



National E-Congress 2023

Teacher Instructions

Dear Educator,

Welcome to YLI's National E-Congress! Examine this document closely and keep it as a reference, as it will guide you through each phase of our legislative simulation. If you cannot find the answers to your questions here, YLI staff will happily assist you. Contact us by email at [ylihelp@virginia.edu](mailto:ylihlp@virginia.edu) or by telephone toll free at 866.514.8389.

User's Guide Contents

National E-Congress 2023 Important Dates	Page 2
Before You Register	
E-Congress Overview	Page 5
Planning for E-Congress	Page 5
Considering the My E-Congress option.....	Page 5
Getting Started	
Register for the National E-Congress	Page 6
Preparing your classes to participate	Page 6
Setting up your class lists and assigning bills.....	Page 6
The Teacher's Role in the National E-Congress	
A note from Meg Heubeck and Daman Irby, YLI Staff.....	Page 10
E-Congress Planning Guides	
Phase I: Introduction	Page 11
Phase II: Research	Page 12
Phase III: Writing	Page 13
Phase IV: Committee.....	Page 15
Phase V: Amendment	Page 18
Phase VI: House Floor	Page 20
Life of an E-Congress Bill	Page 21
Frequently Asked Questions	Page 22
E-Congress Do's and Don'ts	Page 23

2023 National E-Congress Weekly Guide of Important Dates

Because E-Congress is an interactive simulation involving classrooms nationwide, YLI asks that teachers help us keep the program running smoothly by planning ahead and observing deadlines.

Date	Day	E-Congress Calendar	Teacher Responsibilities	YLI suggestions and comments
WEEK 1 & 2: JANUARY 4-7, JANUARY 8-14				
4-Jan	Wednesday	E-Congress registration, Introduction, Research and Writing Phases are Open	Log in to www.youthleadership.net and click E-Congress on the Dashboard page. Then click the National E-Congresses tab and then “ Join ” to register. Create class rosters and assign students to individual or group bills. Students may begin work.	Print and read the E-Congress Teacher Instructions and check your school's calendar before committing to E-Congress. Students may begin work immediately but cannot write their bill until you have assigned them to an individual or group bill.
WEEK 3: JANUARY 15-21 (NOTE: The YLI Office is Closed on Monday, January 16 in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day)				
18-Jan	Wednesday		Rosters should be created and students assigned to bill numbers by today in order for them to have enough time to complete the writing of their bills.	Students should complete the political ideology survey by today and continue making progress.
WEEK 4, 5, & 6: JANUARY 22-28, JANUARY 29-FEBRUARY 4, FEBRUARY 5-11				
22-Jan thru 11-Feb	Monday thru Friday each week	Heart of Writing Phase	Continue to have students work on completing their bills.	This is the heart of the Writing Phase of E-Congress, and your students should be making great strides toward the completion of their bills.
8-Feb	Wednesday		Have students submit their bills to you by today so that you can review them before the deadline.	YLI will not be open during the weekend so please contact us with beforehand if you have questions.
WEEK 7: FEBRUARY 12-18				
13-Feb	Monday	<u>Submit all completed bills to YLI by the end of today.</u>	Select those bills you would like to submit to YLI. From the Monitor Progress page, click on any links that say Teacher Review Finished Work , and after reviewing the bill, click Send to YLI .	Please do not wait until the last minute to do this step. Bills not sent to YLI by today <u>cannot</u> be included in the Committee Phase. If you need help meeting the deadline, please contact YLI.
16-Feb	Thursday	Committee Phase opens	Log in and view the Committee page. This will show you all bills assigned to your class(es). Please review and vote on these bills ASAP. The deadline is Wednesday, March 1.	If you would like to do this step in the classroom, print out copies of the Bill Review Guide and the bills themselves for your students.

WEEK 8: FEBRUARY 19-25				
20-24 Feb	Monday thru Friday	Review and vote on all assigned bills	Enter comments and votes on the bills assigned to your class(es) for Committee review. <u>All bills regardless of outcome (Approved, Rejected, or Returned to Author for Amendment) must receive comments</u> as to why. Bills returned for amendment should include a specific amendment proposal as the comment.	All bills <u>MUST</u> be reviewed. Please make sure all comments are constructive in nature (i.e. not sarcastic & include reasoning behind result). Only one unified comment should be given per bill. Only YOU may cast the vote for those who reviewed the bill.
WEEKS 9: FEBRUARY 26-MARCH 4				
1-Mar	Wednesday	Committee Phase Ends	All bills assigned to your Committee(s) must have their comments/amendments entered (and approved if written by a student) and votes cast by this day.	All bills <u>MUST</u> be reviewed. Please make sure all comments are constructive in nature. Only one unified comment should be given per bill. Only YOU may cast the vote for those who reviewed the bill.
2-Mar	Thursday	Amendment Phase Begins	Log in to see if any of your students' bills have received a proposal to amend. Vote to accept or reject amendments or negotiate with the other class. Continue to respond to the authors of the bills your students amended.	This is the phase of E-Congress where your students <u>debate and compromise with the class that proposed amendments</u> to your students' bills and the authors of the bills they proposed to amend. Log in daily to see if your students need to respond to an amendment proposal and see if any bills your class voted to amend have come back to you.
WEEK 10: MARCH 5-11 (NOTE: THE YLI OFFICE IS CLOSED ON FRIDAY, MARCH 10)				
6-10 Mar	Monday thru Friday	Heart of Amendment Phase	Log in regularly to see if any of your students' bills have received a proposal to amend. Vote to accept or reject amendments or negotiate with the other class. Continue to respond to the authors of the bills your students amended.	This is the phase of E-Congress where your students <u>debate and compromise with the class that proposed amendments</u> to your students' bills and the authors of the bills they proposed to amend. Log in daily to see if your students need to respond to an amendment proposal and see if any bills your class voted to amend have come back to you.
WEEK 11: MARCH 12-18				
15-Mar	Wednesday	Last day to accept/reject proposed amendments	Any of your students who have a bill pending Amendment must either accept or reject the proposed amendments.	It is vital that you submit a final vote on amended bills both from your class and the bills which you reviewed. Please check the status of your assigned bills and your students' bills throughout the day.
16-Mar	Wednesday	House Floor opens	Have students log in to www.youthleadership.net and vote on the bills in the House Floor.	This works well in areas where each student has computer access or after school as homework. Every student votes independently (i.e. not as a group).

