

**George W. Bush**  
*President*



**Richard Cheney**  
*Vice-President*



**Nancy Pelosi**  
*Speaker of the House*



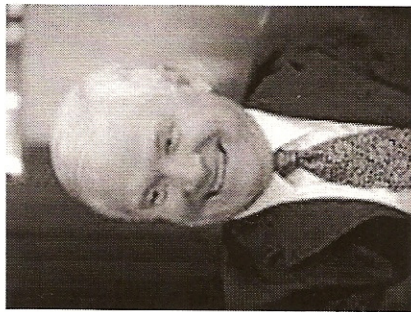
**Robert C. Byrd**  
*President Pro-tem*



**Condoleezza Rice**  
*Secretary of State*



**Henry Paulson**  
*Secretary of the Treasury*



**Robert Gates**  
*Secretary of Defense*



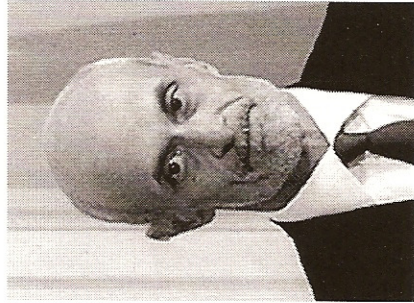
**Emanuel, Gutierrez,  
Kirk, Schakowsky**  
*Northside Members of the  
House*



**Barack Obama &  
Richard Durbin**  
*Illinois Senators*



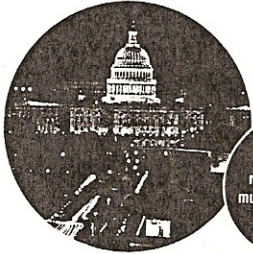
**John Roberts**  
*Chief Justice*



**Michael Chertoff**  
*Secretary of  
Homeland Security*

How a Bill becomes a Law

All U.S. laws start out as bills in Congress. They have to go through a long process, and many bills do not make it through.

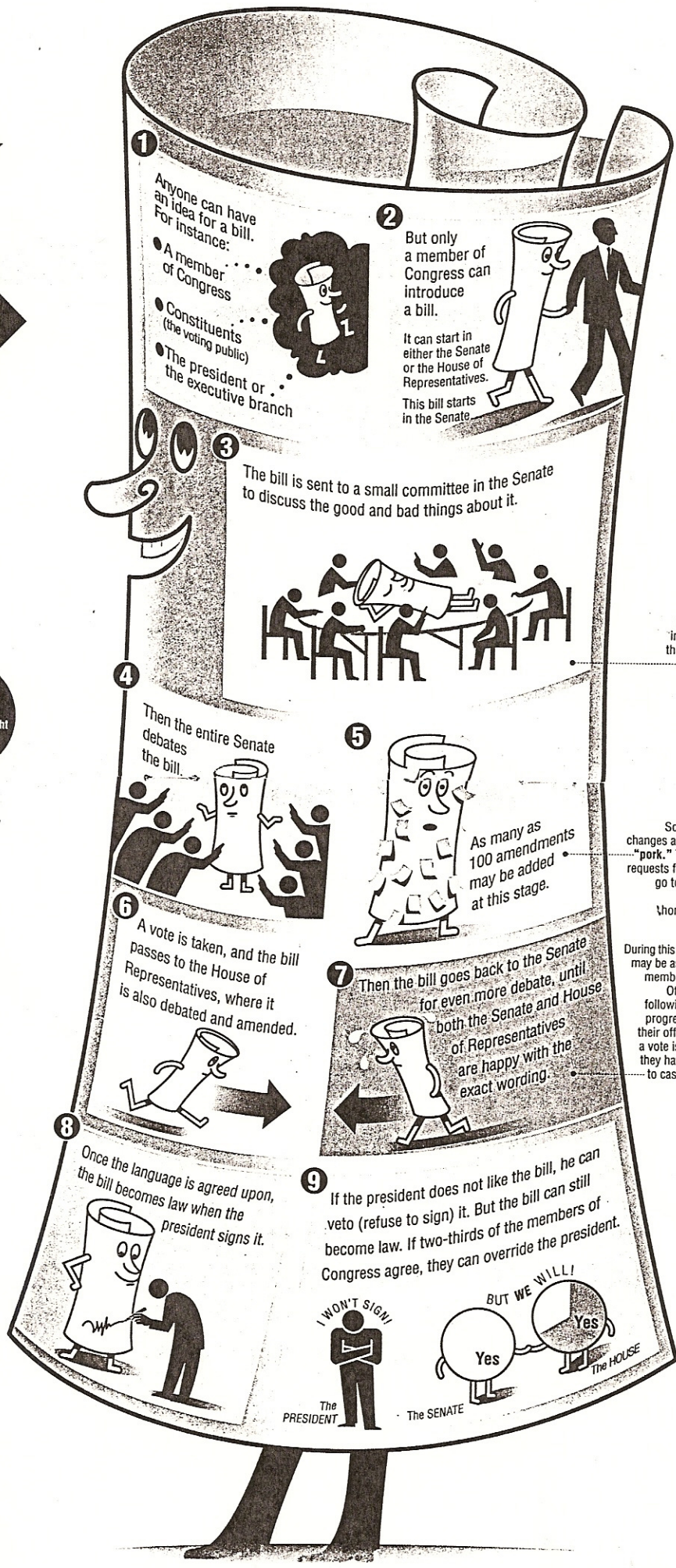


Sometimes, senators and representatives must work all night to get a bill passed.

Out of about 5,000 bills that are introduced every year, only about 350 actually become laws.



To get the attention of the media, committees can call celebrity witnesses to their hearings. For instance, Michael J. Fox testified (gave his opinion) about Parkinson's disease, the illness he has. Pearl Jam testified in a hearing about the sale of tickets to rock concerts.



When a committee is in session like this, it is called a hearing.

Some of these changes are known as "pork." This is often requests for money to go to projects in politicians' home districts.

During this phase, there may be as few as ten members present. Others will be following the bill's progress on TV in their offices in case a vote is called and they have to return to cast their vote.



You may hear the word filibuster in connection with bills and Congress. A filibuster is a tactic used to block the passage of a bill by delivering very long speeches.