

How a Bill Becomes a Law in Wisconsin
Reader's Theatre
By Ava L. McCall

Roles: 8 citizens, 12 Representatives, 4 Senators, 1 Governor, 1 narrator

Citizen 1: I didn't like what we had for lunch today.

Citizen 2: Me either. I didn't eat most of my lunch.

Citizen 3: I wish we could have pizza more often.

Citizen 4: Yes! I love pizza!

Citizen 5: Why doesn't our school serve pizza more often?

Citizen 6: Maybe we could talk to our principal about having pizza every week.

Citizen 7: Why don't we have a law that requires all elementary schools in Wisconsin to serve pizza each week?

Citizen 8: Yes! Let's contact Representative Hintz and ask him to write a bill.

Narrator: The first step in creating a new law is coming up with an idea for a law.

Representative Hintz: How can I help you, fourth-graders?

Citizen 1: We want Wisconsin to have a law requiring all elementary schools in Wisconsin to serve pizza each week.

Citizen 2: Yes! Sometimes students are not eating their lunch when the school serves food the students don't like.

Citizen 3: A lot of food is wasted!

Citizen 4: And students are getting hungry in the afternoon.

Citizen 5: Pizza can be a healthy food that most elementary students like.

Citizen 6: Students need to eat healthy food at lunch to give them energy to learn for the rest of the day.

Citizen 7: Could you write a bill (proposed law) so that all elementary schools in Wisconsin will serve pizza each week?

Citizen 8: A lot of elementary students will be happy with this new law.

Representative Hintz: Okay. I will write a bill. How does this sound? All public elementary schools in Wisconsin will serve pizza for school lunch each week of the school year. I will present the bill to the Assembly.

Narrator: The second step in creating a new law is a member of the Assembly must write a bill.

Representative 1 Hintz: Fellow Representatives, please consider this bill: All public elementary schools in Wisconsin will serve pizza for school lunch each week of the school year.

Representative 2 Schraa: I support this bill since fourth-graders from Webster Stanley Elementary School in Oshkosh suggested it. They are students from my district.

Representative 3: I don't believe this bill is good for all elementary students.

Representative 4: I agree. What about those elementary students who don't like pizza? Why should they have pizza each week?

Representative 5: Would all school districts in Wisconsin be able to serve pizza to elementary students each week?

Representative 6: I think we should have the students who suggested the bill speak to the Assembly about why they want this bill to become a law.

Representative 7: Good idea, let's invite them to our next session of the Assembly.

Representative 8: I want to know more about why the students believe having pizza each week is so important.

Representative 9: Welcome, Webster Stanley Elementary School fourth-graders. Please tell us why it is so important for all elementary students in Wisconsin to have pizza for lunch each week.

Citizen 1: When schools serve foods that elementary students don't like, a lot of food is wasted.

Citizen 2: Most elementary students like pizza and won't waste it when their school serves it.

Citizen 3: Pizza can be healthy if the crust is made from whole grain flour and the pizza has low-salt sauce, low-fat and low-salt cheese, and vegetables.

Citizen 4: Children need to eat healthy foods to grow and learn.

Citizen 5: Some children have their best meal of the day at school. They need to eat nutritious, good food at school.

Citizen 6: If all Wisconsin elementary schools serve pizza each week, they will support Wisconsin dairy farmers, grain farmers, and vegetable farmers because schools will use wheat, cheese, and vegetables grown in Wisconsin in pizzas.

Representative 10: Why do we need a law requiring all public elementary schools in Wisconsin to serve pizza each week? Why can't each school district decide what to serve for lunch each week?

Citizen 7: Sometimes school districts don't pay attention to foods students like and want to eat. They serve foods they think children should eat, but lots of times, students won't eat those foods.

Representative 11: What about the students who don't like pizza? What will they eat for lunch?

Citizen 8: Schools can also offer alternate foods on the days they serve pizza. These should be nutritious foods students like.

Representative 12: Thank you, Webster Stanley fourth-graders. I think the Assembly is ready to vote for the bill.

Narrator: The third step in creating a new law is the Assembly must discuss the bill. The Assembly also invites citizens to talk about the bill's importance. Then the Assembly must vote to approve or veto (reject) the bill. The Assembly members vote to approve the bill. The bill now goes to the Wisconsin Senate.

Senator 1 Feyen: Senators, we need to consider a new bill requiring all public elementary schools in Wisconsin to serve pizza for lunch once a week. Webster Stanley fourth-graders from my district want the law, but I do not see a need for a law requiring all public elementary schools in Wisconsin to serve pizza for lunch each week.

Senator 2: I don't either. We need to hear from the Webster Stanley fourth-graders about why this law is so important.

Senator 3: Welcome, Webster Stanley fourth-graders. Please explain to the Senate why a law requiring all public elementary schools to serve pizza each week is needed.

Citizen 1: When schools serve foods that elementary students don't like, a lot of food is wasted.

Citizen 2: Most elementary students like pizza and won't waste it when their school serves it.

Citizen 3: Pizza can be healthy if the crust is made from whole grain flour and the pizza has low-salt sauce, low-fat and low-salt cheese, and vegetables.

Citizen 4: Children need to eat healthy foods to grow and learn.

Citizen 5: Some children have their best meal of the day at school. They need to eat nutritious, good food at school.

Citizen 6: If all Wisconsin elementary schools serve pizza each week, they will support Wisconsin dairy farmers, grain farmers, and vegetable farmers because schools will use wheat, cheese, and vegetables grown in Wisconsin in pizzas.

Senator 4: Are school districts in favor of this law? Would they be able to serve pizza each week?

Citizen 1: Schools serve pizza regularly for lunch, although not once a week. They should be able to serve pizza each week if they are required to by law.

Senator 1 Feyen: Maybe we should invite the food service workers from school districts to give their views on the law.

Senator 2: The students make a good case for why the law is needed.

Senator 3: I agree. The law will benefit elementary students and Wisconsin farmers.

Senator 4: I think we should vote on this bill.

Narrator: **The fourth step in creating a new law is the Senate members must discuss the bill. The Senate also invites citizens to explain the bill's importance. Then the Senate must vote to approve or veto the bill.** The Senate members vote to approve the bill. The bill now goes to the Governor.

Governor Walker: Well, I never thought fourth-graders would come up with an idea for a bill requiring all public elementary schools in Wisconsin to serve pizza for lunch once a week. I'm surprised that both the Assembly and the Senate passed the bill. If I sign the bill to make it a law, I will make many elementary students in Wisconsin happy. However, they can't vote in the next election. If I sign the bill, I will make Wisconsin farmers happy because they will be able to sell more of their farm products to school districts. Farmers can vote in the next election. I wonder how many citizens throughout Wisconsin support this bill? How many school districts support this bill? I don't think this bill is important enough to become a law. I am vetoing the bill.

Narrator: **The next step in creating a law is the Governor must sign to approve the bill or veto the bill. If the Governor signs the bill, it becomes law. If the Governor vetoes the bill, two-thirds of the Assembly and the Senate must vote to approve the bill in order for the bill to become law.** Because Governor Walker vetoed the bill, the Senators and Representatives must vote again. Two-thirds of all the members of the Assembly and Senate must vote to approve the bill in order for it to become law. What do you think will happen?