

## Sponsorship Limits for Legislation

Ideas for legislation may be suggested by anyone—constituents, state agencies, political subdivisions or advocacy groups, to name a few. But many legislatures require that bills and resolutions be introduced into the process by a senator or a representative, either acting individually or with other members. In most cases, the original sponsor of a bill or resolution will circulate it to obtain signatures of additional supporters (co-sponsors), which hopefully will give the legislation a much better chance of passage. Four-fifths of the legislative bodies allow an author to gather an unlimited number of legislator signatures as co-sponsors. Eleven chambers, however, restrict the total number of signatures (including the main author's); they are:

Indiana House (4)	North Dakota Senate and House (6)
Minnesota Senate and House (5)	West Virginia House (7)
New Hampshire Senate (10)	Wyoming Senate and House (15)
New Hampshire House (5)	New Mexico Senate (5)

So that bill authors will solicit their co-authors more quickly, more than half the legislative chambers impose a deadline for adding co-sponsor names to a bill. The chambers that have set such a time limit are:

Alabama Senate and House	New Mexico Senate
Alaska Senate and House	North Carolina House
Arizona House	North Dakota Senate and House
California Senate	Ohio Senate
Colorado Senate and House	Oklahoma House
Connecticut Senate and House	Oregon House
Hawaii Senate and House	Pennsylvania House
Illinois House	South Carolina House
Iowa Senate and House	South Dakota Senate and House
Kansas Senate and House	Tennessee Senate and House
Maine Senate and House	Texas House
Maryland Senate	Utah Senate and House
Michigan Senate	Vermont Senate and House
Mississippi House	Virginia Senate and House
Missouri Senate and House	Washington Senate and House
Montana Senate and House	West Virginia Senate and House
Nevada Senate and Assembly	Wyoming House
New Hampshire Senate and House	

Printing cost is cited as another reason that legislatures set time limits for adding bill co-sponsors. As shown by table 96-3.4, sponsor deadlines often correspond to the times when bills normally are printed, thereby saving money to reprint a bill just because another legislator signed in support.

As indicated above, 80 percent of state legislatures allow an unlimited number of authors and co-authors, but some of these chambers do not print all the legislators' names on the legislation. The California Assembly does not list any names on a bill, and the Texas Senate shows only the chief author. The Georgia House, Rhode Island Senate and Texas House list only the chief sponsor and up to four co-sponsors. The New Mexico Senate not only limits the number of lawmakers who can author legislation, it also does not print any names on a bill.

**Table 96-3.4 Examples of Sponsor Deadlines**

<b>Upon introduction or the day of introduction:</b>	
Alabama Senate and House	North Carolina House
Arizona House	North Dakota Senate and House
Hawaii Senate and House	South Carolina House
Iowa Senate	South Dakota Senate and House
Kansas Senate and House	Vermont Senate and House
Maine House	Washington Senate and House
Nevada Senate and Assembly	West Virginia Senate and House
New Hampshire House	
<b>Prior to committee hearing or report:</b>	
Mississippi House	New Hampshire Senate
Montana Senate and House	
<b>Prior to crossover to the other chamber:</b>	
Ohio Senate	Wyoming House
Utah House	
<b>Upon passage:</b>	
Colorado Senate and House	
Iowa House	Texas House
Tennessee House	Virginia House
<b>Prior to enrolling, perfecting or other printing:</b>	
Alaska Senate and House	Pennsylvania House
Maine Senate	Tennessee Senate
Missouri Senate and House	

