In the extensive literature on legislative roll-call voting there are few, if any, studies which focus on the question of where conflict occurs in the legislative process. Many analyses of legislative voting suffer from one of two defects: either they are based on a few selected bills considered to be "major issues" by the researcher, or they use only votes on the final passage of bills.

Compared to our understanding of other aspects of legislative voting, very little is known about the frequency of voting and conflict, the rate of conflict, or of the closeness of votes at different stages in the legislative process. To answer these questions, all votes (8529) from the 1968, 1969, 1970, and 1971 sessions of the Louisiana House of Representatives and Senate were tabulated into one of six categories (types of action). These categories are: "bills" (final passage of bills in chamber of origin), "bills from other chamber", "amendments" (to any
type of bill), "procedural questions", "conference committee reports", and "other". Of the 8529 votes, 2051 or 24% were contested. These contested roll-call votes were categorized the same way as all votes for purposes of comparison.

The votes from these four sessions are analyzed from three points of view. First, contested roll-call votes are compared to all roll-call votes by type of action (bill, amendment, etc.) to determine the frequency of voting and conflict on different actions. Table 1 summarizes this analysis. Second, Table 2 tabulates the percentage of contested votes by type of action (again, bill, amendment, etc.). This second approach will indicate the rate of conflict on each type of action in the legislative process. Third, Table 3 contains data on the closeness of contested votes on different types of action, a line of investigation which will identify any tendency for certain actions to produce smaller majorities.

A plurality of both votes and contested votes are on bills; and a majority of votes and contested votes come on both types of bills (from chamber of origin and from other chamber). Table 1 also indicates that proportionately there are nearly three times as many contested votes on procedural issues than there are total votes on such questions. Finally, in looking at the overall voting picture in four sessions of the House and Senate, one can note that bills from the other chamber are not contested in proportion to their percentage of roll-call votes. A possible explanation would be that having passed one of the two chambers tends to legitimize a measure, thus reducing conflict in the other chamber.

In the House of Representatives either a large plurality or a majority of both roll-call votes and contested votes occur on bills which originate in that chamber. While there is some minor variation from one session to another, contested votes are roughly proportional to the percentage of all votes. This table does indicate that procedural questions are disproportionately contested in all sessions. At the minimum (1970) there are more than three times as many contested procedural votes as votes on that type of measure.

The tabulation of Senate voting suggests that the Louisiana Senate may respond to the House in that in three of four sessions a plurality of Senate roll-call votes occurred on the final passage of bills from the House. The fact that the House outnumbers the Senate by 105 to 39 probably results in there being more bills introduced into the House. Amendments accounted for at least a plurality of all contested votes in every session except 1971. Amendments

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4 The term "Bill" is a broad one including several different but related types of legislative action—joint resolutions, House of Senate resolutions, concurrent resolutions and bills. These types of actions may be defined as follows:
- **Joint Resolutions**: form for constitutional amendment proposals.
- **House or Senate Resolutions**: presented in and passed by one house only, may regulate internal procedure or be statements of opinion. (This category may overlap somewhat with "procedural questions").
- **Concurrent Resolutions**: similar to above but passed by both houses but in some cases may have effect of law.
- **Bills**: all normal legislative business.


5 Contested votes are those on which 10% or more of the voting members were in the minority.