



## The Scene

The scene for this game is the United States Senate, with 100 senators from two parties fighting over legislation. Each player (or team of players) in the game manages a caucus consisting of either all the Republican senators or all the Democratic senators (James Jeffords is included in the Democratic caucus). Players score points by maneuvering legislation through committees, to passage by the senate, and into law.

The game is played with two decks of cards. One deck contains all 100 senators (the Senator cards). The vast constellation of issues facing politicians today has been condensed here into five areas: the economy (Eco), social welfare (Soc), civil liberties (Lib), the environment (Env), and international relations (Int). The continuum of ideologies similarly has been simplified to five positions from very liberal (1) to very conservative (5). Thus, every senator is identified by his or her views, for example, Patrick Leahy of Vermont is: Eco: 2, Soc: 1, Lib: 1, Env: 1, and Int: 2. Bills are similarly identified by issue and position.

The other deck contains 100 Politics cards. Included in this deck are cards representing bills; cards depicting various political events and influences (for example, the presence of liberal or conservative lobbying strength that can help or hurt a bill); and “Flash!” cards (see below), which extend the rules of the game to special situations. The bill cards are identified by issue and position in a manner similar to that of senators (see above and Introducing Bills below).

## Setup and First Moves

Players first decide how the winner will be determined (see Winning). Players then flip a coin and the winner of the toss chooses the party caucus he/she will manage.

Each player takes all the Senator cards of the appropriate party. The party in power in the White House is given the Vice-president card, which should be displayed. The players shuffle their decks thoroughly and place them face down.

The Politics cards are also shuffled. These are placed face down in the middle.

The player with the Senate minority party takes the first turn. He/she takes 5 Politics cards from the deck in the center and 5 Senator cards from his/her own deck. If there are any “Flash!” cards among the Politics cards, these are displayed at once (see Flash Cards below). The player may then put into play *one* senator. He/she may also introduce a bill (see Introducing Bills below). The introduction of a bill requires the activation of a senator (see Activation, below), consequently on this first move, only one bill can be introduced.

The player with the Senate majority party takes the second turn. This turn follows the same pattern as above except that in this and all subsequent moves the player may put into play *two* senators. The player may also introduce bills (two at most, in this case).

## The Play

After the initial round each turn begins with the deactivation (see Activation, below) of the senators in both caucuses who are activated on bills that the player introduced. This is the only way senators are deactivated. Also at the beginning, the player discards any unwanted Politics cards and then draws enough Politics and Senator cards to restore holdings to 5 cards of each type. If any of these are “Flash!” cards, they must be played at once.

Following this, the player then does any or all of the following (and in any order):

- a. Put into play up to two senators.
- b. Introduce bills.
- c. Call for votes on bills.
- d. Activate senators on bills.
- e. Put politics cards into play.

Players are limited to 25 senators in play. When this limit is reached, players may make substitutions from the senator cards they hold. The senators who are replaced are discarded.

## FLASH! Cards

Flash cards must be played at once. The first two flash cards to appear are placed on the table prominently. Subsequent flash cards replace these cards so that no more than two flash cards are in force at any time. Each new flash card replaces the flash card that has been in force for the longest time.

## Senators

Each senator is represented by a card. Senators become members of a player’s caucus when the player plays them face up on the table. The card details special information about the senator. This is the card for Orrin Hatch:

4

**Orrin Hatch**  
Republican  
Utah



Term ends: '07

Eco:	4
Soc:	3
Lib:	5★
Env:	5
Int:	5

Due to his seniority, Senator Hatch can sponsor any bill in the Civil Liberties committee, regardless of position.

The committees the senator belongs to are highlighted in color. If the senator is chair or ranking minority member of the committee, this is indicated by a star. The large number in the upper right corner is the number of votes the senator commands when activated (see Activation, below) and voting on the floor of the senate.

Some senator and politics cards carry special rules. *In case of conflict, these rules supercede all rules printed here.*

## Activation

Normally, in order to vote at full strength on a bill a senator's card must be placed on top of the bill. This is called "activating." The sponsor of a bill, for example, must be activated on the bill whenever it is being voted upon.

The concept of activation reflects the fact that a senator is limited in what he or she can do. A senator cannot be activated on two bills at the same time given the demands of committee work, party work, floor votes, meetings with constituents etc. Thus, each senator must choose which issues are most important personally and politically. Activating a senator on a bill signifies that the bulk of the senator's resources (time, energy, staff, political capital) have been committed to it, at least for that turn in the game.

