



# CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE LEGISLATION SUBMISSION CHECKLIST



**SUBMIT BY FEBRUARY 5, 2026**  
[www.speechanddebate.org/congress-submission](http://www.speechanddebate.org/congress-submission)



Before submitting your student-written legislation, ask yourself the following questions to ensure it meets the criteria for consideration in the 2026 National Tournament Docket!

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☐ **Is your legislation a bill, a resolution, or a Constitutional amendment?**

If your legislation outlines how a policy would be implemented, it's a **bill**. If it expresses a belief, value, or position and urges or suggests further action, it's a **resolution**. If it proposes an official change to the U.S. Constitution, it's an **amendment**. Be sure you've selected the correct type of legislation. Also, ask yourself: ***Does the federal government have the authority to carry out the actions in your bill or amendment?*** If not, consider writing it as a resolution instead.

☐ **Is the idea for your legislation fresh, unique, and timely?**

Repeating topics previously used in other debate formats is generally not considered “fresh,” as it encourages students to rely on old research rather than engage in new, original analysis. Does your topic offer a unique perspective on an issue? Has it been featured in recent media coverage, or is it something that was more relevant in the past but has since lost urgency or significance?

☐ **Can you find at least three recent articles that support your legislation and three that oppose it? Are those sources credible and well-researched?**

Is there genuine opportunity for students to debate a point of view that goes against your proposed legislation? If everyone agrees your legislation is a good idea, you may want to reconsider the language of the legislation to make it more debatable. Judges look for clash in debate, so consider including provisions that bring nuance and layers to an issue as you craft your bill, resolution, or amendment.

# SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

☐ **Does your legislation allow for a variety of beliefs and ideas to be debated?**

We welcome submissions from a variety of ideological and political perspectives, and we ask students to select balanced topics that provide meaningful clash. Our topic and wording committees use the [NSDA Topic Rubric](#) to guide their process. Have you done the same?

☐ **Did you use the NSDA-provided template and save your file as a Word document?**

When you submit your legislation, it must use the NSDA templates and be saved as a Word document (.docx). Check out the resources on the [submission page](#) for instructions on how to convert your document. Don't hesitate to email [info@speechanddebate.org](mailto:info@speechanddebate.org) if you need additional assistance!

☐ **Is your submission your own original content?**

The legislation you submit can be inspired by real bills or resolutions currently being considered by the U.S. Congress, but it must be written in your own words and not copied from existing texts. While it's fine to get feedback or edits from teammates or a coach, only one student can be recognized for each submission.

☐ **Have you had someone copy edit your work?**

Make sure your legislation is grammatically correct, free of spelling errors, avoids acronyms, and is fully complete. Once you submit it, you won't be able to make any edits!

☐ **Have you determined which category of legislation is the best fit for your submission?**

Each student is welcome to submit one piece of legislation for each of the ten categories of legislation—be sure to select the best fit! Your legislation will be evaluated in comparison to the others in that category.

☐ **Do you have all of the information you need to complete your submission?**

When you submit your legislation, you'll be asked to provide your coach's name and your coach's email address. You'll also need to know your NSDA ID number and your NSDA District, which both can be found on your [NSDA Account](#) when you log in to the NSDA website.



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