WEEK 12: MARCH 19-25				
20-25 Mar	All week	Heart of House Floor Phase	Have students log in to www.youthleadership.net and vote on the bills in the House Floor.	In areas where each student has computer access at home, this works well in a virtual environment or as homework.
WEEK 13: MARCH 26-31				
30-Mar	Thursday	House Floor closes at 5PM Eastern	Have students log in and vote on the bills in the House Floor on or before today.	
31-Mar	Friday	Results Posted Online	Log in at www.youthleadership.net and visit the National E-Congress page to view results	

Before You Register

E-Congress Overview

E-Congress is a multi-phase simulation that guides students step-by-step through the legislative process.

- Phase I: Introduction – learn about the legislative process
- Phase II: Research – explore topics and formulate ideas for writing a bill
- Phase III: Writing – write original legislation
- Phase IV: Committee– review bills from around the country in classroom committees. Vote to Approve, Reject, or Return to Author for Amendment.
- Phase V: Amendment – Your students debate their bills’ amendments proposals and respond to the amended bills that they voted on in Committee.
- Phase VI: House Floor – vote individually and view results on the YLI website

Planning for E-Congress

We encourage teachers to plan carefully for this challenging and exciting simulation. Is the National E-Congress right for you and your students? This checklist will help you to decide.

- **View the demo:** Preview the activities your students will complete during each phase of E-Congress. View the demo by clicking the Learning Programs link from www.youthleadership.net and scrolling down to the E-Congress section. Click the View the Demo link.
- **Review the teacher planning guides:** To assess the amount of preparation time and class time you will need to set aside for E-Congress. Most teachers use E-Congress for one ninety-minute block per week or less during the three-month duration.
- **Print the calendar:** Look ahead for potential scheduling conflicts such as testing or holiday breaks.
- **Examine technology resources:** The National E-Congress is perfect for virtual learning or in person. We estimate that students will need NINE blocks of 90 minutes to complete the simulation. Most phases require students to spend a significant portion of their work time online. The entire program can be conducted virtually.
- **Plan ahead:** Weather, power outages and testing occur, and it is best to think of alternatives for participating should something happen. Several teachers had their students work from home when the weather kept them from school. Avoid waiting until the last minute to complete phases.
- **Trimester Schedule?** Call us to discuss how the National E-Congress can work for you.
- **National E-Congress and My E-Congress will not work simultaneously.** You must withdraw from your My E-Congress before you may join the National E-Congress. Click on the My E-Congress tab and then click “Withdraw” underneath the name of your My E-Congress.

Considering the My E-Congress Option

If the interactive 2023 National E-Congress simply does not fit into your schedule, you can still achieve the instructional goals of E-Congress using our **My E-Congress** program and accompanying lesson plans. The **My E-Congress** program will allow you to run a legislative simulation using our interactive technology at any time during the school year. The only difference between the National E-Congress and My E-Congress is that **students in My E-Congress won’t have the opportunity to interact with students outside of their school.** To access the **My E-Congress**, login at www.youthleadership.net, click the E-Congress link from the teacher dashboard, and select the My E-Congress tab. Setting up a My E-Congress simulation is easy and can be done following the instructions in the My E-Congress guide located on the E-Congress Getting Started page.

Getting Started

Before your students can begin participating in the National E-Congress, you will need to register and set up your E-Congress roster.

Register for the National E-Congress

Registration opens Wednesday, January 4th.

1. Log in to www.youthleadership.net with your username and password.
2. Click the E-Congress link from the Welcome page.
3. Click the BLUE National E-Congress tab (NOT the My E-Congress tab).
4. A Yellow box will appear with 2023 National E-Congress inside. Below there will be a RED *Join* link. Click *Join*.
5. Your registration is complete.

In order for your students to have adequate time to complete their bills it is recommended that you complete your registration for the 2023 National E-Congress **by Tuesday, January 18.**

To begin

Logging in and accessing all of the materials for the 2023 National E-Congress is easy. Once you are logged in at www.youthleadership.net, click the E-Congress link, which will take you to the Getting Started page. The Getting Started page contains all of the resources you will need including:

1. Downloadable handouts for you to use to evaluate student progress
2. 2023 National E-Congress Calendar with dates and deadlines for all phases of the program.
3. Detailed Instructions (You're reading them now!)
4. A bill review guide to help guide student writing

Throughout the program...

You will be reminded of upcoming tasks and deadlines throughout the National E-Congress program. The YLI staff will send periodic email reminders, so be sure that the email address you have registered with YLI is accurate and not blocking our emails or sending them to spam. Please read the emails.

Preparing your classes to participate

Before your students can begin using E-Congress, you must set up your online roster and decide if your students will work individually and or in groups. Classes may have students working individually, in groups, or a combination.

Setting up your classes

1. Log in to www.youthleadership.net with your username and password and click the E-Congress link from the Teacher Dashboard.
2. Click the National E-Congress link from the list of tabs.
3. Click the RED Manage Classrooms link found in the yellow National E-Congress Box
4. Click the RED Create a Classroom banner from the bottom of the page
5. Add your class title (e.g. Turner Am. Govt. Period 1), grade level, reading level and click save.
*Please do not click the Advanced Placement tab if your class is not a high school program.
6. Repeat the process for each class that will participate in the 2023 National E-Congress.

Questions? Call YLI staff toll free at 866.514.8389 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern) or email [ylihelp@virginia.edu](mailto:ylihhelp@virginia.edu).

Adding your students to your classes

There are two ways to add students. You can do it in advance of their participation, or the students can register themselves from the **Student Portal Page**. You will have to approve the students who register via the portal.

To add your students:

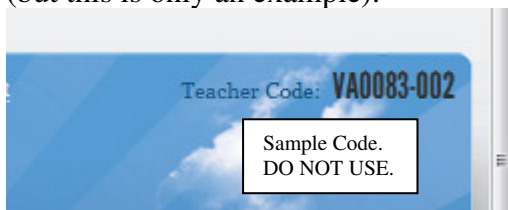
1. Login to www.youthleadership.net and click the E-Congress link from the Teacher Dashboard.
2. Click the National E-Congress tab.
3. Click the Manage Classrooms link from the yellow E-Congress box.
4. Select the class to which you would like to add students.
5. Select the blue Create New Student option at the bottom of the page.
6. Add the student information and click “save.”
7. Repeat the process for all students within the class. Keep a list of your students’ usernames and passwords.