As mentioned above, at the beginning of a player's turn, the senators from both parties who are activated on bills sponsored by that player's senators are deactivated. Until that time, they remain activated.

## How Bills Become Law

Players accumulate points by passing bills. These are the usual steps a bill goes through to become law:

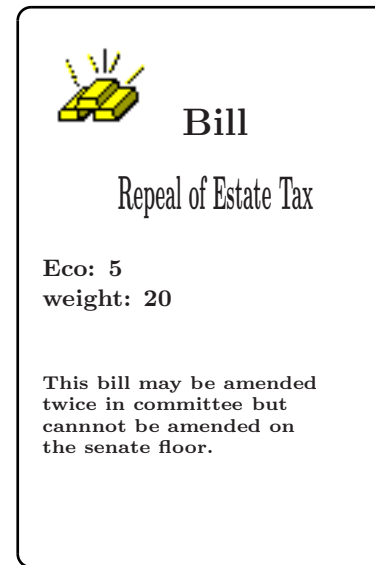
1. The bill is introduced in committee.
2. The committee passes the bill.
3. The senate passes the bill.
4. The bill is signed by the president.

There *can* be complications. In committee, the bill may be amended. It may also be amended on the floor of the senate. It may be filibustered in the senate, in which case the senate

must vote to end debate (cloture). Finally, the president might not sign the bill, in which case the bill is vetoed and the senate must vote on overriding the veto. All this is explained in the sections that follow.

## Introducing Bills

To introduce a bill, a player plays a bill card from the deck of politics cards. Here's a sample:



The player transfers the information from the card to a "Bill Record Sheet" (see Points).

The weight of the bill indicates the minimum number of votes the bill must have on the floor to pass. It also contributes to the number of points it is worth in the game.

The player chooses a sponsor for the bill, who must have the same policy position as the bill. This is also recorded on the Bill Record Sheet. The sponsor must be activated on the bill at this time.

If the player chooses, he/she can attach pork to the bill and record that as well. Attaching pork to a bill means listing one or more states on the Bill Record Sheet. Pork-barrel clauses help to attract votes but decrease the points awarded. In the real Senate, these provisions award benefits to particular localities, attracting the votes of the senators representing the region. In our game, pork can affect whether a senator will oppose or support a bill (see Passing the Senate).

Pork can be added now or when a vote is being called for in committee or on the floor (see the next two sections). Along with states, “the president” can be listed under Pork. This can affect whether or not the president signs the bill.

After introduction, a bill must wait one turn before being brought to a vote.

## Passing the Committee

A bill is successfully voted out of committee when it receives a majority of the votes cast. Only members of the committee can vote, and they must be activated to do so. A player is not obliged to activate all committee members, however, only those who are voting.

Every committee member gets one vote, except the leaders, the chair (majority party) who gets three votes and ranking minority member who gets two votes. The committee leaders are indicated by a star (★) on their cards.

In committee, senators in play vote however the player who controls them desires, except that a senator cannot vote against a bill with her/his own policy position (a senator can abstain on a vote on a bill with his/her policy position). Ties are defeats.

The procedure for voting is as follows: First, the player who introduced the bill adds any additional pork and activates the bill’s sponsor. This player then announces that the bill is being brought forward for consideration. Next, the opposing player may try to amend the bill (see Amendments). If no amendments are offered, the committee moves to a vote. Essentially, voting is a series of exchanges. The first player has placed the sponsor on the bill. That means there is 1 (or 2 or 3 if the sponsor is a leader) votes for the bill. Now the opposing player may activate enough senators to match this. Next, the first player may activate more senators, and so on, back and forth. During the process, either player may play politics cards, if relevant. Finally, when one player declines to activate additional senators (remember they must be members of the committee), the vote is tallied.

A bill that doesn’t pass the first time may have a second vote in a later turn. A bill cannot pass through a committee and receive a floor vote in the same turn. Bills passing out of committee must wait one turn before coming to a vote in the senate.

