

**From:** Greg Foster <GregFoster@schouse.gov>  
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**Subject:** Hooray, It's Crossover Week!!!

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So ... What the heck does that mean? Well, here's a backgrounder of everything you've ever wanted to know (or didn't want to know) about Crossover Deadline:

*(And, as a quick disclaimer – The following mainly focuses on the Deadline as it pertains to the House. For better clarification on the Senate's Rules, please contact the House of Lords directly as I only speak for the House of Commons.)*

### **What is Crossover?**

Crossover Deadline is established in each Legislative Body by their Rules. Both Chambers have Rules ([House Rule 5.12](#) & [Senate Rule 47](#)) setting the annual Crossover Deadline as May 1<sup>st</sup>. That means a bill originating in one body must be received in the other body by the May 1<sup>st</sup> Crossover Deadline to receive normal consideration for that year's Legislative session.

- Example: A House bill on the calendar today up for 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, must favorably receive 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, 3<sup>rd</sup> reading AND be sent to AND received in the Senate by May 1<sup>st</sup> in order for the Senate to consider this bill under the normal legislative process.
- Senate bills already in the House, and similarly, House Bills already in the Senate are not subject to the Crossover Deadline since they've already been passed out of one Body and received by the other.
- Additionally, Bills back in the originating chamber on amendments from the other chamber have already met this Crossover requirement.
- Crossover Deadline is a set date. The recent House and Senate furlough weeks DO NOT change or back up this Deadline.

### **There's an "Introduction Deadline" in the House that's already passed?**

Yep, and this one matters because we're in the second year of a two year session. The House has a Rule (also stated in Rule 5.12) that says a bills must be introduced before April 15<sup>th</sup> to receive normal consideration on the House Floor during the second year of the two year session. After this deadline, a bill can still be introduced, read for the 1<sup>st</sup> time and referred to Committee BUT CANNOT be taken up for 2<sup>nd</sup> reading without first receiving a 2/3 vote in the House (of those Members present and voting) agreeing to its debate.

- Similarly, even though the House Members were furloughed the week of this April 15<sup>th</sup> Deadline, the furlough weeks DID NOT change or back up this Deadline.

### **Is there any way around the Crossover Deadline?**

Yes, but it requires a super-majority. The receiving body must first achieve a 2/3 vote (of those Members present and voting) on these post-Crossover bills just to take up legislation for debate. This is more difficult and rarely accomplished but is in place to allow matters of extreme importance an opportunity to be considered, even if they come up late in the session. This type of Crossover "escape clause" is usually only employed in rare legislative fixes that arose very suddenly and are almost universally agreed upon by both bodies.

### **Why do we have a Crossover Deadline?**

It establishes a set workload for each Body going into the final weeks of the Legislative session. After the Deadline, each body knows exactly what bills are "on their plate" for the rest of the year and gives them time to properly vet bills through the normal legislative process. It also prevents one Body from passing a major piece of legislation in the final days of the session and laying blame for the bills failure at the feet of the other Body because it did not quickly pass the bill in the last days of session.

### **A few notable notes about the Crossover Deadline:**

- The Crossover Deadline is ON (not before & not after) the May 1<sup>st</sup> calendar date, whether or not it is a

Legislative session day ... For example, in the House, bills must be received in the House by 5:00 pm or by adjournment of the House on May 1<sup>st</sup>, whichever occurs later.

- Bills that have already crossed over AND bills back in the originating body on amendments from the other DO NOT fall under this deadline as they have previously “crossed over” from one body to the other ... So expect to see these bills on the House Calendar passed over to give Members more time to debate those bills that are subject to this Deadline
- Crossover is more important in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 2-year Legislative session. Bills passed after the Crossover Deadline in the 1<sup>st</sup> year are still active and can be taken up under normal practice by the other body during the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. HOWEVER, all unpassed legislation effectively dies at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year Legislative session as a new election will be held and a brand new General Assembly organized.

I hope this helps explain what exactly Crossover Week is all about. Expect to see some longer than usual days on the House Floor this week as we try to address the bills on our calendar subject to this Deadline. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about the Crossover Deadline or which bills have met this requirement.

Best,

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