

# 1. INTRODUCTION

State legislatures are dynamic institutions, and no two operate in the same fashion. Perhaps this diversity is most apparent in the area of legislative procedure. Although legislative processes may differ among the states, they remain fairly constant within a chamber. John Tilson, a noted parliamentarian, offers a theory for this constancy:

The rules and procedures of a body are almost sure to have been thoroughly tried out under conditions providing a searching test. Politics and partisan passion furnish abundant reasons and opportunity for putting them to the test, and when a rule or process fails to stand up to the strain, it soon passes into discard. It is therefore quite safe to assume that rules, which have withstood partisan assaults for many years, will not break down under ordinary usage.

*Inside the Legislative Process* is nationally recognized as a valuable research tool that provides some of the best information on state legislative processes and procedures. In 1975, the American Society of Legislative Clerks and Secretaries (ASLCS) authorized its first comprehensive survey of the structure, size, function and operations of the clerks' and secretaries' offices in the 50 state legislatures. The survey proved to be an extraordinarily useful document, not only to the society's members but also to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and to others who are interested in the management and procedures of legislative chambers. The data was so useful that surveys were completed in 1979, 1982, 1985, 1988, 1992, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006 and 2008.

This report reflects the findings of the recent survey of the nation's parliamentary officers. Throughout, the titles of legislative clerk and secretary are used interchangeably to refer to the chief clerk of the house or secretary of the senate of any given state. The report was compiled directly from the survey responses, and questions of interpretation were not decided by the NCSL staff who assembled the data.

The publication format for *Inside the Legislative Process* changed in 1996. From 1979 through 1992, editions were published every three to four years as stand-alone books. Beginning with the 1996 edition, *Inside the Legislative Process* became a publication with its information divided among several general topic tabs in a three-ring binder.

In 2007, *Inside the Legislative Process* became an electronic document. The electronic version includes all sections published since 1996, and it is available through the NCSL website at <http://www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=13506>.

Although its format has changed over the years, *Inside the Legislative Process* always provides ASLCS members and others with valuable comparative information about legislative procedures.

Table 96-1.1 1996 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	•
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	•
California	•	•
Colorado	•	•
Connecticut	•	•
Delaware	NR	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	NR	•
Hawaii	•	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	•	•
Iowa	•	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	•
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	•	•
Maryland	•	•
Massachusetts	NR	NR
Michigan	•	•
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	NR	•
Missouri	•	•
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	•	•
New Jersey	•	•
New Mexico	•	•
New York	•	•
North Carolina	NR	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	•
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	•	NR
South Carolina	NR	•
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	•
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•

**Table 96-1.1 1996 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	•
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	•
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	•	•
U.S. Territories	NR	NR

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: Delaware Senate, Georgia Senate, Massachusetts Senate and House, Mississippi Senate, North Carolina Senate, Rhode Island House, and South Carolina Senate. No responses were received from legislatures of U.S. territories—that is, American Samoa, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

NA=Not applicable. The Nebraska Legislature is unicameral.

Table 97-1.2 1997 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	•
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	•
California	•	•
Colorado	NR	•
Connecticut	•	•
Delaware	NR	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	•	•
Hawaii	NR	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	•	•
Iowa	NR	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	NR
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	NR	•
Maryland	•	•
Massachusetts	NR	NR
Michigan	•	•
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	NR	NR
Missouri	•	•
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	•	•
New Jersey	•	•
New Mexico	•	•
New York	NR	•
North Carolina	NR	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	NR
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	NR	•
South Carolina	NR	•
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	•
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•

**Table 97-1.2 1997 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	NR
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	•
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	•	•
U.S. Territories		
American Samoa	NR	•
District of Columbia	NR	NA
Guam	NR	NA
Northern Mariana Islands	NR	NR
Puerto Rico	•	NR
Virgin Islands	NR	NA

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: Colorado Senate, Delaware Senate, Hawaii Senate, Iowa Senate, Kentucky House, Maine Senate, Massachusetts Senate and House, Mississippi Senate and House, New York Senate, North Carolina Senate, Oregon House, Rhode Island Senate, South Carolina Senate, Vermont House, American Samoa Senate, District of Columbia Council, Guam Senate, Northern Mariana Islands Senate and House, Puerto Rico House and Virgin Islands Senate.

NA=Not applicable. The Council of the District of Columbia and the Guam, Nebraska and Virgin Islands legislatures are unicameral.

