

The General Assembly is required to pass at each regular session a budget bill which shall contain the budget for the State Government for the next fiscal year. Upon the passage of the bill by both Houses, it becomes law without further action (III, 52).

The General Assembly has power to pass such laws as are necessary for the welfare of the State, and in addition it has the power to pass public local laws for counties, towns, or special taxing areas. The General Assembly may establish such departments of the State Government as are necessary for its efficient operation and may establish special taxing districts or areas within the State for the purpose of administering a special function or functions. The General Assembly may establish such taxes as are in accordance with the Constitution of the State and of the United States. It may propose amendments to the State Constitution, which must be embodied in a regular legislative bill and passed by three-fifths of the total membership of each House. All amendments to the Constitution must be submitted to the voters at the next general election after its passage.

All bills passed by the General Assembly become Law when signed by the Governor or passed over his veto by three-fifths of the membership of each House, on the first day of June after the session in which the law was passed; except, (1) when a later date is specified in the act or (2) when the bill is declared an emergency measure and passed by three-fifths of the total number of members of each house, in which case the bill becomes law immediately upon its approval by the Governor.

The General Assembly may add a referendum provision to any local bill but may not submit a state-wide bill to referendum (with the exception of a Soldiers' Bonus Bill). Any state-wide bill, except an appropriation bill, and any local bill which concerns a county or Baltimore City may be submitted to a referendum by petition. No bill subject to a referendum shall be enforceable until approved by a majority of the voters at the election in which the referred bill is voted upon, except an emergency bill which shall be effective immediately but shall remain effective thirty days following its rejection by the voters (XVI).

The House of Delegates shall have sole power of impeachment of any officer of the State. A bill of impeachment must be approved by a majority of the whole number of members of the House. The Senate shall try all impeachment cases, and a verdict of guilty must be concurred in by two-thirds of the total number of Senators (III, 26). The Senate has the additional power to confirm officers appointed by the Governor as may be provided by the Constitution or by the act creating such office.

The State Treasurer is elected by a joint ballot of both Houses every fourth year. The General Assembly also elects the Governor in case of a tie or ineligibility of the winning candidate; and should the office become vacant while it is in session, then the General Assembly shall elect a successor; otherwise, the President of the Senate succeeds to the office until the next regular session.

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| Appropriations     | 1953      | 1954      |
| General Fund ..... | \$683,557 | \$452,820 |

Staff: 42.