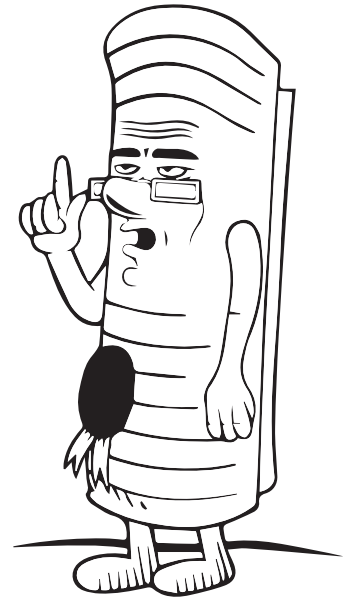




This is Bill

Say hello to Bill
Hi Bill!



Bill is a plan that **proposes** a law.

The details of Bill are debated through a **legislature**.
When Bill is accepted, he becomes **legislation**.

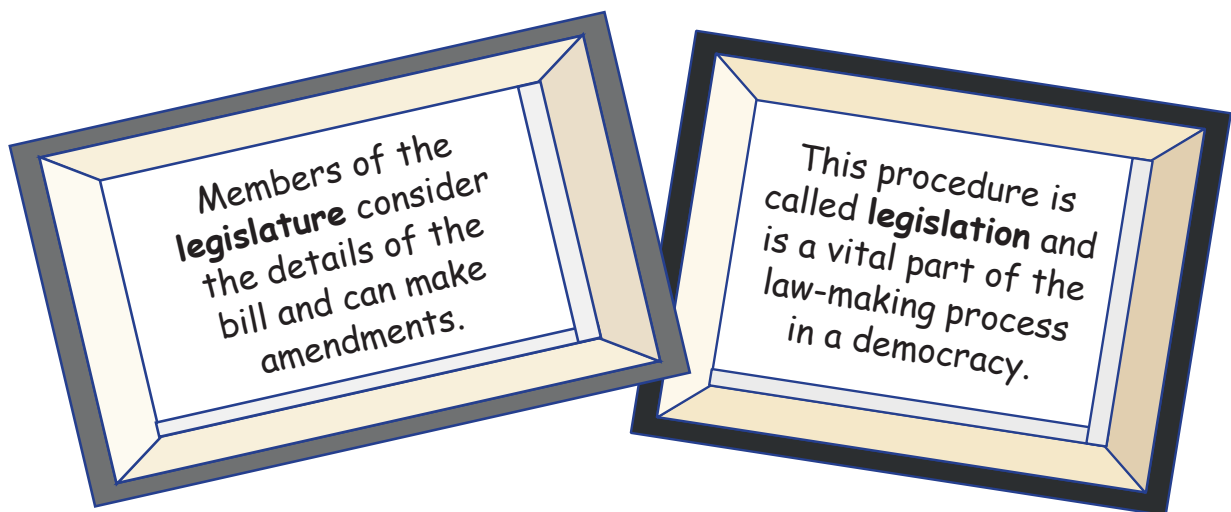
It sounds complex, doesn't it?

Let's break it down.....

Proposed	a plan, or suggestion presented for consideration
Legislature	a group or body of people, such as a government, who has the authority to make laws for a society
Legislation	a law, or the process of making a law

Bill makes suggestions, or provides a plan for the government to consider when passing a law.

Bill will have all the details because he's the man for the job!



Laws can only be made by the legislature and must follow the agreed process (legislation).
This ensures all laws are made in an open and transparent way by representatives of the people for the benefit of society.

Legislature: Who makes the Laws?

The purpose for a bill can come from a variety of sources, such as policy ideas from the Executive Government, an announcement from an election campaign, suggestions by Members of Parliament, or from groups in the community.

Legislation is made by representatives of the people. That means we can all have a say in what laws are passed. The public has access to review and comment on the details of a bill at any time by visiting the Parliament's website www.aph.gov.au/bills.

There are different legislature bodies that can pass laws in Australia:

- **Federal Parliament**
- **State and Territory Parliaments**

Each legislature follows the **Westminster System** of law making, which originates from the British Parliamentary system consisting of two Houses of Parliament.