NOTE: If want your students to work in groups and you know the groupings before you register the students, you can save yourself some time by entering the first group then select the second option when creating a bill number for the group. Repeat for subsequent groups. (See “Assigning Students to a Bill on page 9 for more information.)

8. Repeat the process for all classes participating in the 2023 E-Congress.

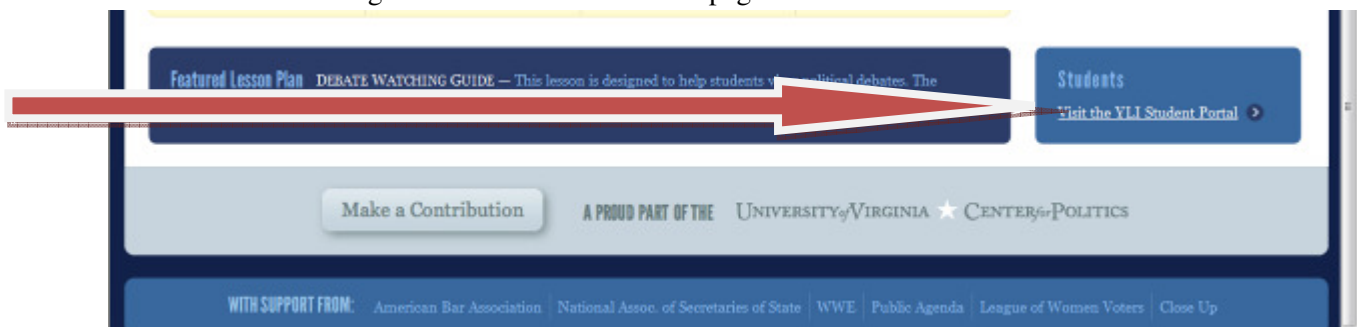
Having students register themselves:

Prior to having students register, be certain to identify your teacher code. Log in at www.youthleadership.net to find your **teacher code**. Your teacher code is a seven-digit alphanumeric code beginning with the two-letter abbreviation for the state in which you are registered. It can be found in the upper right-hand corner of each page after you have logged in. It looks like the following (but this is only an example):



Once you know your teacher code, you are ready to have your students log on to the E-Congress.

1. Direct students to enter the URL: www.youthleadership.net
2. Scroll to the bottom right-hand corner of the home page and click the Student Portal link

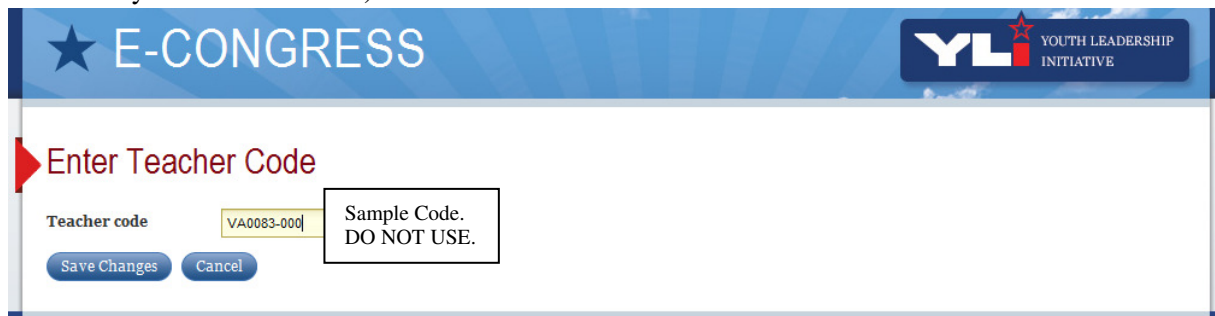


3. Have the students click the Register for the E-Congress link from the E-Congress section of the Portal Page (see graphic on next instruction page).

Questions? Call YLI staff toll free at 866.514.8389 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern) or email [ylihelp@virginia.edu](mailto:ylihlp@virginia.edu).



4. Students will be prompted to enter their Teacher Code that you have provided them. (NOTE: VA0083-000 is not your Teacher Code.)



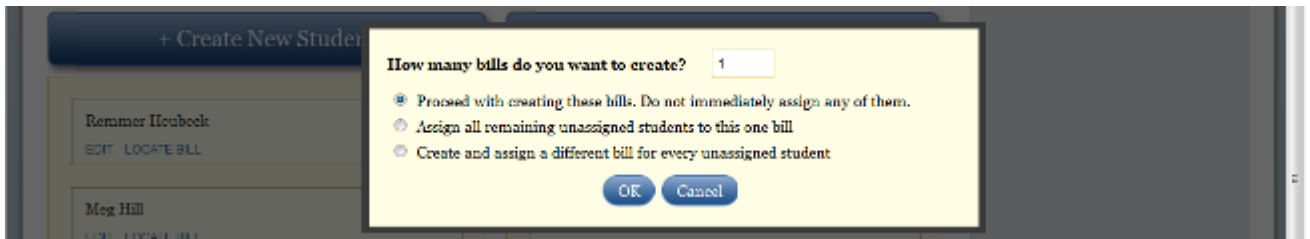
5. The students then must select their class from the list of classes provided in the drop-down menu. Once they have selected the appropriate class, each must save changes.
6. Each student will then enter their information, create a username and password (case sensitive) and click SAVE. The student is now registered for the E-Congress.
7. To view your class roster(s) click the Manage Classrooms link from the National E-Congress page and then select the class you wish to view. You must approve the students before they can login to the E-Congress program. You can do this by clicking the RED approve link underneath their name on your class list.
8. By clicking “Edit” underneath the name of the student, you will be able to alter his/her name, login name, or passwords. Login names must be unique nationwide.
9. YLI recommends that you have your students inform you of their username and password.

Indicating if students will work individually or in groups.

There are advantages to both having students work individually and/or in groups. Younger participants often feel more successful when working with a partner or group. AP and older students generally receive more benefit from working individually. Since you know your students best, you can decide what will make the program most successful for your class(es).

