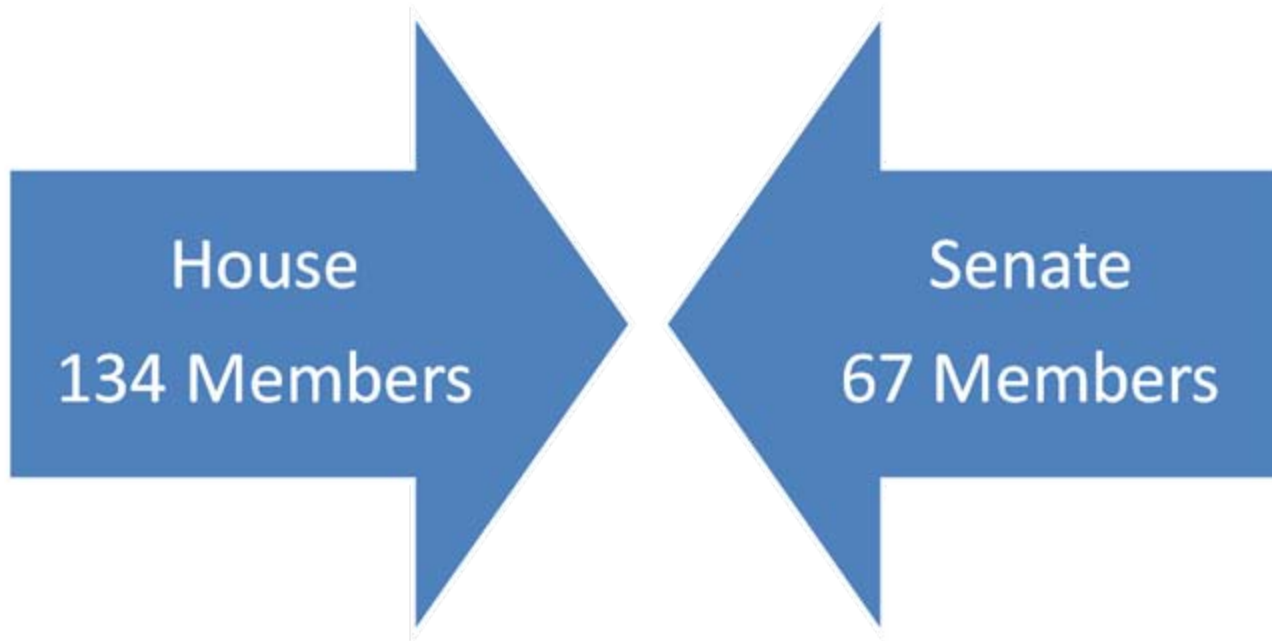


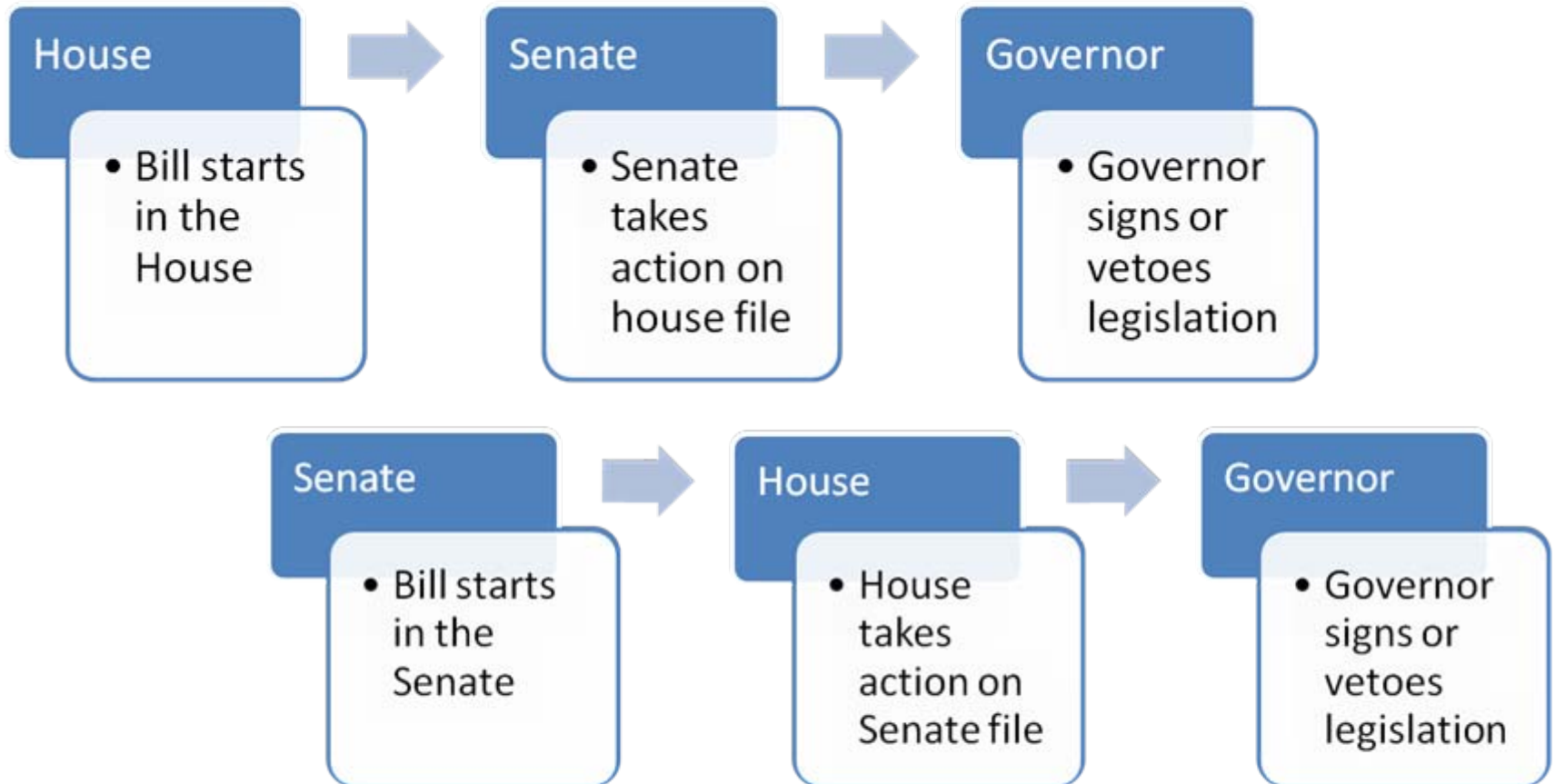
# Legislative Process 101



# The State