

A dark wood desk with a blue pen and a glass in the background.

Congress

The People's Branch

Congressional Facts

- Terms and Sessions
 - Terms= 2yrs
 - Two Sessions per term (1yr. Each)
 - Recess= vacation
 - Special Sessions- President can force Congress to convene (only 26 times)

House of Representatives

- The “Lower House”
- “The People’s Voice” - regional issues
- 2 year term, no limit, 435 members
 - Faster paced
 - Always looking at the next election
- Leader- Speaker of the House- official
 - Many rules= much power for Speaker
 - Party leadership Majority/Minority Leader and Whips

Senate

Maj. Leader

Maj Whip

- The “Upper House”
- “The world’s greatest deliberative body”
- Equal Representation- 2 per state
- 6 year term, no limit, 100 members
 - Slow and deliberate, Supposed to view the “big picture”
- Leadership-
 - The V P- no power except for a tie,
 - usually led by President Pro Tempore
 - Real leader- Majority Leader- few rules = less power
 - Minority Leader and Whips

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Getting Elected House of Representatives

- 25 year old, reside in the state, 7 yrs a citizen
- \$174,000 per year
- Districts
- Gerrymandering
 - Reapportionment
 - Redistricting
 - Westberry v. Sanders
 - One person one vote, not physical size
 - Safe seats and incumbency

Getting Elected The Senate

- 30 years old, reside in the state you represent, 9 yrs a citizen
- Same pay as House members
- Need lots of \$

I' m just a Bill sitting on Capitol Hill

- Flow chart
- Reality- the little bill dies
- The difference between the House and the The Senate is... The Senate Has:
 - Filibuster
 - Cloture
 - No Rules Committee

I' m Just a Bill... Committees

- Where the work gets done
 - Standing
 - Special/Select
 - Joint
- Chairs
- Investigations and Oversight

I' m Just a Bill...

- Cite the differences between the House and the Senate for the law making process
- Sign or Veto
 - Override 2/3 vote of both houses

The Job as Legislator

- Do you want to be one? Explain
- Do they represent the will of the people or are they sent by the people to represent them?
 - Delegates
 - Trustees
- What are the influences on Lawmakers?
 - Party
 - Constituents
 - Their own political philosophy

Critique of Congress

- They have the lowest approval rating...
- It's okay... they're good