Assigning students to a bill:

1. From the Classrooms page select the class to whom you will assign bills.
2. Determine the number of bills you will need for the class.
3. Click the **Create New Bill** prompt.
4. You will see the following:



5. Choose the option that best fits your situation. If you have all students working individually, select option 3, and Click OK. Bills will be created for all of your students and your students will automatically be assigned to those bills located on the right side of the page.
6. For group work select option 1 or 2. Use the first option if you know the number of bills you need but are uncertain as to the groupings or if your students registered on their own. To assign a student or students to a bill, drag and drop them from the left onto the bill on the right. Use the second option if you know the groupings and can register your students one group at a time. This option will assign your students to a bill and will avoid having to drag and drop. If you change your mind, you can always move them back by clicking “unassign” and drag the student to the appropriate bill. You can remove extra bills by clicking the trash can icon on the right. To see which student is working on what bill- click the locate bill link under each student’s name on the roster.
7. All students must be assigned to a bill number. They will not be able to progress through the program unless assigned to a bill number.

Call 866.514.8389 or email [ylihelp@virginia.edu](mailto:ylihhelp@virginia.edu) if you have questions or need help.

WE need YOU to make the 2023 National E-Congress a success!

The Teacher's Role

As we begin the 2023 session of the National E-Congress, we'd like to remind participating teachers what an important role you have in making E-Congress a quality program.

YLI resources are always designed to provide all the materials teachers need for a complete classroom experience, but our comprehensive instructional materials are only one side of the National E-Congress. The other side comes from the contributions of students and teachers all across the country who want to make this nation a better place to live, work, and learn.

The phases of E-Congress provide multiple opportunities for students to learn from other participants. At every stage, we ask teachers to monitor student work for appropriateness and evidence of thoughtful effort- because your students' contributions directly affect the learning experience of many other students.

Teachers have a chance to review work during each phase of E-Congress. The phase-by-phase teacher planning guides will highlight those opportunities, but we would like to emphasize a few key points where teacher interaction can dramatically improve the quality of the program.

- **View your students' work often** and offer comments to guide their completion. To view a student's bill, login, click the National E-Congress tab, click the Manage Classrooms prompt, select the appropriate class, and then click on the Locate Bill next the student's name. You will see the bill and a box for comments.
- As you review your students' finished bills, consider the quality of each bill before sending the bills to YLI to be reviewed by other students during the committee phase. Can you and your students be proud of the level of effort they have put in? Participants are grouped according to grade and reading level, so content is more important than writing quality. Please avoid sending bills you would not be happy to receive yourself.
- Students and teachers in other classrooms are counting on you during the Committee Phase. If you send bills to YLI, we will assign bills for your classes to review, comment, and vote on. Those classes will be counting on thoughtful, constructive comments and amendments from your students. Remind students to concentrate on the ideas and concepts of the bill- not the writing or grammar unless it is so poor that the concept is not clear. Use the **YLI Bill Review Guide** as a framework for committee discussions. If students do not follow appropriate guidelines, please edit their comment as needed when you enter them online. Rude and sarcastic student comments should never be approved.
- Log in to your account often and **check the progress of your students' bills and those assigned to you.**

Thank you for choosing to participate in the 2023 National E-Congress! If you have any questions, please contact us by calling toll free 866.514.8389 or by sending an email to ylihelp@virginia.edu.

Sincerely,

The YLI Team

Meg Heubeck
Director of Instruction

Daman Irby
Deputy Director of Instruction

Questions? Call YLI staff toll free at 866.514.8389 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Eastern) or email ylihelp@virginia.edu.

Planning Guide for Phase I: Introduction

About Phase I	Introduces students to the structure and function of Congress, the responsibilities of members of Congress, and how a bill becomes a law. Students expand their knowledge about various aspects of government, learning about their personal political views. Though not required, teachers may find it helpful to have completed the YLI lesson plans <i>Formation of an Ideological Spectrum</i> and <i>Analyzing Political Cartoons</i> .
Before You Begin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Download the <i>Phase I Study Guide</i>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go to www.youthleadership.net and log in with your username and password. Click the E-Congress link from the teacher dashboard. Then click the Getting Started tab. Print the study guide from the Getting Started page.
Estimated Class Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The time needed to complete the Introduction will depend on your students' reading level and/or background knowledge of the legislative process; we estimate 90 to 120 minutes. This phase is most easily completed in the computer lab with all students having computer access.
Student Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> interpret charts and graphs related to the structure and function of Congress. identify the steps in the legislative process. complete an interactive political ideology survey to determine their own political ideology.
Teacher Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As students work through the Introduction section, begin thinking about whether you will want them to write their bills individually or in groups. If you are ready to indicate online whether students will work individually or in groups, refer to the Setting Up Your Classes and Indicate Individuals or Groups section of the planning guide (pages 6-7 of this document) for detailed instructions.
During Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have students begin by logging in to E-Congress: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go to www.youthleadership.net. Click Student Portal page from the homepage. Log in using their assigned usernames and passwords to begin the simulation. (If you did not assign usernames and passwords, students may create their own. See "Set Up Your Roster" on page 6 of this document for detailed instructions.) Distribute the <i>Phase I Study Guide</i>. Using their study guides, students will navigate through the introductory phase of E-Congress. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students must take the Political Ideology Survey and the quiz (with at least a grade of 70%) in order to advance. Many teachers collect the <i>Phase I Study Guide</i> as a means for assessing student progress. To view student progress in this phase, go to your E-Congress teacher records section and click the Student Progress link at the top of the page. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can view whether or not students have taken the Political Ideology Survey and the results of the quiz.

Planning Guide for Phase II: Research

About Phase II	Students explore many of the issues facing America today and select a topic for their legislation, choosing an issue of importance to them from a list of 14 broad topics. Students will complete a research guide to assist them as they prepare to write their legislation. Teachers may find it helpful to have completed the YLI lesson plan <i>Analyzing Political Cartoons</i> before students begin research, although it is not required.
Before You Begin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Download the <i>Research Guide</i> from the E-Congress Getting Started tab and make enough copies for each student in your class.
Estimated Class Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The amount of time required for students to complete this phase will vary depending on goals and schedules of teachers as well as Internet access for students in school and at home. In order to be prepared to write bills, we estimate two to three 90-minute block periods. Many teachers find it effective to assign parts of the Research Phase for homework. Some teachers have students do research in the library, while others complete the entire phase online.
Student Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore national issues of interest. identify a topic for writing legislation. review political party platforms. predict possible conflicts between proposed legislation and the U.S. Constitution. learn to distinguish between state and federal issues. classify different types of budgetary spending.
During Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have students log in to E-Congress with their assigned usernames and passwords: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Go to www.youthleadership.net and click on the Student Portal link from the bottom of the homepage. Distribute the <i>Research Guide</i>. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Research Guide</i> helps students select a topic, narrow their focus, and develop an idea for their own original legislation. Many teachers collect the <i>Research Guide</i> as a means of assessing student progress. When students have completed the Research Phase, they will be prompted to check a box indicating that they have completed their <i>Research Guide</i>. To see if students have reached this point, view the Student Progress page of your teacher records section.
Special Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YLI recommends that students complete their research by <u>Wednesday, January 25</u> or sooner in order to have sufficient time to write their bills.