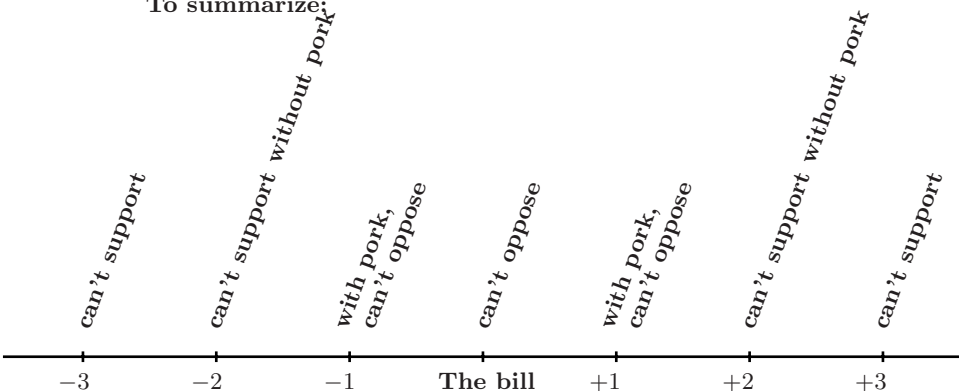
## Passing the Senate

A bill successfully passes the senate when it receives a majority of the votes cast and at least as many votes as its weight.

Each senator that is activated casts the number of votes listed on the senator’s card. Senators not activated cast one vote each or abstain. Senators in a player’s caucus vote however the player decides, subject to the following restrictions:

1. If the senator's position matches that of the bill, then the senator cannot vote against the bill (he/she may abstain, however).
2. If the senator's position is 1 away from the position on the bill and there is pork for the senator's state, then the senator cannot oppose the bill.
3. If the senator's position is exactly 2 from the position on the bill, then the senator can support the bill, but only if there is pork for the senator's state.
4. If the senator's position is more than 2 from the position on the bill, then the senator cannot support the bill.

To summarize;



The procedure for a vote on the floor is similar to the procedure in committee. The player who introduced the bill adds pork, activates the sponsor of the bill and announces that the bill is being brought forward. The opposing player can then offer an amendment or announce a filibuster (see Filibusters). If there is no amendment or filibuster, the voting proceeds as in committee, with players alternately adding senators, pork, playing politics cards, etc. The process continues until both players are satisfied and decline further moves. Then a poll of the votes is taken and registered as the official vote.

In the case of a tie vote, the bill passes if the vice president is in play and votes for the bill. The vote of the vice president is determined in the same way as that of any senator.

## Presidential Action

The president will sign a bill that has passed the senate if his position is within 1 of the position of the bill, or within 2 if there is presidential pork, otherwise he vetoes the bill. Presidential pork must be added to the bill before it is passed by the senate. The president's positions are the same as the vice-president's and are printed on the vice-president's card.

Presidential action takes place immediately following successful passage through the senate, that is, on the same turn.

If the president vetoes the legislation, the Senate can override the veto with a two-thirds majority vote (see Handy Chart). This vote is taken only once and must wait at least one turn after presidential action. The rules for senators on an override vote are the same as that for voting on bills. Override proposals cannot be amended on the floor.

## Points

Points are determined by the weight of the bill, its policy position, the pork that is attached, amendments to it, and by the bill's history. These are all recorded on the Bill Record Sheet:

Bill Record Sheet	
Title:	
Issue:	Position:
Sponsor:	Weight:
Pork (list states):	
Amendments, committee	Amendments, senate floor
Sponsor	Sponsor
Position	Position
Pork	Pork
<b>Basic Points</b>	<b>Multippliers</b>
Weight: _____	<i>Check all that apply:</i>
Pork (-2 ea.): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Passes committee
Cloture voted (+5): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Passes senate
Amendments (-2 ea.): _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Becomes law
Veto overridden (+5): _____	
Position 1 or 5 (+6): _____	
Basic Point total: _____	Total Multipliers: _____
Score = (Basic Points) × (Total multipliers): _____	

The final score for the bill is the product of the basic point sum and the number of “multipliers.”

Notice that points are earned even if the bill does not ultimately become law. It must, however, pass committee to earn points.

## Winning

There are several options for determining a winner:

1. The first player to reach an agreed-upon number of points.
2. The player with the most points after an agree-upon number of bills have been passed.
3. (For tournament play) The player with the most points after an agreed-upon period of time. In this case, turns must have definite time limits as well.