Table 98-1.3 1998 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	•
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	NR
California	•	•
Colorado	•	•
Connecticut	•	NR
Delaware	NR	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	•	•
Hawaii	•	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	•	•
Iowa	•	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	•
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	NR	•
Maryland	•	•
Massachusetts	•	•
Michigan	•	•
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	•	•
Missouri	•	NR
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	•	•
New Jersey	•	•
New Mexico	•	•
New York	NR	•
North Carolina	NR	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	•
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	NR	•
South Carolina	•	•
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	•
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•

**Table 98-1.3 1998 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	•
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	NR
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	•	•
U.S. Territories		
American Samoa	NR	NR
District of Columbia	NR	NA
Guam	NR	NA
Northern Mariana Islands	NR	NR
Puerto Rico	•	NR
Virgin Islands	NR	NA

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: Arkansas House, Connecticut House, Delaware Senate, Maine Senate, Missouri House, New York Senate, North Carolina Senate, Rhode Island Senate, Washington House, American Samoa Senate and House, District of Columbia Council, Guam Senate, Northern Mariana Islands Senate and House, Puerto Rico House and Virgin Islands Senate.

NA=Not applicable. The Council of the District of Columbia and the Guam, Nebraska and Virgin Islands legislatures are unicameral.

Table 99-1.4 1999 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	•
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	•
California	•	•
Colorado	•	•
Connecticut	•	•
Delaware	NR	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	•	•
Hawaii	NR	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	•	•
Iowa	•	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	•
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	•	•
Maryland	•	NR
Massachusetts	•	•
Michigan	•	•
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	•	•
Missouri	•	•
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	NR	•
New Jersey	•	•
New Mexico	•	•
New York	NR	•
North Carolina	•	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	•
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	•	•
South Carolina	•	•
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	•
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•



**Table 99-1.4 1999 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	•
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	•
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	•	•
U.S. Territories		
American Samoa	•	NR
District of Columbia	•	NA
Guam	NR	NA
Northern Mariana Islands	NR	NR
Puerto Rico	•	NR
Virgin Islands	NR	NA

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: Delaware Senate, Hawaii Senate, Maryland House, New Hampshire Senate, New York Senate, American Samoa House, Guam Senate, Northern Mariana Islands Senate and House, Puerto Rico House and Virgin Islands Senate.

NA=Not applicable. The Council of the District of Columbia and the Guam, Nebraska and Virgin Islands legislatures are unicameral.

Table 00-1.5 2000 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	NR
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	•
California	•	•
Colorado	•	•
Connecticut	•	•
Delaware	NR	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	•	•
Hawaii	•	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	•	•
Iowa	•	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	•
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	•	•
Maryland	•	•
Massachusetts	•	•
Michigan	•	•
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	NR	•
Missouri	•	•
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	•	•
New Jersey	NR	NR
New Mexico	•	•
New York	NR	•
North Carolina	•	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	•
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	NR	•
South Carolina	•	•
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	•
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•

**Table 00-1.5 2000 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	NR
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	•
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	•	•
U.S. Territories		
American Samoa	NR	NR
District of Columbia	•	NA
Guam	NR	NA
Northern Mariana Islands	NR	NR
Puerto Rico	NR	NR
Virgin Islands	NR	NA

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: Alabama House, Delaware Senate, Mississippi Senate, New Jersey Senate and General Assembly, New York Senate, Rhode Island Senate, Vermont House, American Samoa Senate and House, Guam Senate, Northern Mariana Islands Senate and House, Puerto Rico Senate and House, and Virgin Islands Senate.

NA=Not applicable. The Council of the District of Columbia and the Guam, Nebraska and Virgin Islands legislatures are unicameral.

Table 02-1.6 2002 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	•
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	•
California	•	•
Colorado	NR	•
Connecticut	•	NR
Delaware	NR	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	•	•
Hawaii	•	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	NR	•
Iowa	•	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	•
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	•	•
Maryland	•	NR
Massachusetts	•	•
Michigan	•	•
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	NR	•
Missouri	•	•
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	NR	•
New Jersey	•	NR
New Mexico	•	•
New York	NR	NR
North Carolina	NR	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	NR
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	•	NR
South Carolina	NR	NR
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	NR
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•

**Table 02-1.6 2002 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	•
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	•
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	•	•
U.S. Territories		
American Samoa	NR	•
District of Columbia	NR	NA
Guam	NR	NA
Northern Mariana Islands	NR	NR
Puerto Rico	NR	•
Virgin Islands	NR	NA

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: Colorado Senate, Connecticut House, Delaware Senate, Indiana Senate, Maryland House, Mississippi Senate, New Hampshire Senate, New Jersey General Assembly, New York Senate and Assembly, North Carolina Senate, Oregon House, Rhode Island House, South Carolina Senate and House, Tennessee House, American Samoa Senate, District of Columbia Council, Guam Senate, Northern Mariana Islands Senate and House, Puerto Rico Senate and Virgin Islands Senate.