Planning Guide for Phase III: Writing

About Phase III	Students will use their knowledge of the legislative process as well as their completed research to write their own legislation. Once their work is completed, they will mark their bill "Finished" and submit it to the teacher. The teacher will then review student legislation, suggest edits or make comments for a final round of revision, and <i>if satisfied with the final draft</i> , send the bill to YLI so that it may be included in the Committee Phase. If you accidentally submit the bill to YLI before it is ready, simply click "Return to Student."
Before You Begin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Log in and download the <i>Rubric for E-Congress Legislation</i> from the E-Congress Getting Started page. This document is your tool for assessing each piece of legislation written by your students. In addition, consider downloading the <i>Bill Review Guide</i> (also on the E-Congress Getting Started page) and distributing to students. Since both documents are assessment tools, your students may find it helpful to see the criteria upon which their work will be judged both by you, and by students analyzing their bills in the Committee Phase. • If your students will not be able to download during class, download and copy the topic-specific <i>Budget Worksheets for Fiscal Impact Statement</i>. • We estimate that the Writing Phase will take three 90-minute block periods. Some of the work may be assigned as homework or completed without computer use.
Estimated Class Time	
Student Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ review examples of both good and bad sample bills. ◦ write their own original legislation. ◦ estimate the fiscal impact (cost) of their legislation.
Teacher Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before students can begin writing their bills online, you must indicate whether students will work individually or in groups. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Go to the Monitor Progress page of the National E-Congress section. If any students are unable to advance to the writing phase, you will see a red outline around their information, indicating they have yet to be assigned to a bill. Drag the student to a bill that has yet to be assigned or to a group. Changes will be saved. ◦ On the Monitor Progress page, you may view each student's status in the Phase Details area. To move a student, click the Manage Classrooms link and select the classroom you wish to alter. Scroll to the bottom and find the student you wish to move. Unassign the student and he or she will be returned to the right-hand side of the page. You can then create a bill for the student or drag them to a new group. Remember to save your updates! The Edit function will be unavailable if the student's bill has been submitted to you or sent to YLI.
During Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have students log in to E-Congress with their usernames and passwords. • Distribute the <i>Bill Review Guide</i>. The <i>Bill Review Guide</i> is also available for students to view online or download. • Students should refer to their completed <i>Research Guide</i> when writing their legislation. • Beginning on the second page of the Writing Phase, students will be able to click Work on Your Bill to enter their work online (presuming they have been assigned to a bill). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ If you have students working in groups, only one student at a time in each group should edit bill content online. Multiple students editing bill content will result in the loss of some information. ◦ Remind students to save their work! If students log out of E-Congress without saving their bills, any unsaved work will be lost. • Distribute copies of the <i>Budget Worksheets for Fiscal Impact Statement</i>, or have students

download the *Budget Worksheet* for their topic to assist them in completing the fiscal impact section of their bills.

- Students must complete at least 3 categories of the fiscal impact section.
- Accurate dollar amounts are not critical; the most important thing is for students to make an effort to complete this section thoughtfully. Cost estimates should be reasonably realistic and should be based on detailed descriptions.
- Teachers may wish to collect and review *Budget Worksheets* and give feedback to students.
- You may view students' bills as they work by clicking the **View Work In Progress** link beside their names on the Monitor Progress page.
- When students reach the *Congratulations!* page of the Writing Phase, they should have completed their bills. Students should review their bills and then click the button on their bill that says **Submit Bill to Teacher**.
 - Once students submit their bills to you, the link **Teacher Review Finished Work** will appear beside a student's name on your Student Progress page.
 - We suggest that students submit their completed bills to you by Thursday, February 9.
- Teachers must review all bills before sending them to YLI. **Note: students cannot submit finished bills directly to YLI.**
 - If you feel the bill is ready to send to YLI, click **Send to YLI**.
 - If you feel the bill needs student revision, click **Save Comments for Student Review** to send it back to the student. The student must resubmit the bill to you after revision.
 - If you accidentally send an unfinished bill-no problem. You can correct this by clicking the Monitor Progress link and clicking the Retrieve from YLI link on the chart.
 - NOTE: If you do not feel that your student's bill should be submitted to YLI, you do not have to submit it. A good gauge is to ask yourself if you would be happy receiving a similar bill to debate during the Committee Phase. At the same time, peer criticism can also be a good thing!
- All bills to be considered during Committee must be sent to YLI by the end of the day on **Monday, February 13**. Try to finish before this date.

Special Considerations

- Completing the bill in small steps makes understanding the process easier and less overwhelming for students.
- The most challenging aspect of the bill writing phase is the Fiscal Impact Statement. It is not expected that students come up with a firm cost for their legislation. The purpose of the activity is to help students understand that bills cost money and to give students an estimate for the cost of their legislation. The budget should be for the full national cost of the bill (not a per unit budget).
- Remember that other teachers and students will review your students' bills. Please take the time to evaluate them before deciding whether or not to send them to YLI for the Committee Phase.
- The last day for teachers to send bills to YLI is **Sunday, February 13**.

Phase IV: Committee

About Phase IV

At this point in the simulation, student legislators come together as a classroom committee. Committees evaluate legislation written by students across the country and determine if the bills they review should be Approved, Rejected or Returned to Author for amendment. Teachers or a designated student from each committee will enter comments at the base of each bill that summarizes the view of the committee and then the teacher selects Approve, Reject, or Return to Author. If the teacher enters the comments, she or he will then vote on the bill on behalf of classroom committees. If a student has entered the unified committee response, the teacher must review and approve the student's comments and then vote on the committee's behalf. The author will not see the comment if the teacher does not click *Approve*.

