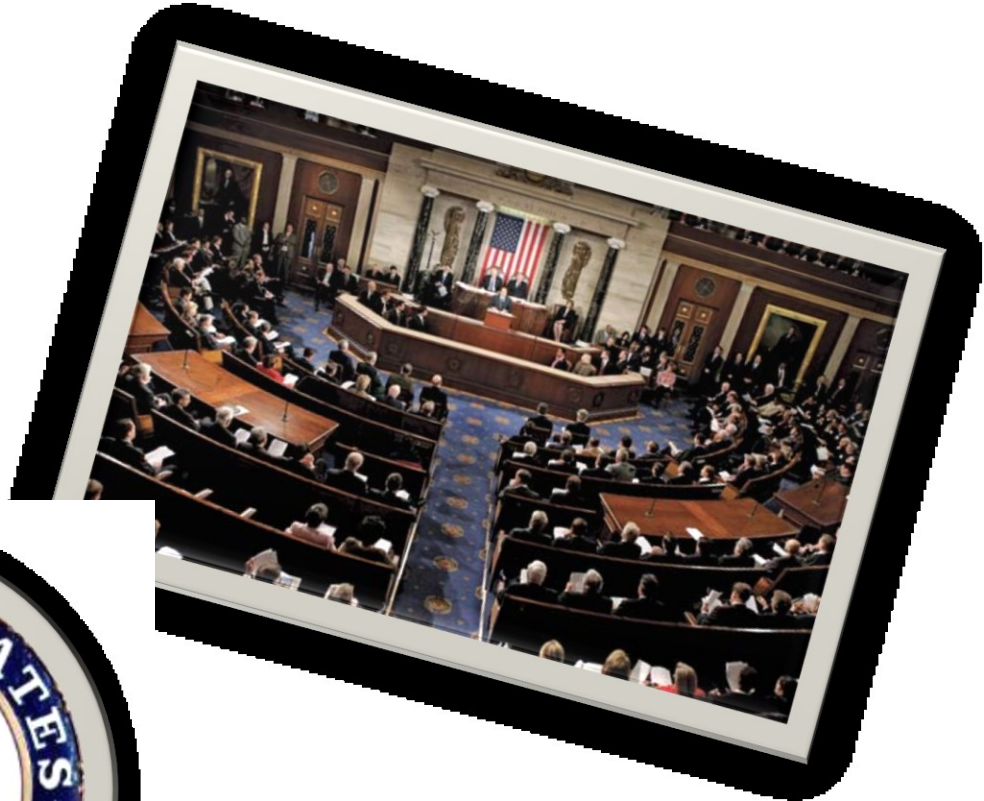


THE LEGISLATION SYSTEM IN THE U.S.

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS



THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

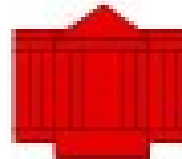
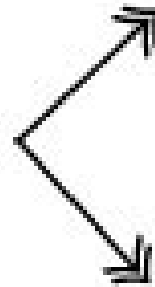
- ◉ Represents the legislative branch of government
- ◉ Is made up of two houses: - House of Representatives
- Senate
- ◉ This two house system is known as a bicameral legislature
- ◉ The primary duty of Congress is to write, debate, and pass bills, which are then passed on to the president for approval

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

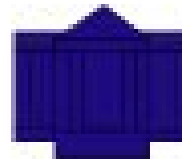


The
U.S.
Capitol

CONGRESS



HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES

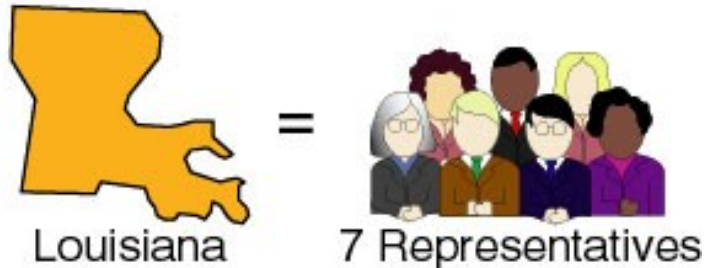


SENATE

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

- ◉ Lower of the two legislative bodies
- ◉ 435 members - every two years voters get to choose all of them
- ◉ Number of representatives per state depend upon that state's population
- ◉ Each member represents an area of a state, known as a congressional district
- ◉ The number of representatives is based on the number of districts in a state
- ◉ Each state is guaranteed one seat
- ◉ Every ten years, the U.S. Census Bureau counts the population of the states to determine the number of districts in each state

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



- Alaska, North Dakota, South Dakota Montana and Wyoming are sparsely populated states -> 1 representative
- California: 53
- Texas: 32
- New York: 29

