

PUT ME IN COACH!



**How the law was changed to let
fourteen and fifteen year olds
become bat boys and bat girls.**

Brought to you by:

**Vermont Department of Labor
and
The Vermont Lake Monsters**





A bat boy or bat girl under the age of sixteen can work night games when other kids their age cannot work past 7:00 p.m. This is because of a law passed by the Vermont state legislature. Before that time, workers under sixteen were not allowed to work later than 7:00 p.m., except as an actor or other performer in radio or television and with special permission. The bat boy/bat girl law added workers at baseball games to this list.



Meet My Friend Bill

There are two (2) basic categories in the legislative process: **bills** and **acts**. A bill is a law in its infant stage. A bill must pass both chambers of the legislature and be signed by the governor in order to become an act. An act is a bill that has survived the legislative process and officially becomes a law.

We can follow the progress of the bill allowing kids under the age of sixteen to work later than 7:00 p.m. with parental permission and the approval of the commissioner of the Vermont Department of Labor as an example.

In the beginning . . .

Each year, legislators introduce a variety of different bills. A lawmaker comes up the idea (many times at the request of one of their constituents) and presents it to a **draftsperson**, a lawyer employed by the state specifically to write laws. The draftsperson must do more than just write the bill. They must also research current laws and find the sections that will be affected by the new bill. In many cases, the bills just rewrite current **statutes** (laws in book form). In other cases, entirely new sections are created.

Once a bill has been drafted, the legislator who requested it, introduces the bill. In order to become law, a bill must pass both the House and the Senate.

First, a bill is referred to one of the standing committees - General & Military Affairs, for example. Most work on bills is done in committee. The committee then takes testimony on the bill and does one of four things. The committee can recommend the bill as "Favorable." The committee can also change the bill and report it as "F/W/A - Favorable with Amendment." Although rare, a committee can also report a bill as "Unfavorable." A committee can also vote to "bury" a bill, making sure that it will not emerge from the committee room to the entire House or Senate floor.

Assuming a committee has recommended a bill as either “Favorable” or “Favorable with Amendment,” the bill is then placed on the Calendar for notice.

Once a bill has passed the House, it goes through the same process in the Senate, or vice versa. Sometimes, the House and Senate will pass different versions of the same bill. When this occurs, a Committee of Conference is appointed. This is usually made up of three House members and three Senate members. The committee of conference tries to reconcile the differences between the two versions. After a compromise has been reached, the members of the committee go back to the House and Senate and report on the final version. The House and Senate must **concur**, or agree.

Sign on the dotted line . . .

The next step for the bill is the Governor’s desk. The Governor must sign the bill in order for it to become law. The Governor may also return the bill with his objections, or **veto** it. If this happens, two-thirds of the House and two-thirds of the Senate can override the Governor’s veto. A bill can also become law if the governor does not return it to the legislature within five days. An exception is made if the legislature goes home before the Governor has a chance to return the bill.

BILL PLAYS BALL

Many things can be compared to baseball. We can even compare the progress of The Batboy Bill to a regular nine-inning baseball game...

Final	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	H	R	E
SENATE												
HOUSE												

Inning 1

January 4, 2000
The Batboy/Batgirl bill is read for the first time. The bill is referred to a House committee.

Inning 3

February 23, 2000
The bill passes second reading in the House on a “voice vote.”

Inning 2

After taking testimony on the bill, the committee makes changes and reports the bill “Favorable With Amendment.”

Inning 4

February 24, 2000
The Batboy/Batgirl bill is sent to the Senate, read the first time, and referred to the Committee on General Affairs & Housing.



Inning 6

The Batboy/Batgirl bill passes the Senate. Since the Senate version is different than the House version, the House must agree to the Senate changes.



Inning 5

The Senate Committee holds hearings, makes its own changes, and reports the bill "Favorable With Amendment."

Seventh Inning Stretch

The House of Representatives approves the Senate changes. The bill is sent to the Governor for his signature.

Bottom of the Ninth

Act 69 takes effect July 1, 2000, allowing workers under the age of 16 at baseball games to work past 7:00 p.m.

Inning 8

Governor Dean signs the bill into law. The Batboy/Batgirl bill becomes Act 69 of the 1999-2000 biennium.

For more information on the legislature, try the following sources:

www.leg.state.vt.us
www.rutlandherald.com
www.burlingtonfreepress.com
www.ncsl.org

For more information about becoming a batboy or batgirl, contact:

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