

# SSI Onsite Mock Committee Chair Instructions

Thank you for volunteering to serve as a chairperson for our SSI Onsite Mock Committee Meetings! We look forward to a wonderful and educational experience for our students.

## Details

**In the email you received, you will find the time and location of the committee meeting, instructions to find your assignment, and your assigned committee's bills.** This information is also at <https://ssionline.org/onsite-committee-resources/>.

There will be a brief orientation for all involved prior to the committee meetings. Coffee and refreshments will be served. After the orientation, you will be introduced to the students and the committee meetings will begin.

## Chairing

You will be chairing a hearing on two different bills. Each bill will have two lobbyists speak: one supporting the bill and one opposing. Committees are named after American Presidents (Adams, Jefferson, Washington, Madison) rather than being named to indicate what type of bills are being considered. Each committee is split into two caucuses, Green and Blue, instead of Republican and Democratic Caucuses. Students spend the program role-playing as state representatives and are assigned their positions on each bill. They are not allowed to change their positions, nor are they allowed to amend their bill. Legislators must use proper parliamentary procedure during the meeting: the Chair is running the meeting, and students must have the Chair recognize them in order to ask a question or speak. They are not allowed to directly ask questions of each other but must ask them through the Chair. **Please explain to the students what this should look like.**

Every student must participate by either asking a question or making a comment. If students have not engaged by the second bill, feel free to draw them out and encourage them to make a comment or ask a question. You might remind the group that each person needs to ask a question or make a comment and tell them if they still don't say anything, soon you'll start calling out people by name. If you notice that one student in particular has not participated, you can single him out by saying, "Representative Lastname, we haven't heard anything from you. I'll give you a minute to think of something to say and then come back to you for a question or comment."

## Schedule

Opening Procedure and Roll Call: 3 minutes

First Bill: 35 minutes

5 Minute Break (time permitting)

Second Bill: 35 minutes

Adjourn: 2 minutes

Reception with Students: 15 minutes

*There will be a brief VIP reception with the students immediately following the committee meeting. We invite you to stay if time permits.*

# Day of Event Procedure

Before starting, ask the lobbyists for their Committee Hearing Cards which will have their name and the organization they represent so that you can recognize them. The lobbyists may use a fake name and/or organization. *Note: Because of the lobbyists' schedules, the order in which the bills are considered CANNOT be changed without permission.*

## Opening Procedure and Roll Call (3 minutes)

Call the meeting to order and take the roll using the Committee Tally Sheet. We will also have name tents by each seat so you can call them by name (Representative *Lastname*). Explain basic parliamentary procedure (raising hand to be recognized, speaking through the Chair, how to make a motion).

## First Bill (35 minutes)

1. Announce that the committee will be taking up bill #... for public comment. *The order in which you take up your committee's bills is listed in materials provided.*
2. Ask the Bill Sponsor from the sponsoring caucus to give a brief introduction of the bill.
3. Recognize the lobbyists and moderate student questions. Call on the first lobbyist using the information on the Committee Hearing Cards. **The first lobbyist should be given 3-5 minutes for his initial remarks followed by 6-8 minutes of questions. This would then be repeated by the second lobbyist.** If a lobbyist has not finished his testimony after 5 minutes, ask him to wrap up so that students may begin asking questions. Lobbyists who give long winded answers can also be asked to keep their answers short so that more questions can be asked. Students may be reluctant to ask questions at first. Feel free to ask questions or make comments yourself to help them start.
4. After approximately 25 minutes of lobbyist testimony and questions, the lobbyists should be thanked, and debate should be opened between caucuses. Ask whether anyone has any questions or comments for the other caucus. Remind them that they should direct everything through you. Again, students may need to be prompted to begin debate. You can help by presenting some thoughts as a devil's advocate.
5. After approximately 10 minutes or if the debate has come to a natural end, explain how to ask for a motion to report the bill out of committee and request a second. Use the tally sheet to record their vote (yea or nay) as you read off their names. **Students must vote FOR the bill they are sponsoring and AGAINST the bill they are opposing.**

Due to the nature of the simulation with the student's assigned position, each bill, regardless of the vote tally, will be reported out of committee. As Chair, you are the only undetermined vote. We ask that you vote in favor of the caucus that asked the best questions and gave the best arguments. If you vote in favor of the bill, it will be reported "with recommendation"; if you vote against the bill, it will be reported "without recommendation."

**Break (5 minutes)** Note: Depending on how involved students are during the first bill, there may or may not be time to take a brief break.

**Take up the second bill following the same procedure as the first:** 25 minutes of testimony and questions and 10 minutes of debate between caucuses.

**Close the meeting by asking for a motion to adjourn.** Please make sure everything is done by the time indicated in the email you received. Thank you!

*If you have any questions, please contact Grace Anne Rosbury at [programs@ssionline.org](mailto:programs@ssionline.org).*

*If an emergency arises and you cannot fulfill your commitment on the day of the event, please call or text Grace Anne Rosbury at 989-494-8432.*