Every student has the capability to enter a comment related to a particular bill, but only one unified response whether it is entered by the teacher or a designated student should be entered (and approved if it is a student writing the comments). Some teachers allow their students to enter comments related to a bill to get the full perspective of the class which allows more passive students to express their beliefs. If you choose to do this, just make sure that you do not approve these comments as they will then be visible to the author. Bills returned to the author for amendment must include a specific amendment proposal. No rude or sarcastic comments should be approved by the teacher.

Before You Begin

- Log in and download the *Bill Review Guide for Students* (found on the Getting Started page) and provide copies for students.
- Decide how you would like to have your students review bills during this phase: as one large committee or in subcommittees.

Estimated Class Time

- YLI recommends one to two 90-minute block periods depending on the number of bills you are assigned. Computer time is necessary for teachers who choose to use the comment section as a place for students to individually express their opinions about a bill (see second About Phase IV paragraph above).

Student Objectives

- Students will
 - evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each bill assigned to their committee.
 - build consensus within committee to Approve, Reject, or Return to Author (Amend) each bill reviewed.
 - provide valuable comments to student authors explaining the committee's vote on each bill. Amendment proposals should be specific (e.g Please increase your legal budget by \$1,000,000 to account for X.).

Teacher Records

- Beginning **Thursday, February 16**, you may log in and view bills assigned to each class.
 - To view bills assigned to a class, navigate to the Monitor Progress page and select a class. Afterwards click "Bills Assigned to Your Classes" and click on the bill title to view its contents.
 - You may wish to print these bills for classroom use.
 - The base of the page is also where you will enter your students' comments on each bill and amendment proposals.
 - To view the status of your students' bills, click "Students' Bills" on the Monitor Progress page.

During Class

- You may want to begin class with a review of the function of committees in the legislative process (as outlined in the Introduction Phase).
 - Describe what a congressional committee does and remind students that most bills do not make it through the committee process.
- If you chose to have your students review the bills in subcommittees, have them get into their groups.
- Distribute copies of the *Bill Review Guide* and go over the kinds of comments that are appropriate for bill review:
 - Ask students to focus on the quality of bill content and research.
 - Have students provide feedback that is specific and constructive.
 - Ask your students to avoid focusing on grammar unless the poor grammar renders the bill to confusing to approve.
- Review voting options (found on the *Committee Guidelines* page of the Committee Phase):
 - Approve: This action recognizes the value and quality of the bill and moves it onto the House Floor for consideration.
 - Return to Author (amend): This selection supports the legislation but allows the committee to offer specific amendment(s). Your students must write the amendment(s) which you the teacher or a designated student enters. Amendments written by a student must be approved by the teacher. The teacher must then submit the bill back to the author, and the author of the bill will in the Amendment Phase review the proposed amendment(s).
 - Reject: This selection means the committee did not think the bill had significant value or did not agree with its premise. Failed bills will die in the committee session and do not go on to the House Floor. A bill's approval or rejection is not necessarily reflective of the of the quality of work or amount of time dedicated to the bill. An important lesson of the National E-Congress is learning that while many of the students' may have similar perspectives, students in other parts of the country might have another point of view.
- Distribute copies of bills to students or have students log in to view their committee's bills.
- Teachers in previous sessions of E-Congress have shared that their students enjoy this phase very much because they have the opportunity to debate many different issues. You may wish to find ways to facilitate discussion in your classroom, Google, Zoom, or a similar online medium during this phase.
- Collect *Bill Review Guides* from students so that you may use their feedback to enter comments in your teacher records section (see instructions below about entering comments and votes).
- Students may view the status of their own bills by logging in to E-Congress and navigating to the *Your Bill's Status* page of the Committee Phase. This is also where they will edit their bills should any be returned with an amendment.

Teacher Responsibilities

- After the class(es) have decided on each bill, it is the **YOUR** responsibility to assure that the results are reported. To do this:
 - Log in to E-Congress, click the **Monitor Progress** tab and select a classroom if you have more than one. Then click on the Bills Assigned to Committee link.
 - Click on the bill title you wish to comment and vote on, scroll to the base of the bill and click Comment. A screen will appear that will enable you to enter comments and amendment proposals. Please make sure you are entering comments and amendments on the correct bill. Click **Add** to save and close the window and then select Approve, Reject or Return to Author (Amend) above the

bill name.

- If you have chosen to allow one of your students to enter the comments related to the overall committee result via the student's log in, you will need to click on the bill name as described above. Once you have reviewed the content, click Approve next to the designated student's comments presuming they are appropriate. You must then select Approve, Reject, or Return to Author (amend) above the bill name. Students do not have the capability to submit bills, and you should never give your students your log in name and password.

Special Considerations

- When reviewing bills be mindful of the fact that this is a simulation designed to teach students about the legislative process. Focus students on the content of the bill as they assess its strengths and weaknesses as a piece of legislation. Carefully consider how the bill might be amended. Please be thoughtful about rejecting bills solely on the basis of poor grammar, spelling or punctuation, unless it renders the bills unclear; and keep comments and feedback constructive in nature. Sarcastic comments are usually rude and don't translate well in written form.
- During Committee, the teacher is the sole liaison between their classroom committee and the author of a bill. **Do not give students your password.**
- Generally, the number of bills a class receives to review during the Committee phase depends partly on the number of bills submitted within a House Floor, the number of classes within a House Floor, the number of bills a teacher sent to YLI as well as the number of students in the class.
- Committees should have all of their bills reviewed, comments entered, and the bill voted upon by **Wednesday, March 1.**
- Committee phase results are listed in real time. Once a bill has been voted on, the author, the author's teacher, and the committee teacher can see the vote that was cast and the comment which was entered.
- Students who have had their bills returned to them with an amendment may edit their bills immediately.

Phase V: Amendment

About Phase V

At this point in the simulation, students should know if the committee Approved, Rejected, or returned their bill for amendment. Bills that have been Approved or Rejected require no response from the author though all bills should receive a comment as to why they received the result. Contact YLI at 1.866.514.8389 or ylihelp@virginia.edu if you have bills that did not receive a comment.