Legislature has Two Bodies



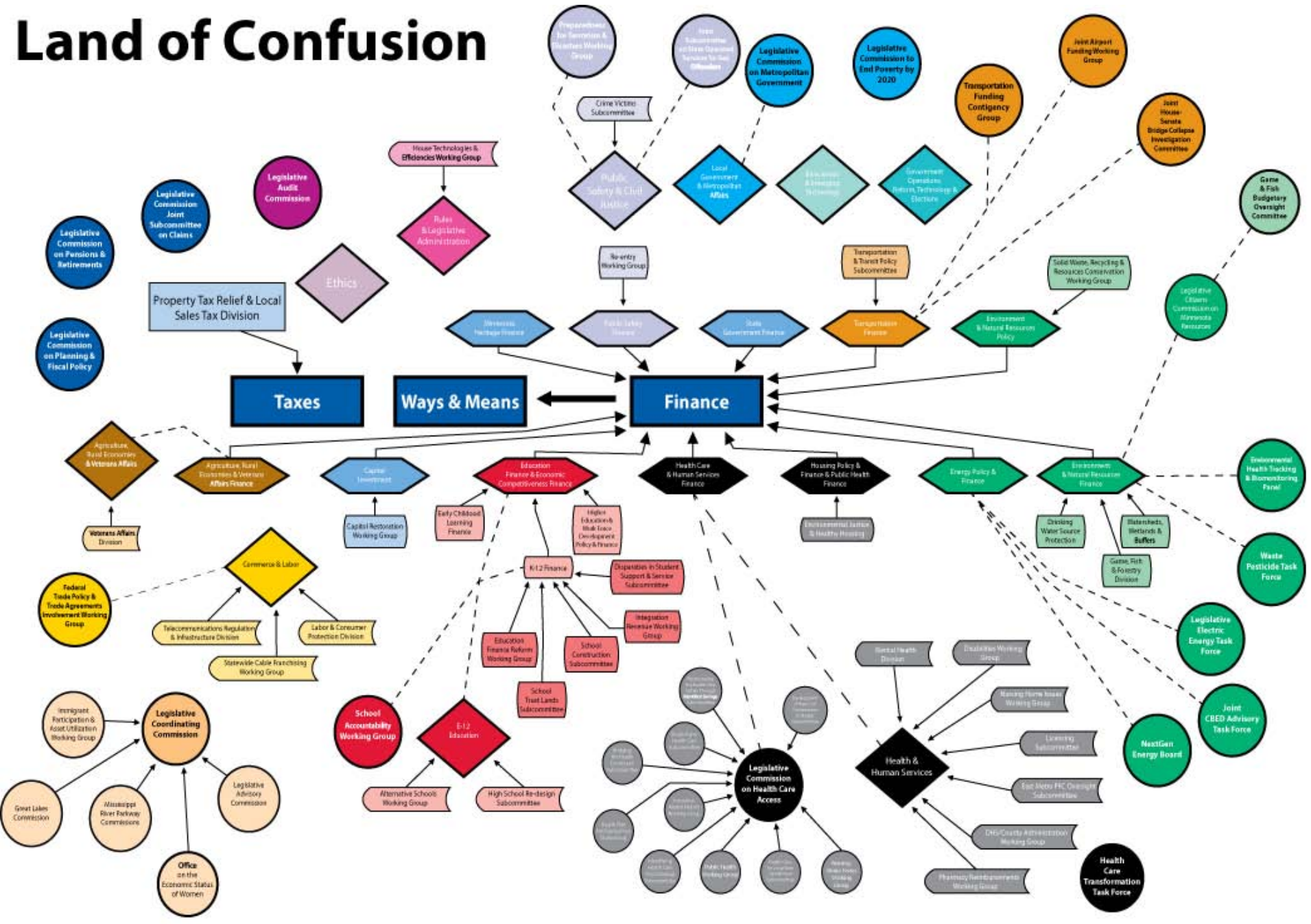
# Simple Explanation of the Legislative Process



