

Helpful Definitions

What is a Bill?

It is the form used for most legislation. A bill that begins in the House is labeled "H.R." which stands for "House of Representatives" and then is given a number that stays the same for the entire legislative process. Once an identical bill is approved by both the House and the Senate it is presented to the President for action. Note that a bill that begins in the Senate is labeled 'S.' which stands for Senate.

What are Joint Resolutions?

A joint resolution can start in either the Senate or the House. There is very little difference between a Joint Resolution and a Bill except for a Joint Resolution that proposes an amendment to the Constitution. In the case of a Joint Resolution that proposes an amendment to the Constitution, it does not get presented to the President but rather once it has obtained a 2/3 vote in both the House and the Senate it gets passed onto the States for ratification. A Joint Resolution that begins in the House is labeled "H.J.Res." followed by its number and one that begins in the Senate is labeled 'S.Res.' followed by its number.

What are Concurrent Resolutions?

Concurrent Resolutions are those that deal with the operating issues that affect both the House and the Senate. Once the resolutions are approved by the House and the Senate they are signed by the Clerk of the House and the Secretary of the Senate but are not presented to the President for approval. A Concurrent Resolution that begins in the House is labeled "H.Con.Res." followed by its number and one that begins in the Senate is labeled 'S.Con.Res.' followed by its number.

What is a Simple Resolution?

A simple resolution is that which deals with the operation of either the House or the Senate. It is not presented to the President. A simple resolution that starts in the House is labeled "H.Res." followed by its number and one that begins in the Senate is labeled 'S.Res.' followed by its number.

All above information was taken from the United States House of Representatives Website