NA=Not applicable. The District of Columbia Council and the Guam, Nebraska and Virgin Islands legislatures are unicameral.

Table 04-1.7 2004 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	•
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	•
California	•	•
Colorado	•	•
Connecticut	•	•
Delaware	•	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	•	•
Hawaii	•	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	•	•
Iowa	•	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	•
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	•	•
Maryland	•	•
Massachusetts	•	•
Michigan	•	•
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	•	•
Missouri	•	•
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	•	•
New Jersey	•	•
New Mexico	•	•
New York	•	•
North Carolina	•	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	•
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	•	•
South Carolina	•	•
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	•
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•

**Table 04-1.7 2004 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	•
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	•
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	•	•
U.S. Territories		
American Samoa	NR	NR
District of Columbia	NR	NA
Guam	NR	NA
Northern Mariana Islands	NR	NR
Puerto Rico	NR	•
Virgin Islands	NR	NA

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: American Samoa Senate and House, District of Columbia Council, Guam Senate, Northern Mariana Islands Senate and House, Puerto Rico Senate and Virgin Islands Senate.

NA=Not applicable. The District of Columbia Council and the Guam, Nebraska and Virgin Islands legislatures are unicameral.

Table 06-1.8 2006 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	•
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	•
California	•	•
Colorado	•	•
Connecticut	•	•
Delaware	•	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	•	•
Hawaii	•	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	•	•
Iowa	•	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	•
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	•	•
Maryland	•	•
Massachusetts	•	•
Michigan	•	•
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	•	•
Missouri	•	•
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	•	•
New Jersey	•	•
New Mexico	•	•
New York	•	NR
North Carolina	•	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	•
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	NR	•
South Carolina	•	•
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	•
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•



**Table 06-1.8 2006 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	•
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	•
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	NR	•
U.S. Territories		
American Samoa	NR	NR
District of Columbia	NR	NA
Guam	NR	NA
Northern Mariana Islands	NR	NR
Puerto Rico	NR	NR
Virgin Islands	NR	NA

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: New York Assembly, Rhode Island Senate, Wyoming Senate, American Samoa Senate and House, District of Columbia Council, Guam Senate, Northern Mariana Islands Senate and House, Puerto Rico Senate and House, and Virgin Islands Senate.

NA=Not applicable. The District of Columbia Council and the Guam, Nebraska and Virgin Islands legislatures are unicameral.

Table 08-1.9 2008 Survey Respondents

State	Senate	House
Alabama	•	•
Alaska	•	•
Arizona	•	•
Arkansas	•	•
California	•	•
Colorado	NR	•
Connecticut	•	NR
Delaware	NR	•
Florida	•	•
Georgia	•	•
Hawaii	•	•
Idaho	•	•
Illinois	•	•
Indiana	NR	•
Iowa	•	•
Kansas	•	•
Kentucky	•	•
Louisiana	•	•
Maine	NR	NR
Maryland	•	NR
Massachusetts	•	•
Michigan	•	NR
Minnesota	•	•
Mississippi	•	•
Missouri	•	•
Montana	•	•
Nebraska	•	NA
Nevada	•	•
New Hampshire	NR	•
New Jersey	•	NR
New Mexico	•	•
New York	•	NR
North Carolina	•	•
North Dakota	•	•
Ohio	•	•
Oklahoma	•	•
Oregon	•	•
Pennsylvania	•	•
Rhode Island	NR	•
South Carolina	•	•
South Dakota	•	•
Tennessee	•	•
Texas	•	•
Utah	•	•

**Table 08-1.9 2008 Survey Respondents, cont'd.**

State	Senate	House
Vermont	•	•
Virginia	•	•
Washington	•	•
West Virginia	•	•
Wisconsin	•	•
Wyoming	•	•
U.S. Territories		
American Samoa	NR	NR
District of Columbia	NR	NA
Guam	NR	NA
Northern Mariana Islands	NR	NR
Puerto Rico	•	NR
Virgin Islands	NR	NA

**Key:**

NR=No response. The following chambers did not return a survey: Colorado Senate, Connecticut House, Delaware Senate, Indiana Senate, Maine Senate and House, Maryland House, Michigan House, New Hampshire Senate, New Jersey General Assembly, New York Assembly, Rhode Island Senate, American Samoa Senate and House, District of Columbia Council, Guam Senate, Northern Mariana Islands Senate and House, Puerto Rico House and Virgin Islands Senate.

NA=Not applicable. The District of Columbia Council and the Guam, Nebraska and Virgin Islands legislatures are unicameral.