>Pros of using a motion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Motions are easier to pass through the Legislative Assembly from a procedural perspective since they do not need to go through second reading, the committee stage, third reading, and then obtain royal assent. ❖ Since motions are not enforceable, they can be more expressive than a bill. ❖ Motions, if successful, can be used as a “stepping stone” to later pass a bill. For example, the House of Commons first used a motion to recognize the Holodomor as a genocide.
<p>Cons of using a bill?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The process to pass a bill is lengthier and more complex than the process of passing a motion. ❖ Many bills are introduced and debated at second reading without making it to the committee stage or to third reading. ❖ If a bill does not move forward before prorogation or the end of a parliamentary session, it ‘dies’ on the order paper and must reintroduced in the House at a later session and debated at second reading once again. 	<p>Cons of using a motion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Since they merely express the opinion of the House, motions are not enforceable. ❖ Motions can be challenging for the general public to look up since they are not catalogued with the official laws of the province.
<p>What are notable ‘proclamation’ bills that have been passed in Ontario and in Canada?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In 1998, the Ontario Legislature passed a bill to proclaim Holocaust Memorial Day each year on Yom HaShoah. ❖ In 2009, the Ontario Legislature passed a bill to proclaim Holodomor Memorial Day on the fourth Saturday of November each year. 	<p>What are notable ‘proclamation’ motions that have been passed in Ontario and in Canada?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ In 2007, the Canadian House of Commons passed a motion to recognize Japanese-use of “comfort women” during WWII. The motion was also expressive, and encouraged the Japanese government to issue a formal apology. ❖ In 2011, the Ontario Legislature passed a motion recognizing April 24th of each year to be Armenian Genocide Memorial Day.