



Allegheny County Council

County of Allegheny
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Legislation Text

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Motion of the Council of Allegheny County amending and supplementing the Rules of Council, Article IV, Rule B, in order to establish a uniform mechanism for the consideration of written motions.

Whereas, Allegheny County Council members do, from time to time, introduce written motions expressing the sense of Council regarding issues of significance; and

Whereas, these motions often relate to issues that require careful consideration and through evaluation before voting upon them, and have recently involved subject matter as diverse as teaching Critical Race Theory, Federal budgeting priorities, commercial vehicle size regulations, minimum wage rates, interstate bridge tolling, transgendered scholastic athlete participation, and potential court diversion programs for avoiding evictions during the COVID-19 pandemic, among many others; and

Whereas, the existing Rules of Council, specifically Article IV, Rule B requires committee consideration of ordinances and resolutions prior to a final vote on those matters, but does not extend this requirement to motions;

Whereas, it is the desire of Council to clarify the importance of thorough evaluation of the subject matter of motions prior to casting a final vote on them by extending the second reading requirement of Article IV, Rule B to written, non-procedural motions;

The Council of the County of Allegheny therefore hereby moves as follows:

For the reasons delineated herein, the Rules of Council, Article IV, Rule B., is hereby amended as follows:

B. Legislative Action

1. No ordinance, ~~or~~ resolution, or written motion not exclusively relating to a matter of meeting procedure shall be considered until it is given a first reading, referred to a committee, printed for the use of the members, returned from committee, and given second reading, unless:
 - i. A motion to waive the second reading is approved by two-thirds of the seated members of Council;
 - ii. A motion to pull a bill from committee is approved by two-thirds of the seated members of Council, if such motion is made fewer than sixty (60) days from the date of the first reading of the bill; or
 - iii. A motion to pull a bill from committee is approved by a majority of the seated members of Council, if such motion is made after sixty (60) days from the date of the first reading of the bill.

2. All proposed ordinances, resolutions, and motions introduced to Council for a final vote shall be passed by an affirmative vote of the majority of the seated members of Council unless the legislative action requires an affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the seated members of Council, as follows:
 - i. A motion intended to override a veto by the Chief Executive;
 - ii. A resolution to authorize inquiries and investigations; or
 - iii. An ordinance levying taxes.
 - iv. An ordinance creating a new fee for county services or increasing an existing county fee.
3. In lieu of a vote of approval, Council may hold any piece of legislation until a future designated time by an affirmative vote of a majority of the seated members of Council. All motions to hold must contain a specified time period or condition upon which the bill will be brought before the full Council for reconsideration.
4. Council may also table any piece of legislation by an affirmative vote of a majority of the seated members of Council. An affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the seated members of Council is require to untable a bill.
5. All proposed motions, resolutions, and ordinances may be withdrawn by the primary sponsor or primary sponsors at any time before a vote is called. For the purposes of this section, a "primary sponsor" shall be defined as any Council Member who initially requested a bill to be drafted. If more than one member made the initial request, all such Members must request the ordinance, resolution, or motion be withdrawn. Any Council Member requesting to be added as a sponsor after a bill is either (1) circulated to the full Council for co-sponsorship or (2) placed upon the agenda for introduction shall be deemed to be a co-sponsor. Any other individual authorized to introduce legislation by these rules may also be a primary or cosponsor of legislation.