



GLOSSARY OF LEGISLATIVE TERMS

Adjournment: “Hitting the Snooze Button”

Just like hitting snooze ends your day for now, adjournment pauses the legislative work until the next session, while "sine die" is like turning off the alarm for good—it's the final call with no set time to restart.

Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.): “The Recipe Book”

These statutes are like Arizona's official recipe book, filled with the exact ingredients (laws) needed to run the state smoothly.

Bill: “The Blueprint”

A bill is like a zygote – a baby law still in development. Passage by the state legislature followed by signature by the governor is the birthing process.

Bipartisan: “A Two-Handed High Five”

Bipartisan cooperation is like two hands coming together for a high five—both sides, Democrat and Republican, must work together for it to succeed.

Caucus: “Team Huddle”

A caucus is like a team huddle where members gather to discuss strategies before they go back into the game. There is a Republican Caucus, a Democratic Caucus, a Native American Caucus, and others.

Chair: “The Orchestra Conductor”

The chair is like the conductor of an orchestra, making sure everyone plays in harmony during committee meetings.

COW, Committee of the Whole: “The Big Family Dinner”

COW is like a big family dinner where everyone gathers at the table (House or Senate) to discuss and decide on important matters together.

Concurrent Resolution: “The Unaccompanied Duet”

A concurrent resolution is a duet of opinion, when both chambers of the state legislature issue an expression of opinion, will, or intent to resolve. A concurrent resolution can provide for the submittal of a referendum to voters, initiate legislative action to amend the state or federal constitution, or express regret at the death of a public figure. Concurrent resolutions are not signed by the Governor.



Consensus: “Finding the Perfect Playlist”

Consensus is like agreeing on a playlist that everyone can vibe with, even if it's not everyone's first choice.

Convene: “Turning on the Lights”

Convening a meeting is like flipping the light switch to start the day's work.

Cosponsor: “The Co-Pilot”

A cosponsor is like the co-pilot of a plane, helping guide the bill along with the main sponsor.

District: “A Puzzle Piece”

A district is like a puzzle piece in the larger picture of Arizona, each represented by one Senator and two Representatives.

Do Pass: “The Green Light”

A "Do Pass" is like getting a green light at an intersection, signaling that the bill is good to move onto the next step in the process.

Effective Date: “The Start of the Movie”

The effective date is like the moment the movie starts—when a bill officially begins to play out in real life as a law in effect. In Arizona, laws that are not signed or vetoed within five days of transmission from the Legislature go into effect ten days after legislative session adjournment.

Emergency Bill: “The Fire Alarm”

An emergency bill is like pulling the fire alarm—it needs immediate action to address a critical situation.

Engrossed Bill: “The Final Draft”

An engrossed bill is like the final draft of a book, ready for others to read and approve.

First Reading: “The Pitch”

The first reading is like the pitch of an idea to make a movie, giving a preview of what it could be. And there may or may not be a second reading... or a third.



Hearing: “The Interview”

A hearing is like an interview where a committee asks questions and gathers information before deciding.

Regular Session: “The School Year”

The regular session is like the school year—starts on a set date (January), but the end (adjournment sine die) isn’t fixed.

Request to Speak: “Facebook for Bills” but Serious

The “Request to Speak” (RTS) system is where you can weigh in online with what you like, what you don’t like, and why. Your thumbs up, thumbs down, and any additional commentary is provided to lawmakers before committee hearings and full votes.

Second Reading: “The Second Pitch”

The second reading is like a second pitch of the idea for the movie after getting feedback from the First Reading - where the bill gets another look before moving forward.

Sine Die: “The Curtain Call”

Sine die is like the curtain call at the end of a play—everything wraps up, and there’s no set time for another performance.

Sponsor: “The Lead Architect”

The sponsor is like the lead architect, designing and introducing the blueprint (bill) for a new law.

Standing Committee: “The Assembly Line”

A standing committee is like an assembly line where bills are reviewed and fine-tuned before moving forward.

Statute: “The Law in a Tux”

A statute is just fancy talk for law. And statutory is just another word for “according to the law.”

Strike Everything Amendment (Striker): “The Plot Twist”

A striker is like a plot twist in a story where everything suddenly changes, possibly going in a new direction. Think Sixth Sense plot twist; it’s that big a deal.



Subcommittee: “The Special Task Force”

A subcommittee is like a special task force focusing on one specific issue and reporting back to the larger committee.

Sunset: “The Expiration Date”

Sunset is like the expiration date on a product—when the time is up, the agency or program automatically ends. Several state agencies are also subject to a sunrise/sunset process, when agencies are audited and scopes of work and practice redefined.

TBD: “The Blank Calendar”

TBD is like having a blank calendar date—something is planned, but the details haven’t been filled in yet.

Third Reading: “The Final Hard-Core Sales Pitch”

The third reading is like the final sales pitch to get a bill Greenlit, where it gets its last review before passing or failing in a full vote.