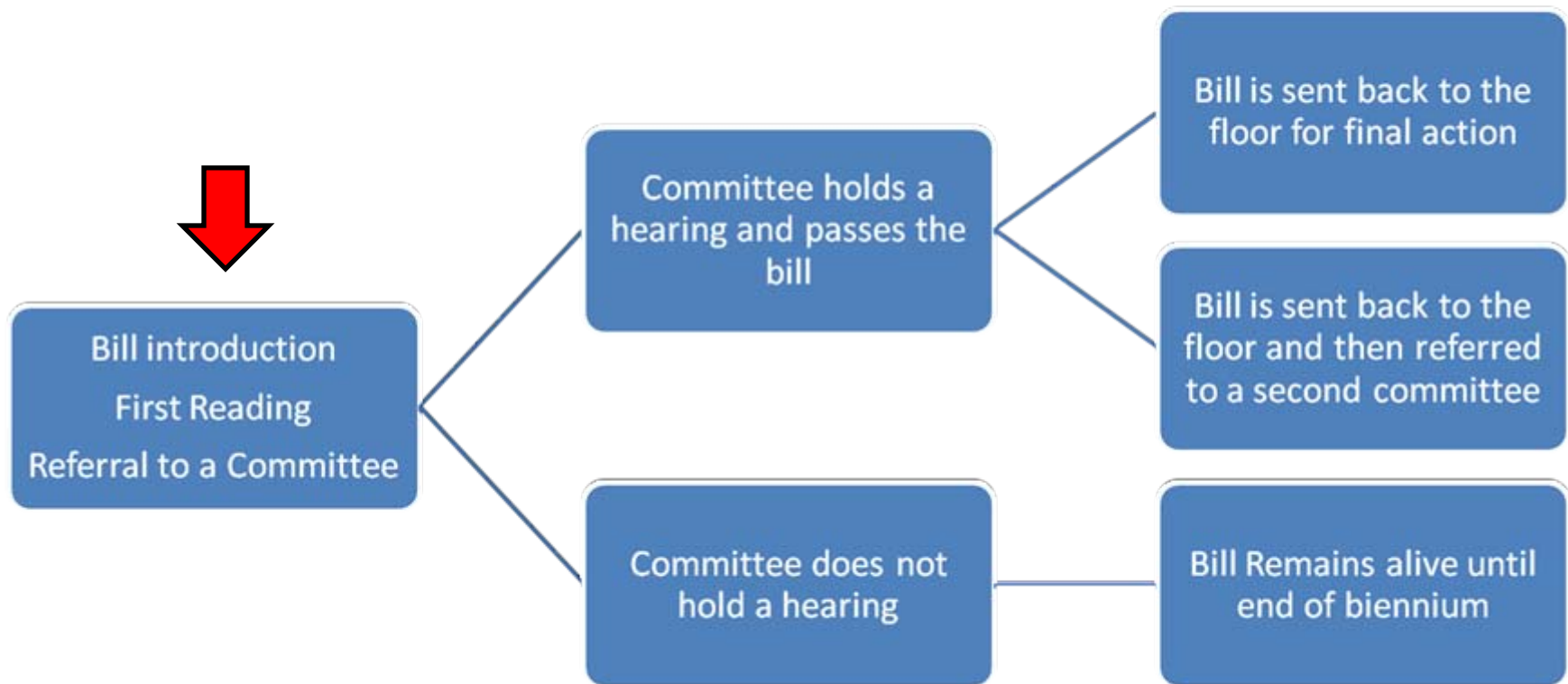
# Minnesota Operates on a Two-Year Legislative Cycle

