

TITLE 48 - TERRITORIES AND INSULAR POSSESSIONS**CHAPTER 12 - VIRGIN ISLANDS****SUBCHAPTER III - LEGISLATIVE BRANCH****§ 1575. Legislative procedure****(a) Quorum and method of voting on bills**

The number of members of the legislature needed to constitute a quorum shall be determined by the laws of the Virgin Islands. No bill shall become a law unless it shall have been passed at a meeting, at which a quorum was present, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present and voting, which vote shall be by yeas and nays.

(b) Enacting clause of acts

The enacting clause of all acts shall be as follows: "Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands".

(c) Governor's message and budget

The Governor shall submit at the opening of each regular session of the legislature a message on the state of the Virgin Islands and a budget of estimated receipts and expenditures, which shall be the basis of the appropriation bills for the ensuing fiscal year, which shall commence on the first day of July or such other date as the Legislature of the Virgin Islands may determine.

(d) Approval and disapproval of bills

Every bill passed by the legislature shall, before it becomes a law, be presented to the Governor. If the Governor approves the bill, he shall sign it. If the Governor disapproves the bill, he shall, except as hereinafter provided, return it, with his objections, to the legislature within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him. If the Governor does not return the bill within such period, it shall be a law in like manner as if he had signed it, unless the legislature by adjournment prevents its return, in which case it shall be a law if signed by the Governor within thirty days after it shall have been presented to him; otherwise it shall not be a law. When a bill is returned by the Governor to the legislature with his objections, the legislature shall enter his objections at large on its journal and, upon motion of a member of the legislature, proceed to reconsider the bill. If, after such reconsideration, two-thirds of all the members of the legislature pass the bill, it shall be a law. If any bill presented to the Governor contains several items of appropriation of money, he may object to one or more of such items, or any part or parts, portion or portions thereof, while approving the other items, parts, or portions of the bill. In such a case he shall append to the bill, at the time of signing it, a statement of the items, or parts or portions thereof, to which he objects, and the items, or parts or portions thereof, so objected to shall not take effect, unless the legislature, after reconsideration upon motion of a member thereof, passes such items, parts, or portions so objected to by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the legislature.

(e) Use of prior appropriations upon failure to pass appropriation bills

If at the termination of any fiscal year the legislature shall have failed to pass appropriation bills providing for payment of the obligations and necessary current expenses of the government of the Virgin Islands for the ensuing fiscal year, then the several sums appropriated in the last appropriation bills for the objects and purposes therein specified, so far as the same may be applicable, shall be deemed to be reappropriated item by item.

(f) Journal of proceedings; contents

The legislature shall keep a journal of its proceedings and publish the same. Every bill passed by the legislature and the yeas and nays on any question shall be entered on the journal.

(g) Transmittal of laws to Congress

A listing of all laws enacted by the legislature each year shall be transmitted with the annual report to Congress required pursuant to section 1591 of this title.

(July 22, 1954, ch. 558, § 9, 68 Stat. 501; Pub. L. 90–496, §§ 2, 3, Aug. 23, 1968, 82 Stat. 837; Pub. L. 95–134, title III, § 301(b), Oct. 15, 1977, 91 Stat. 1163; Pub. L. 95–348, § 4(c)(1), Aug. 18, 1978, 92 Stat. 490; Pub. L. 96–470, title II, § 206(d), Oct. 19, 1980, 94 Stat. 2244; Pub. L. 106–364, § 2, Oct. 27, 2000, 114 Stat. 1408.)

Amendments

2000—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 106–364 amended first sentence generally. Prior to amendment, first sentence read as follows: “The quorum of the legislature shall consist of eight of its members.”

1980—Subsec. (g). Pub. L. 96–470 substituted provision requiring a listing of all laws enacted by the legislature each year be transmitted with the annual report to Congress required by section 1591 of this title for provision requiring copies of all laws enacted by the legislature be transmitted within 15 days of their enactment by the Governor to the Secretary of the Interior and by the Secretary annually to Congress.

1978—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 95–348 inserted provision authorizing the Virgin Islands Legislature to determine other dates on which the fiscal year shall commence.

1977—Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 95–134 inserted “, unless the legislature, after reconsideration upon motion of a member thereof, passes such items, parts, or portions so objected to by a vote of two-thirds of all the members of the legislature” after “shall not take effect”.

1968—Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 90–496, § 2, increased the quorum requirement from seven to eight members.

Subsec. (d). Pub. L. 90–496, § 3, inserted requirement that when a bill is returned by the Governor to the legislature, a motion of a member of the legislature is necessary for the legislature to reconsider the bill, and substituted provisions that if, after reconsideration by the legislature, two-thirds of all the members of the legislature pass a bill returned by the Governor, it shall be a law for provisions that if, after reconsideration by the legislature, two-thirds of all the members of the legislature agree to pass the bill, it shall be presented anew to the Governor for his approval, provisions that if the Governor does not approve the bill, the bill shall be sent to the President of the United States for his approval, provisions that if the President disapproves the bill, the bill shall be returned to the Governor, stating the President’s disapproval, and it shall not be a law, and provisions that if the President neither approves nor disapproves the bill within 90 days after it was sent to him by the Governor, the bill shall be a law as if the President had signed it.

Effective Date of 1968 Amendment

Section 2 of Pub. L. 90–496 provided that the amendment made by that section is effective on date of enactment of Pub. L. 90–496, which was approved Aug. 23, 1968.

Amendment of provisions of section necessary to authorize the holding of an election for Governor and Lieutenant Governor on Nov. 3, 1970, effective Jan. 1, 1970, and all other amendments of provisions of section, unless otherwise expressly provided by Pub. L. 90–496, effective Jan. 4, 1971, see section 16 of Pub. L. 90–496, set out as a note under section 1591 of this title.