*NOTE:* A good introductory game can be played with just the rules introduced so far, that is, without amendments or filibusters.

## Amendments in Committee

Amendments can be proposed by senators from either party on the committee who disagree with the bill’s position. The amended bill’s policy position doesn’t have to be the same as that of the amending senator. The amendment (if passed) moves the bill one notch in the direction of the amending senator’s position. In order to amend a bill, the senator amending must be activated. A vote is taken immediately on the amendment. Senators in play vote on amendments however the controlling player desires. In the case of a tie, the amendment is defeated.

If the amendment succeeds, the position of the bill is changed, otherwise, it is not. If the bill’s new position is 4 or 5, the resulting bill is Republican. If the bill’s new position is 1 or 2, the resulting bill is Democratic. In either of these cases, if the bill switches parties, the old sponsor is removed and the amending senator becomes the new sponsor. At the conclusion of the bill’s journey, points are awarded (see Points) to the player controlling the sponsor.

If the bill’s new position is a 3 and the amending senator is from the opposite party, then the result is a bipartisan bill. The amending senator is added as a co-sponsor and his/her caucus is immediately awarded 10 points. If the bill remains a 3 throughout its passage in the senate, then the player of the amending senator is awarded points (see Points) equal to one-half the total awarded for the other player.

Each caucus is allowed only one amendment in committee. After an amendment attempt, whether successful or not, a vote on the bill itself must wait until the next turn.

## Amendments on the Floor

Amendments can be proposed by opposition senators, no more than one per bill. Amendments on the floor take the form of substitute bills and a new bill card must be completed. The amendment should agree with the bill on issue and weight, but disagree on position. It may have its own pork barrel clauses.

The senate first votes on the amendment. Voting follows the usual procedure on the floor. If the amendment fails (a tie is a failure), the senate can move immediately to a vote on the bill. All senators activated on the amendment are moved over to the bill.

If the amendment succeeds, again the senate moves to a vote on the original bill. Any senator activated on the amendment can be moved over to the bill, but a senator abstaining on the amendment automatically abstains on the bill. If the bill succeeds, it supercedes the amendment. The amendment is dead and the bill is passed. (It is possible—through the use of pork, politics cards, and choices about which senators to activate—for both the original bill and the opposing amendment to pass the senate on the same turn.) If the bill fails, then the amendment has passed the senate.

on cloture fails twice, then the bill must be removed from the floor; the bill dies.

Once cloture is voted, the bill can no longer be filibustered by any senator and the senate can move immediately to a vote on the bill or an amendment to the bill.

## Filibusters

Senators whose positions are at least 3 away from the position on the bill may filibuster the bill. The procedure is as follows: One player brings a bill to the floor, activating the sponsor. At this time, the opposing player may start a filibuster by activating an eligible senator on the bill. A senator can filibuster a bill if he/she's position is at least 3 from the bill's position, or 4 without pork.

If a player decides to call for cloture, a cloture vote is taken. As in other floor votes, senators with the same policy position as the bill cannot support the filibuster. To end the filibuster, the bill must receive 60% of the votes on a call for cloture (see Handy Chart).

If the first player decides not to call for cloture at this time, the sponsor and filibusterer remain activated on the bill. If a vote



## Handy Chart

Votes Against	Needed for Cloture	Needed for Override	Votes Against	Needed for Cloture	Needed for Override
0-4	6	8	36	54	72
5	8	10	37	56	74
6	9	12	38	57	76
7	11	14	39	59	78
8	12	16	40	60	80
9	14	18	41	62	82
10	15	20	42	63	84
11	17	22	43	65	86
12	18	24	44	66	88
13	20	26	45	68	90
14	21	28	46	69	92
15	23	30	47	71	94
16	24	32	48	72	96
17	26	34	49	74	98
18	27	36	50	75	100
19	29	38	51	77	102
20	30	40	52	78	104
21	32	42	53	80	106
22	33	44	54	81	108
23	35	46	55	83	110
24	36	48	56	84	112
25	38	50	57	86	114
26	39	52	58	87	116
27	41	54	59	88	118
28	42	56	60	90	120
29	44	58	61	91	122
30	46	60	62	93	124
31	47	62	63	94	126
32	49	64	64	96	128
33	50	66	65	97	130
34	52	68	66	99	132
35	53	70	67	100	134
36	54	72	68	102	136