- The legislature takes action on the state budget in the odd years. (2007, 2005 etc.)
- The legislature takes action on the bonding bill in even years. (2008, 2006 etc.)
- Bills are alive for two years until the end of the biennium.
- The current legislative session began January 3, 2007 and will end May 19, 2008.

# Land of Confusion



# All bills are referred to a committee at the beginning of the process



# A Bill for an Act...

**H.F. No. 2710, as introduced – 85th Legislative Session (2007-2008)**

Posted on Jan 31, 2008

1.1 A bill for an act

1.2 relating to state government; designating the Black Angus

1.3 as the state Cow; proposing coding for new law

1.4 in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 1.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF

1.6 MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. [1.1499] [STATE COW.]

1.8 The Black Angus (Bos Taurus) is the official

1.9 Cow of the state of Minnesota.

2.1 The sum of \$100,000 is appropriated from the

2.2 general fund to promote awareness of cows.

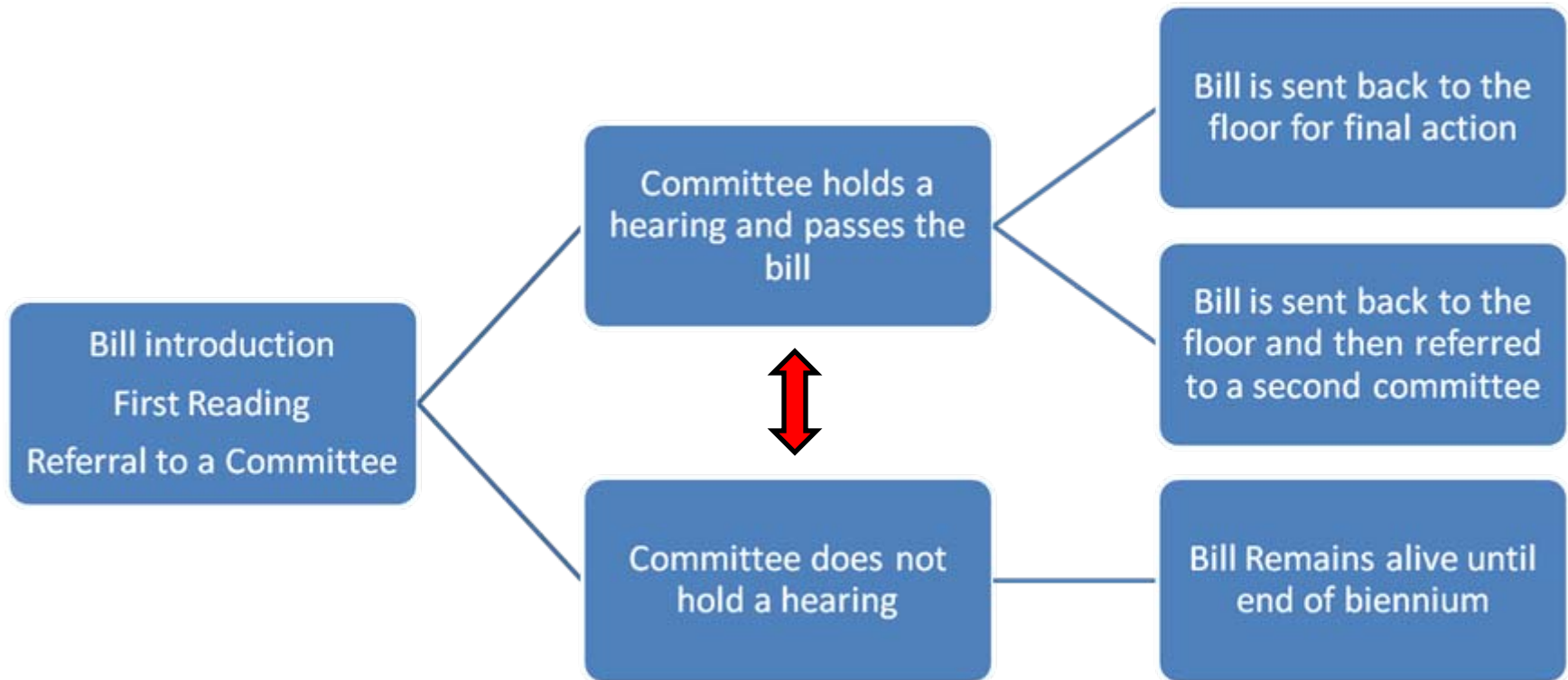


# Who Decides Where Bills Go?

- Each committee has a distinct jurisdiction which is posted on the committee website
- Bills are generally referred to the committee that seems most relevant
- Other committee chairs can request that a bill be brought before their committee
- All spending bills must go through either the tax committee or the finance committee or both
- HF2710 is first being sent to the Agriculture, Rural Economies and Veterans Affairs Committee



# Step 2: The Committee(s)



**H.F. No. 2710, as introduced – 85th Legislative Session (2007-2008)**

Posted on Jan 31, 2008

- 1.1 A bill for an act
- 1.2 relating to state government; designating the Black Angus
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1.8 The Black Angus (Bos Taurus) is the official

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2.1 The sum of \$100,000 is appropriated from the

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**Amendments?**



**H.F. No. 2710, as introduced – 85th Legislative Session (2007-2008)**

Posted on Jan 31, 2008

- 1.1 A bill for an act
- 1.2 relating to state government; designating the ~~Black Angus~~ Holstein
- 1.3 as the state Cow; proposing coding for new law
- 1.4 in Minnesota Statutes, chapter 1.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF

