

**Title: Request for Legislation (RFL)**

**Audience:**

Senior Social Studies, specifically fitting for Law Studies 12, Political Studies 12, or Social Justice 12

**Overview:**

The suggestion is to utilize the educational framework of backward design and to do this lesson after teaching students about how a Bill becomes a Law (from First Reading to Royal Assent). That said, it could also be done before to 'follow' the steps of the law-making process. Students will identify an issue of concern and design a request for legislation.

**Objectives:**

Students will:

- Describe the pre-legislative process that occurs before a bill is drafted.
- Identify the roles of MLAs, Cabinet Ministers, ministries, and public servants in the Request for Legislation process.
- Evaluate how citizen input, political priorities, and feasibility shape whether an idea moves forward.
- Create and justify their own Request for Legislation proposal addressing a real-world issue in British Columbia.

**Activities and Method:**

**DAY 1:**

**STARTER:**

1. On your own: list of 2-4 laws that you think need to be made or changed.
2. With a partner: share your lists and create new list of 3 (consensus)
3. Group of four/pair up partner groups: share your top 3 list and come to consensus about what are the most important two - then choose one to share with the class
4. Teacher writes each group's top choice on the board and may add some more (see list below):
  - Vaping on public grounds (includes schools!)
  - 15-year-olds and under operating electric bicycles and scooters on roadways and bike lanes
  - Graduated licensing program
  - Provincial voting age (16-year-olds)
  - Tuition-free post-secondary education
  - Indigenous reconciliation
  - Mental health supports
  - Smart device use in schools
  - Environmental protection
  - Amalgamation and reorganization of municipalities under s.92 provincial authority

**Direct Instruction (suggested slides; add images and content as per course and grade level):**

***Request for Legislation\* process in BC:***

The \*RFL is like a **proposal for permission to write a law** — it must show the need, the objectives, and that the proposal aligns with government priorities.

**SLIDE 1: Identifying an Issue or Need:**

- Problems are raised by citizens, MLAs, advocacy groups, ministries, or through government research.

**IDEAS:** Solve a problem/Propose an initiative

**SOURCES - Where do the ideas come from?**

- Executive: Cabinet/political sources (“platform”)
- Public service: government employees
- External: organizations and individuals

***Democracy allows for advocacy, consultation, etc.***

**Local newspapers and councils** - opinion pieces, public hearings

**Provincial** - <https://consultation-portal.leg.bc.ca/>

**Federal** -

<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/consultations/consultingcanadians.html>

**SLIDE 2:**

**FURTHER LOOK:** Students should find two local media sources that are highlighting the issue that they are choosing to propose change(s) to. For example: Regulating the use of e-bikes and scooters on roadways and bicycle lanes.

- “Surge in e-bike adoption brings higher speeds, concerns to Metro Vancouver bike lanes” 17 December, 2024 <https://globalnews.ca/news/10922548/bc-e-bike-speed-concerns/>
- “E-bikes speeding past B.C. regulations” 9 September 2025
- <https://bcitnews.com/photo-e-bikes-speeding-past-b-c-regulations/>

Summarize the keys issues in the stories and determine whether the story supports or is against the amendment that you are proposing.

**DAY 2:**

**SLIDE 3: Policy Development:**

- Ministries research the issue, consult stakeholders, and prepare policy options.

**SLIDE 4: Cabinet Consideration:**

- A Minister may submit a **Request for Legislation (RFL)** to Cabinet for approval to ask Legislative Counsel to draft a bill.

**SLIDE 5: Approval to Draft:**

- If approved, Legislative Counsel (government lawyers) begin drafting the bill text.

**SAMPLE:**

### 3-Column Document

Current	Proposed	Reason
<i>Emily Carr Park Act:</i> Motor vehicles are permitted on all park roadways and driveways and in designated parking areas	Motor vehicles are not permitted except for those used by staff and emergency personnel, and to access certain current parking lots  Further exceptions may be added	To increase the safety of park users, to reduce congestion and noise in the park, and to preserve the natural landscape

### Drafting Instructions

WHIB	Policy
Who	Park users
What	Must not use motor vehicles
When	All day, every day
Where	Throughout the park, except designated parking lots and on the access road to those lots
Why	Increase safety; decrease noise / congestion; preserve the environment
How	Designated parking lots to be identified by the park management board and signposted
How much	Parking fees to be set by the park management board
If (limits / conditions)	Park management board may limit motor vehicle sizes in parking lots by passenger numbers
If not (sanctions)	Impoundment of motor vehicle + fine of \$5000
But (exceptions)	Park staff engaged in park business; emergency personnel if responding to an emergency Special events permitted by the park management board

Office of Legislative Counsel

**RFL CREATION**

Groups (created by Starter Activity) choose an issue/idea and begin research and collaboration to gather evidence and relevant details as per the note-taking sheet below (each student completes their own note-taking sheet).

**Proposed Title of Legislation:**

*(Give your proposed law a clear and concise title.)*

**Problem Statement:**

*Describe the issue or gap in BC law or policy that needs to be addressed. Why is it a problem?*

**Background / Rationale:**

*Provide 2–3 key facts, statistics, or examples that explain why the issue is important.*

**Proposed Solution / Legislative Objective:**

*What do you want government to do? (Create a new program, regulation, or law? Strengthen penalties? Provide funding?)*

**Responsible Ministry:**

*Which BC Ministry would oversee this issue?*

- Education
- Environment and Climate Change Strategy
- Health
- Transportation and Infrastructure
- Housing
- Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Stakeholder Consultation:**

*List groups or individuals who government should talk to (e.g., Indigenous communities, municipalities, students, business groups, etc.).*

**Potential Benefits:**

*List at least two positive outcomes of your proposed legislation.*

**Potential Challenges or Opposition:**

*Identify possible criticisms or barriers.*

**Why Cabinet Should Approve Drafting:**

*Write 2–3 sentences explaining why your proposal aligns with public interest and government priorities.*

- 1. Students complete one 3-Column Document using their own notes to discuss and debate how they will word their proposal:**

Current	Proposed	Reason

- Students will need to find the current legislation, if it exists:  
<https://www.canlii.org/bc>
- They will discuss and decide the change or implementation that they desire.
- Support with reasoning that connects to a government objective, i.e. safety.

