



## Joint Budget Committee Staff

Nonpartisan Budget Analysis for Colorado's Legislature

# Memorandum

To: Joint Budget Committee Members  
From: Kelly Shen, JBC Staff (303-866-5434)  
Date: January 15, 2026  
Subject: 2026 Process for JBC Legislation

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This memo outlines the proposed process for drafting and approving JBC bills for the 2026 session, and two decisions for the committee to consider.

## Requesting and Approving JBC Legislation

Similar to previous years, JBC members may request that a bill is sent to draft during any committee meeting. The process has historically been as follows:

1. The JBC makes a motion to send a bill to draft. This motion may include the authority for JBC staff to work with relevant stakeholders and the Department. The motion needs a majority vote to pass, but does not need a unanimous vote.
2. JBC staff will work with the drafter and authorized stakeholders to put together a draft. Any changes that were not expressly approved by the committee will not be included without discussion.
3. JBC and OLLS staff will present the draft to committee members. This happens during weekly or bi-weekly potential legislation reviews, becoming daily or more frequent as we finalize the Long Bill.

Staff would like to clarify:

- **Does the committee always want to take a vote to send a bill to draft?**

Taking a vote gives staff clarity on bills formally sent to draft and makes objections more apparent. However, it does keep the process a bit more formal/cumbersome.

## Introducing JBC Legislation

When a bill draft is presented to the committee, the committee can either decide that they need more time/information/revisions or to finalize the bill for introduction. The JBC will also need delayed bill permission to have the bill introduced.

Finalizing a bill for introduction requires a unanimous vote and decisions on the following:

- Prime sponsors and co-sponsors;

- If the bill will start in the House or Senate;
- When the bill should run; and
- Permission for JBC and OLLS staff to make technical adjustments, such as adding an appropriations clause.

In the past, bills have been introduced in “packages” – running with the supplemental budget bills, Long Bill, or as of last year, as a third package after the Long Bill. A handful of bills have run outside of these packages.

Staff would like to clarify:

- **How would the committee like to approach bill introduction this year?**

Including bills in “packages” makes them easier to track, allows bill numbers to be organized sequentially within a “package”, and may make it easier for these bills to move through the legislative process together. However, very large numbers of bills in a package can be cumbersome and cause issues such as a concentrated administrative effort for staff, and long bill lists for committee meetings and floor discussion. The Office of Legislative Legal Services (OLLS) has indicated that, with the particularly high number of JBC bills in recent years, a more evenly distributed workload would significantly help their office as well as fiscal notes/House/Senate staff.

JBC staff believes that the committee could consider multiple, smaller bill packages that run with (and without) supplemental budget bills and the Long Bill. This could look like:

- one supplemental package;
- one package (if needed) between supplementals and the Long Bill;
- the Long Bill package; and
- subsequent packages depending on the amount and complexity of bills proposed.

Alternatively, the Committee could run bills individually outside of the supplemental and long bill packages.

## Combining JBC Legislation

OLLS and JBC staff continue to seek options for combining JBC bills to reduce the administrative and procedural effort associated with each bill. However, we had limited success combining bills last year due to single subject requirements for bills and bill titles. OLLS staff anticipates that opportunities to dramatically reduce the number of bills seem unlikely. However, a few options for consolidation may arise, such as with the joint transfer bill that combines cash fund to General Fund transfers.