1.6 MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. [1.1499] [STATE COW.]

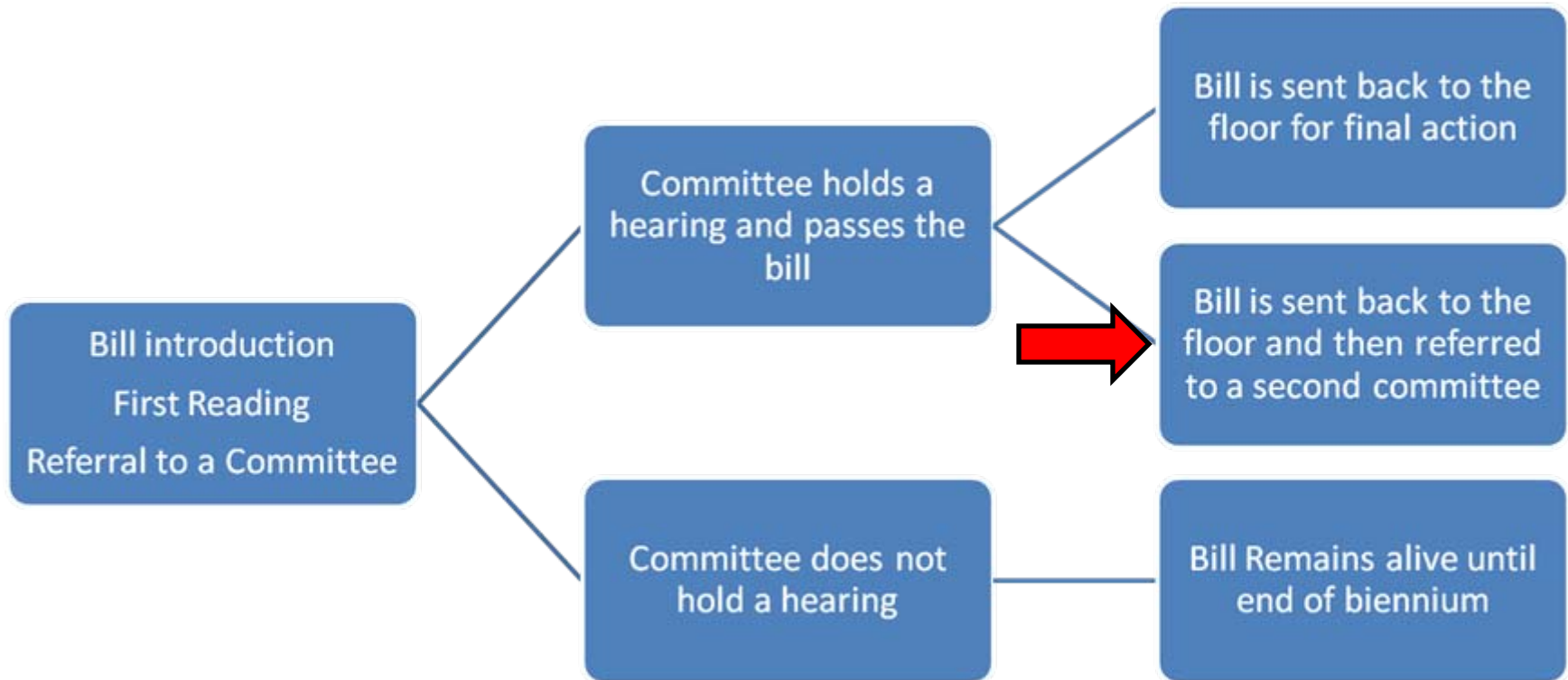