**2. Students complete one WHIB Document:**

<u>WHIB</u>	<u>Policy</u>
Who	
What	
When	
Where	
Why	
How	
How much	
If (limits/conditions)	
If not (sanctions)	
But (exceptions)	

**DAY 3:**

**Cabinet Simulation:** Groups take turns acting as the Cabinet Committee to hear each group's proposal (like a pitch meeting).

- Each group presents their RFL in 2 minutes.
- Cabinet Ministers ask 1–2 questions and then “approve,” “reject,” or “request revisions.”

Students are encouraged to take notes while listening (Cabinet Committee) and to use formal language while speaking (presenting or questioning), for example, “Thank you, Minister. Our proposal seeks Cabinet approval to draft legislation addressing...”

**Student Reflection (After Simulation)**

Reflect in writing (½ page to 1 page):

- What did you learn about how laws begin in BC?
- How does government balance public needs, costs, and priorities?
- What was challenging about creating a Request for Legislation?
- How can ordinary citizens influence this early stage of the law-making process?

**Preparation (by teacher and by students)**

Students' prior knowledge of an MLA's role and Ministers' portfolios/functions and fundamentals of democracy and the importance of law-making are assumed.

**Suggested Duration of activity**

3 ~ 75 minutes lessons

**Suggested Learning Outcomes:****Core Competencies**

Communication - Connecting and engaging with others, Acquiring and presenting information

Thinking - Designing and developing, Questioning and investigating, Analyzing and critiquing

Personal and Social - Recognizing personal values and choices

**Social Studies Curricular Competencies**

Big Ideas:

- Political decision-making is shaped by multiple factors including values, power, and governance structures.
- Law and policy evolve to reflect social change and address emerging public needs.

Curricular Competencies:

- Analyze the role of government institutions in creating and implementing laws.
- Assess the significance of civic engagement and advocacy.
- Develop, support, and defend a position with reasoned arguments.
- Communicate ideas and findings using appropriate political and civic vocabulary.

Content Connections:

- Structure and function of the BC government
- Decision-making processes within provincial government
- Development and implementation of public policy

**Materials & Resources:**

Access to the internet

Handout 1: Note-taking sheet (one per student)

Handout 2: 3-Column Document Template and Drafting Instructions Template (one per group)

<https://consultation-portal.leg.bc.ca/>

<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/system/consultations/consultingcanadians.html>

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10922548/bc-e-bike-speed-concerns/>

<https://bcitnews.com/photo-e-bikes-speeding-past-b-c-regulations/>

<https://www.canlii.org/bc>

**Student Reflection Rubric (After Simulation)**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Emerging (1)</b>	<b>Developing (2)</b>	<b>Proficient (3)</b>	<b>Extending (4)</b>
<b>Understanding of the Legislative Process</b>	Demonstrates limited understanding of how a Request for Legislation works or how laws begin.	Shows partial understanding; identifies some steps or roles but lacks clarity or accuracy.	Clearly explains the RFL process and how ideas move toward law.	Provides insightful, detailed understanding and connects it to broader civic or political contexts.
<b>Analysis of Decision-Making &amp; Civic Factors</b>	Minimal or vague discussion of how decisions are made or influenced.	Identifies some factors that affect decision-making (e.g., public interest, cost).	Analyzes how government balances priorities, interests, and evidence.	Deeply evaluates the complexity of decision-making, showing nuanced understanding of competing perspectives.
<b>Personal Reflection &amp; Insight</b>	Little or no personal engagement or connection to the experience.	Some personal reflection: basic comment on what was learned.	Thoughtful reflection; describes personal learning and challenges meaningfully.	Highly reflective and self-aware; demonstrates growth in understanding civic engagement and public policy.
<b>Use of Evidence &amp; Examples</b>	No examples or evidence from the activity.	Mentions some		

**Submitted By:**

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**NOTE:** *The ideas and opinions expressed in this classroom activity belong to their authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. The Parliamentary Education Office only edits for clarity.*

SEE HANDOUTS ON FOLLOWING PAGES

## Handout 1: NOTE-TAKING SHEET

### **Proposed Title of Legislation:**

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### **Background / Rationale:**

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*What do you want government to do? (Create a new program, regulation, or law? Strengthen penalties? Provide funding?)*

### **Responsible Ministry:**

*Which BC Ministry would oversee this issue?*

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- Environment and Climate Change Strategy
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- Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Stakeholder Consultation:**

*List groups or individuals government should talk to (e.g., Indigenous communities, municipalities, students, business groups, etc.).*

**Potential Benefits:**

*List at least two positive outcomes of your proposed legislation.*

**Potential Challenges or Opposition:**

*Identify possible criticisms or barriers.*

**Why Cabinet Should Approve Drafting:**

*Write 2–3 sentences explaining why your proposal aligns with public interest and government priorities.*

**Handout 2: 3 COLUMN DOCUMENT**

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