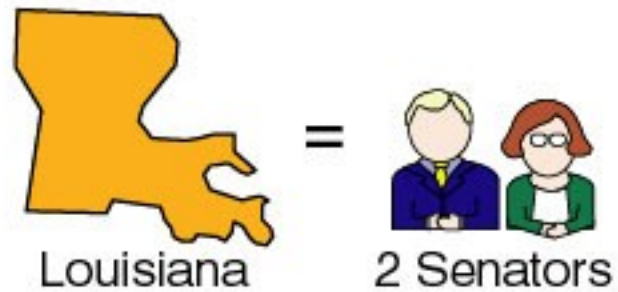
REPRESENTATIVES

- ⦿ Elected for two-year terms
- ⦿ Must be 25 years old
- ⦿ Citizen for at least seven years
- ⦿ Resident of the state from which they are elected
- ⦿ Five additional members from Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia represent their constituencies in the House. While they may participate in the debates, they cannot vote.

THE SENATE

- Upper legislative chamber in the federal government
- 100 members - each state is granted 2 senators who represent the state
- Voters get to choose one third every two years
- More powerful body

THE SENATE



REPRESENTATIVES

- ⦿ Elected for six-year terms
- ⦿ Must be 30 years old
- ⦿ Citizen for at least nine years
- ⦿ Resident of the state from which they are elected

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

- Is charged with drafting, debating and sending bills to the president to be signed into law
- Each Congress has usually two sessions, one per each year, since members of the House of Representatives serve two-year terms

THE CONGRESS: TYPES OF SESSION

- ◉ There are different types of sessions, during which either one or both chambers of Congress meet
- ◉ The Constitution requires a quorum, or majority, to be present in order for the chambers to conduct business
- ◉ Types:
 - Regular session
 - Closed session
 - Joint session
 - “Lame Duck” session
 - Special session

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

◎ Introduction

- Only a member of Congress (House or Senate) can introduce the bill for consideration
- The Representative or Senator who introduces the bill becomes its "sponsor"
- Other legislators who support the bill or work on its preparation can ask to be listed as "co-sponsors"
- Important bills usually have several co-sponsors
- Co-sponsors are not required to sign the bill
- A bill or resolution has officially been introduced when it has been assigned a number (H.R. # for House Bills or S. # for Senate Bills), and printed in the Congressional Record by the Government Printing Office

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- ◉ **Committee Consideration**
 - Committee considers the bill in detail
- ◉ **Committee Action**
- ◉ **Subcommittee Review**
 - The committee sends some bills to a subcommittee for further study and public hearings
- ◉ **Mark Up**
 - If the subcommittee decides to report a bill back to the full committee for approval, they may first make changes and amendments to it
- ◉ **Committee Action - Reporting a Bill**
 - The full committee now reviews the deliberations and recommendations of the subcommittee

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- ◎ **Publication of Committee Report**
 - Once a bill has been reported a report about the bill is written and published. The report will include the purpose of the bill and its impact on existing laws
- ◎ **Floor Action - Legislative Calendar**
 - The bill will now be placed on the legislative calendar of the House or Senate
- ◎ **Debate**
 - Debate for and against the bill proceeds before the full House and Senate according to strict rules of consideration and debate
- ◎ **Voting**
 - Once debate has ended and any amendments to the bill have been approved, the full membership will vote for or against the bill

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

- ◎ **Bill Referred to Other Chamber**
 - Bills approved by one chamber of Congress (House or Senate) are now sent to the other chamber. The other chamber may approve, reject, ignore, or amend the bill.
- ◎ **Conference Committee**
 - If the bill is changed, a conference committee made up of members of both chambers will be formed. The conference committee works to reconcile differences between the Senate and House versions of the bill.
- ◎ **Final Action - Enrollment**
 - Once both the House and Senate have approved the bill in identical form, it becomes enrolled and sent to the President of the United States. The President may sign the bill into law. The President can also take no action on the bill for ten days while Congress is in session and the bill will automatically become law. If the President is opposed to the bill, he can veto it. If he takes no action on the bill for ten days after Congress has adjourned their second session, the bill dies. This action is called a "pocket veto."

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

○ Overriding the Veto

- Congress can attempt to override a presidential veto of a bill and force it into law, but doing so requires a 2/3 vote by a quorum of members in both the House and Senate.

VOCABULARY

- ◉ Bicameral - consisting of two chambers
- ◉ Bill - a form or draft of a proposed statute presented to a legislature, but not yet enacted or passed and made law
- ◉ Amendment - an addition, alteration, or improvement to a motion, document, etc.
- ◉ Reconcile - to bring into agreement or harmony
- ◉ Adjourned - to suspend a session or meeting till another time or indefinitely

Thank You!