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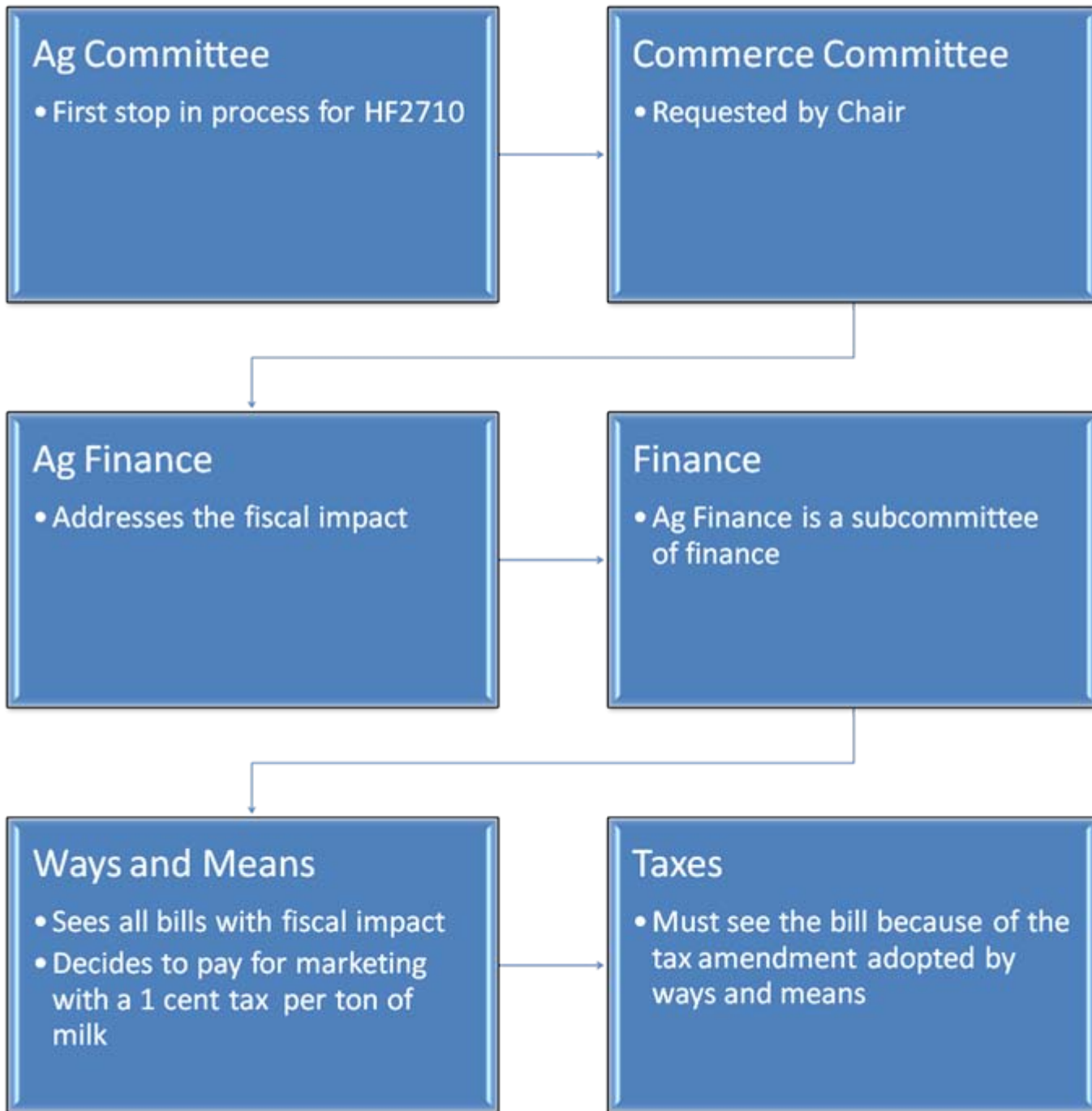
2.2 general fund to promote awareness of cows.