Students whose bills have been returned to them for amendment must decide if they want to accept the proposal, make a counter proposal, or not compromise. If the authors accept the amendment, they should make the change within their bill, enter a comment that the amendment was accepted and the change entered in the bill, and then submit the bill back to their teacher. The teacher will then approve the comment and submit the bill back to the committee for a final vote. If the authors choose to make a counter proposal, they should enter a counter proposal in the comments along with their reasoning, make the change in the bill, and return it to their teacher for approval and submission. If the authors do not wish to amend their bill, they should explain their reasoning in the comments section and submit the bill back to their teacher. The teacher should then approve their student's appropriate comments and submit the bill back to the committee for a final vote or additional discussion.

No rude or sarcastic comments should be approved by the teacher.

Before You Begin

Estimated Class Time

- This phase of E-Congress works best if teachers can check their assigned bills and their students' bills on a daily basis if not periodically throughout the day. This will allow the students and teachers to punctually respond to amendment proposals and provide an increased level of interactivity with students in other parts of the country. Computer time is necessary for those students who have bills returned to them with an amendment though they can also review and enter changes from outside of the school. Teachers should regularly check to see if they have comments and responses from students that need to be approved. Without the teacher's comment approval and submission, the other class/author is unable to respond.
 - Determine if the author(s) wish to accept, make a counter proposal, or reject the proposed amendment. Approve, Reject, or Return to Author (Amend) each bill reviewed.
 - provide valuable feedback/comments to student authors explaining the committee's vote on each bill.
- **Thursday, March 2** is the official opening day of the Amendment Phase, but students may actually respond to amendment proposals as soon as they are voted on during the Committee Phase.
 - Check regularly to see if a bill your students returned for amendment has come back to you with changes.
 - To view the status of your students' bills, click "Students' Bills" on the Monitor Progress page.

During Class

- Students may view the status of their own bills by logging in to E-Congress and navigating to the *Your Bill's Status* page of the Committee Phase. This is where they will edit their bills that have been returned for amendment.

Teacher Responsibilities

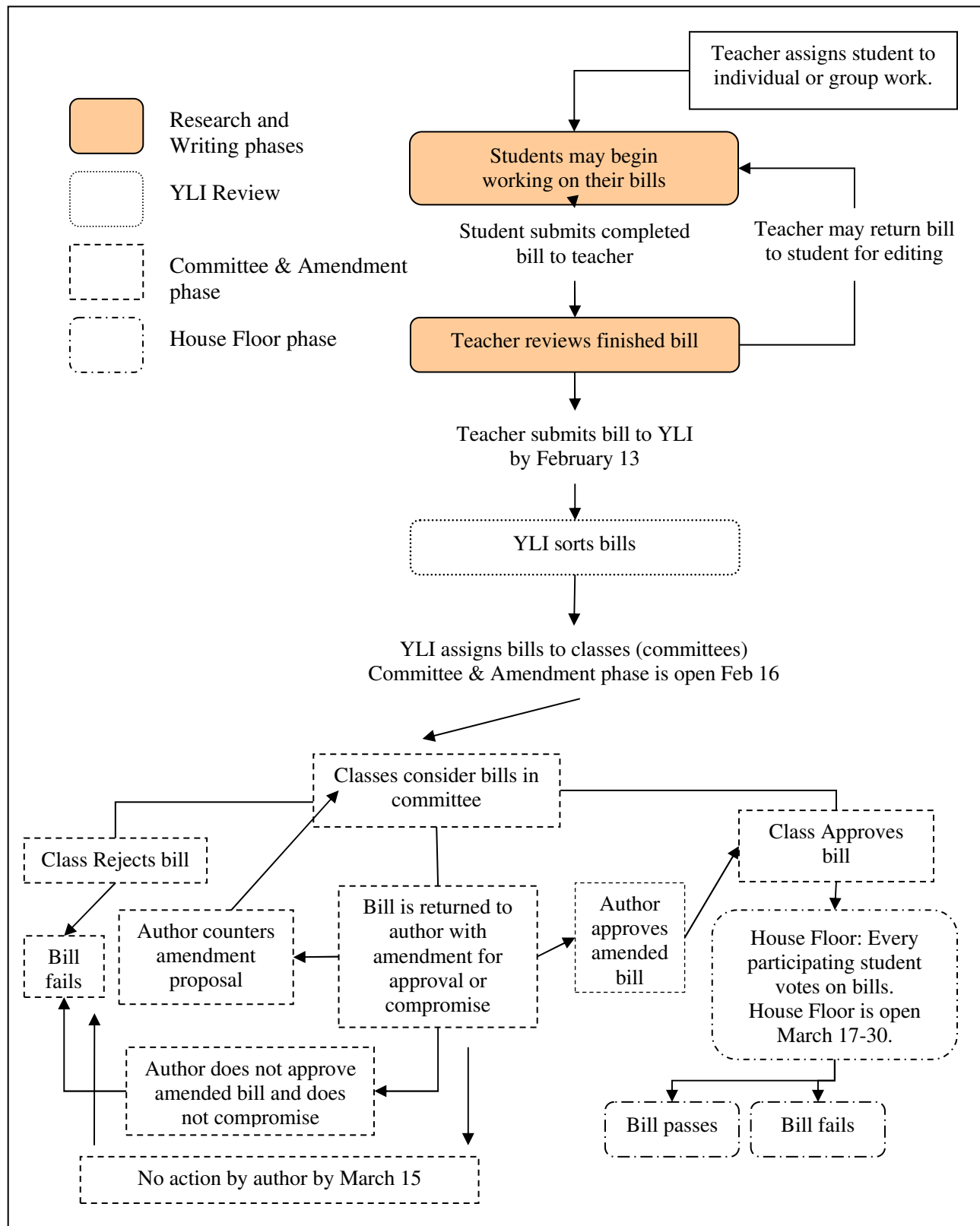
- Your primary responsibility during the Amendment Phase is directing traffic. If your students as a committee returned bills to their authors for amendment, you will need to be on the lookout for responses to those proposed amendments and assure that they receive a vote if the amendment was accepted or report counter proposals to your class so they can determine how to respond. It is your responsibility to assure that the results are reported. To do this:
 - Log in to E-Congress, click the **Monitor Progress** tab and select a classroom if you have more than one. Then click on the Bills Assigned to Committee link.
 - Click on the bill title you wish to comment and vote on, scroll to the base of the bill and click Comment. A screen will appear that will enable you to enter comments as well as amendments. Please make sure you are entering comments and amendments on the correct bill. Click **Add** to save and close the window and then select Approve, Reject or Return to Author (Amend) above the bill name.
 - If you have chosen to allow one of your students to enter the comments related to the overall committee result via the student's log in, you will need to click on the bill name as described above and once you have reviewed the content, click Approve next to the designated student's comments presuming they are appropriate. You must then select Approve, Reject, or Return to Author (amend) above the bill name. Students do not have that capability, and you should never give your students your log in name and password.
- Please inform your students whose bills have been returned to them with an amendment that they must log in and accept, reject or offer a compromise on the proposed amendment. If your student accepts the amendment, and edits the bill accordingly, the committee should pass the bill. He or she may suggest a compromise amendment to the committee. In either case, the student must submit the edited bill back to his or her teacher who then returns the bill to the committee. Bills can go back and forth with amendments, but keep in mind that bills must be approved or rejected by **Wednesday, March 15**. **Be sure to regularly check to see if your students have bills that have been returned for amendment or if the bills your committee returned for amendment have been altered and sent back to you. You, the teacher, are vital to this process.**