A legislature that has two Houses of Parliament is called **bicameral**.

The Australian Federal Parliament

The Australian Federal Parliament is made up of two Houses, the **House of Representatives**, the **Senate**, and the Governor-General as the Queen's representative.

Each House has its own set of procedures to follow in determining what laws will be passed.

The two Houses represent different interests. The House of Representatives is considered to be 'the People's House' and the Senate has a representative for each State and Territory. The process of law making involves a bill to be discussed and debated, as it passes through several stages in both Houses of Parliament. When both Houses agree on the details of the bill, it is then passed on to the Governor General for assent, where it becomes an **Act**.

The House of Representatives

The House has 151 members who have been elected by the people of Australia. The House is the first place that debates and votes on bills.



The Senate

Senators are elected to represent the states and territories. The Senate discusses and debates the details of new bills, which have been passed on from the House of Representatives.

Passing Legislation in the Australian Federal Parliament

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

1st READING The bill is prepared and presented in the House of Representatives.

2nd READING All Members of the House consider and debate on details of the bill.
The main idea of the bill is voted on.

Members of the Parliament are given time to take details of the bill back to their constituents for public consultation. After this time, the House of Representatives again considers and debates the details of the bill and any changes that need to be made.

3rd READING

Reasons why the bill should be supported or opposed are considered again. A proposal is then made, by the Minister whose area the bill originates from, for the House to reach a decision.

THE BILL IS PASSED IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SENATE

1st READING The bill is introduced in the Senate.

2nd READING Senators debate and vote on the main idea of the bill.

A Senate committee sets aside time for public inquiry into details of the bill. A report is sent back to the Senate. The Senate is given time to consider the bill in further detail and make any changes that need to be made.

3rd READING Senators vote on the bill in its final form.

THE BILL IS PASSED IN THE SENATE

ROYAL ASSENT

The Governor-General signs the bill. The words of assent are:

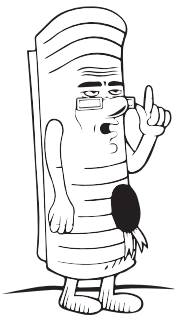
In the name of Her Majesty, I assent to this Act

THE BILL BECOMES AN ACT OF PARLIAMENT



An **Act** is a law passed by both Houses of Parliament that has received Royal Assent.

These steps provide a simple explanation on how a bill is passed through the Australian parliament. For more detailed information regarding how a bill is passed, go to the [Parliamentary Education Office](#)



Remember Bill?

Bill has worked hard to make sure representatives from both Houses in the Parliament have many opportunities to contribute their ideas and concerns before passing a law.

The following principles of the rule of law help create a lawful culture in communities, where laws are applied equally and fairly:



Knowing the law

All citizens have access to information about the law and know their responsibilities regarding living under the law and abiding by the law.



Access to justice

Courts and tribunals exist to make decisions and determine solutions to legal problems. If individuals cannot access these bodies, then they won't receive fair outcomes. Access to justice is fundamental in a fair legal system. A state or country can have the best laws in the world, but if the people cannot use them to seek solutions to problems then the law is useless.



No one is above the law

All individuals are equal before the law. The law should apply to all people equally regardless of their status and position in society. This includes equality for people who are; rich or poor, young or old, male or female, with no favour for race, culture, religion, or any other attribute.



Checks and balances

Laws cannot be made that go against the Constitution. The use of power must be accountable. This means all arms of government and the judiciary act as checks on each other, to make sure none of them have absolute power.

*This is called the **separation of powers** and it makes the government accountable.*

Law making for the states and territories follows a similar process as the federal parliament. The states retain legislative powers over additional areas, such as local government, roads, hospitals, water, electricity, and schools.

The process of sharing responsibility at the state and territory level is called the **Division of Powers**

Click on these links and check out the following videos. They will help support your understanding of the important process of passing a bill in the Australian Federal Parliament!

Making a Law and **Passing a Bill**

(ACHASSK143, ASHASSK144, ACHASSK146)



So, how does the process of preparing and passing a bill help protect all Australians?