# Step 2: The Committee(s)



# Deadlines

- First Deadline: A committee in either body must act favorably on a piece of legislation
- Second Deadline: A committee in the remaining body must act favorably on the legislation
- Third Deadline: Action must be taken on finance bills
- Bills that don't meet deadlines must go through the rules committee



# On the Floor

## Second Reading

Signals the conclusion of the committee process and places the bill on the general register.



## Floor Debate

Legislators argue merits of bills, make amendments and amend amendments



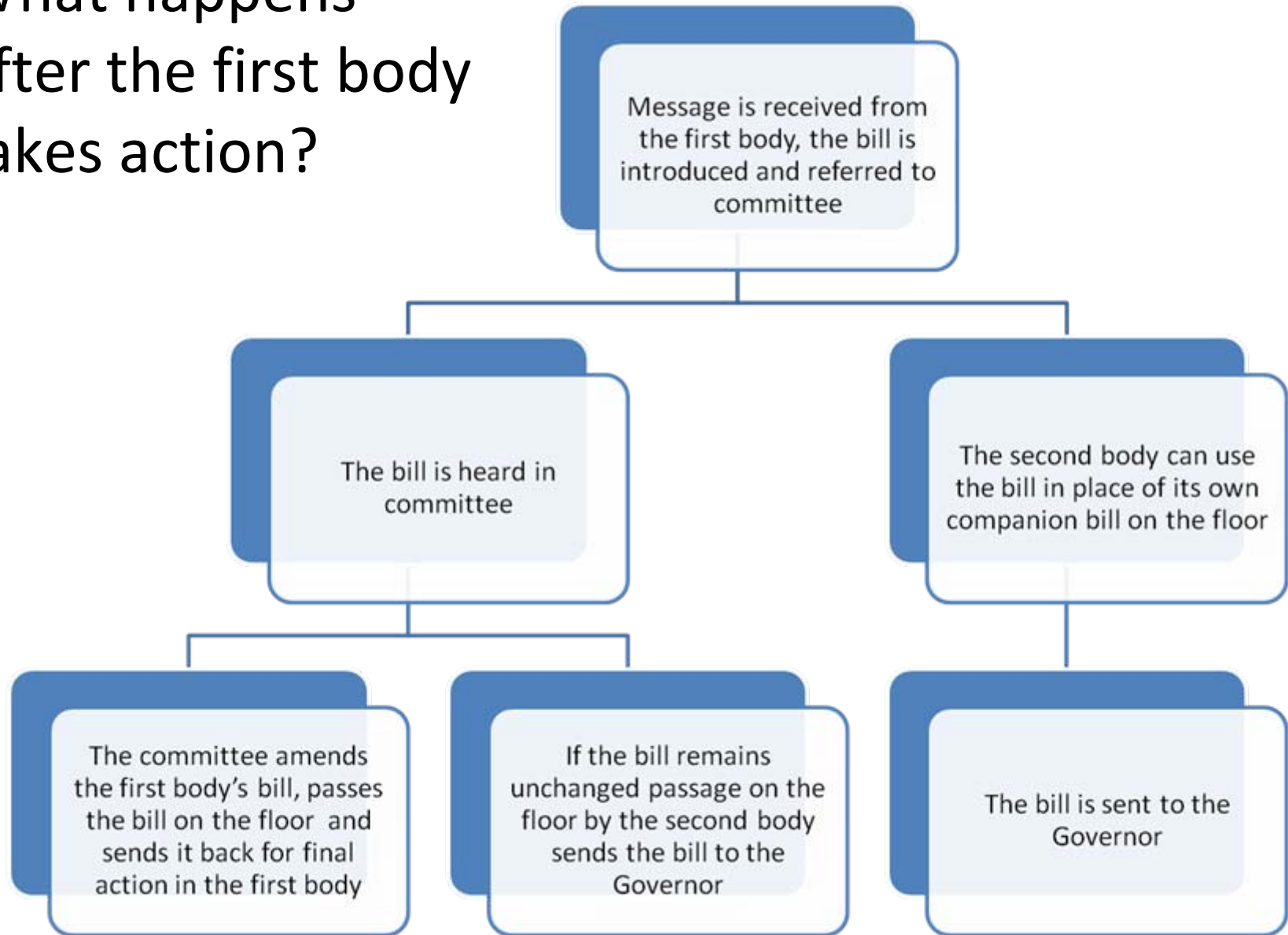
## Third Reading

The bill is now in its final form, no amendments are allowed unless there is unanimous consent within the body