Phase VI: House Floor

About Phase VI	All bills that passed the Committee Phase move on for a vote on the House Floor, the culminating phase of the National E-Congress. There will be around 10 House Floors. Each class is assigned to one House Floor. Students will have the opportunity to read bills in their House Floor and cast votes of Yea, Nay, or Abstain on each.
Before You Begin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider introducing this phase using the YLI lesson <i>E-Congress Anytime Phase V: House Floor</i>. This lesson will generate ideas for conducting a party caucus in class and give students a deeper understanding of the final stages of the legislative process.
Estimated Class Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We suggest a minimum of one 90-minute block period to review legislation. Because students cast votes individually, they may work from home if desired.
Student Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will evaluate bills on the House Floor.
Teacher Records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To view bills on the House Floor, log in and click the Monitor Progress tab and then “Bills on House Floor X”. Bills on the House Floor are grouped by topic. To see bills under each topic, click the name of the topic in the left-hand column.
During Class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will log in to E-Congress and evaluate the bills presented on the House Floor as time permits and cast individual votes on legislation. Just as in Congress, students may run out of time to consider all of the bills that pass the Committee Phase, but encourage them to vote on as many as possible. Legislation will be categorized by topic so that students may set priorities given any time restrictions for this part of the simulation.
Special Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The House Floor will be available to students from <u>Friday, March 17</u> to <u>Thursday, March 30.</u> Final results for your students' bills should be available on <u>Friday, March 31.</u> Following the conclusion of the House Floor Phase, you may wish to reward students whose bills passed the House Floor by logging in and from the E-Congress Getting Started page printing the <i>E-Congress Certificate for Bills Passed</i>.

Life of an E-Congress Bill

How a bill becomes a law in the National E-Congress



Frequently Asked Questions

1) What if I cannot participate in the entire session?

First, call us! We can often advise you on how to make it work for your class. If participation in the National E-Congress is just not possible, we have good news for you! Teachers can access and use E-Congress resources at any time (all year, every year) to teach about the legislative process by using YLI lesson plans and the **My E-Congress** on the YLI website. The **E-Congress Anytime** lesson plans can be found by logging in at www.youthleadership.net and clicking on the **Lesson Plans** link on the teacher profile page. There is a separate **E-Congress Anytime** lesson plan for each phase of the My E-Congress simulation. Lesson plans include warm-ups, complete instructions and assessments to help you provide in-depth instructions about the legislative process. My E-Congress works the same at the National E-Congress except that there is no interaction with other schools with reviews and voting only taking place within your classroom or between classrooms.

2) My students are all virtual. Can I participate in the National E-Congress?

You know it! The National E-Congress is the perfect program for the virtual academic environment. With all of the disruptions that took place during the COVID shut-down, almost all of the National E-Congress classes were able to continue and complete the program. Teachers in areas where their schools have been closed weeks due to snow were able to keep their students engaged and participating.

3) What if I begin E-Congress and realize that I will not be able to complete the simulation?

First, call us! We can often advise you on how to make it work for your class. If, however, you begin the simulation and run into scheduling, testing or computer issues that cannot be resolved and feel that you will not be able to complete the simulation, please us a call toll-free at **866.514.8389**. Call us as soon as possible so we can make adjustments to the simulation. If you have been assigned bills during the Committee phase for your review and you believe you need to withdraw, please contact us immediately. Bill authors are depending on your review.

4) What resources does YLI have to support the E-Congress simulation?

YLI provides many lesson plans that support the activities within E-Congress. Those lessons include: *Expanding the Ideological Spectrum*, *Formation of the Ideological Spectrum*, *Political Ideology Survey*, *Corresponding with Congressional Leaders*, *Drafting Congressional Legislation*, and *Political Cartoon Analysis*. These lessons contain warm-ups, complete activities and assessments to help you provide in-depth instruction about the legislative process.

E-Congress Do's and Don'ts

A Quick Reference for Teachers

Do

- ☒ Contact us if you ever have questions. [ylihelp@virginia.edu](mailto:ylihhelp@virginia.edu) or 866.514.8389
- ☒ Print out and read the E-Congress Teacher Instructions thoroughly.
- ☒ Print out and plan ahead using the E-Congress Calendar and Weekly Guide of Important Dates, located in the Teacher Instructions.
- ☒ View the E-Congress Demo.
- ☒ Review and meet the deadlines for E-Congress, such as the last day of registration, the last day to submit your student's bills to YLI, and the last day to submit comments on bills assigned to your classes during Committee.
- ☒ Log in frequently and check Student Progress in your Monitor Progress section so you can review and comment on your students' work.
- ☒ Make sure your students submit their finished work to you. Send bills ready for Committee review to YLI once students finish and submit them to you
- ☒ Contact YLI if you will not be able to complete any part of E-Congress

Don't

- ⊗ Register for E-Congress without reading the Teacher Instructions, checking the Calendar, or viewing the Demo (http://www.youthleadership.net/econgress/demo_congress)
- ⊗ Submit bills to YLI (at the end of the Writing Phase) written by your students that you would not want to receive yourself
- ⊗ Assume that students send their bills to YLI when they are finished – teachers send the bills to YLI
- ⊗ Miss any deadlines in E-Congress, especially when reviewing bills from other schools in the Committee Phase. **Once E-Congress has changed phases it is impossible to go back to a previous phase.**