# Passage of Bills

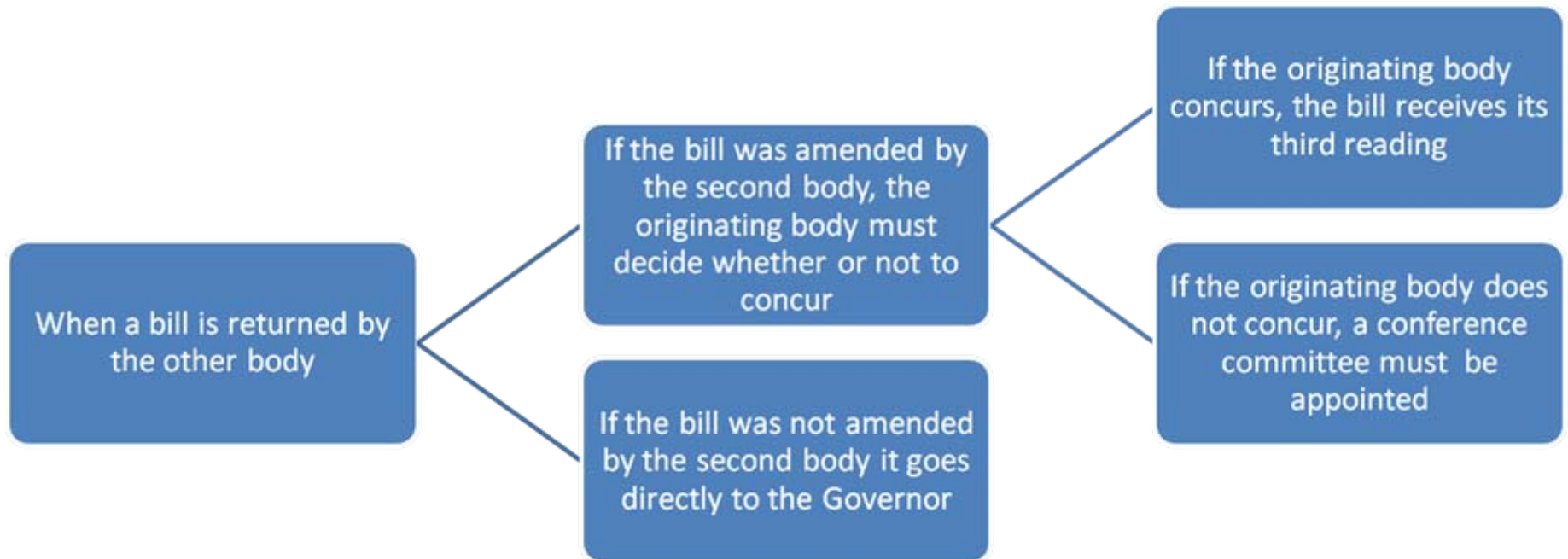
- A simple majority is required for most bills
- 68 members of the House are a simple majority
- 34 Senators are a simple majority
- Bonding bills require the support of at least 60% of the legislature and constitutional amendments require the support of at least 2/3 of each body

# What happens after the first body takes action?





# When bills are returned to the House of Origin



# Conference Committees

- Largely influenced by Caucus Leadership
- Tends to be a less open process and is difficult to influence
- Most commonly used for bills that are controversial or when the House and Senate have strong differences in their positions
- The conference committee report cannot be amended by either body, it must be voted up or down on the floor
- Final passage of a conference committee report by both bodies sends the bill to the Governor

# Actions by the Governor

## Sign Into Law

- If the Governor signs a bill it becomes law on its effective date.

## Return Veto

- The Governor can veto an appropriation or an entire act
- It takes a 2/3 majority in both bodies to override a veto

## Neither Sign nor Veto

- During session, a bill that is not signed or vetoed by the Governor becomes law automatically
- At the end of session a law that is neither signed nor vetoed by the Governor becomes vetoed automatically

# Other FAQs About the Legislature

- What are caucuses and what is their impact?
- Who decides what committees to have and who should serve on them?
- What is the role of lobbyists and how much influence do they have?
- Other questions?