

# Congress



# Objectives



- Compare the Constitutional requirements of the House and Senate.
- List the roles of Congressmen.
- Describe the compensation of Congressmen.

# Background



- The Constitution created a bicameral legislature. This means that there are two houses.
- Each term of Congress lasts two years.
- Congress is in the 118<sup>th</sup> session.

# Size of House and Senate



- Each state is guaranteed one seat in the house regardless of size.
- Constitution provides that representatives will be chosen every two years.
- There are NO set Term limits for the House or Senate.



# Size of House and Senate



- The Senate is fixed at 100 members. Each state has 2 Senators regardless of population of State.
- The House has 435 members. At first the size of the House was 65. The Constitution provides that the total number of seats shall be *apportioned*.
- There are 222 Republicans, 212 Democrats in House
- There are 49 Republicans , 48 Democrats and 3 independents in the Senate

# Reapportionment



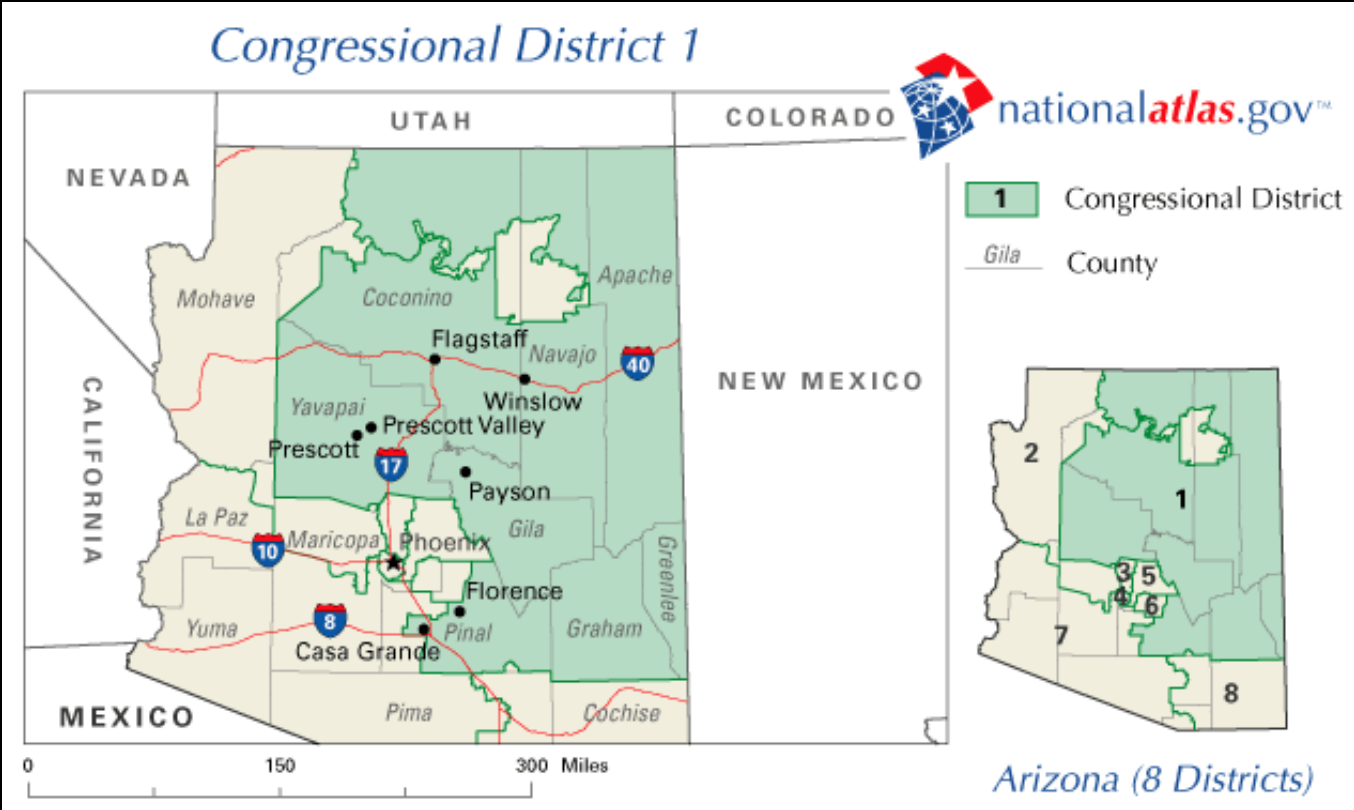
- The seats in the house are reapportioned every ten years. The national census is used to determine population.
- The Reapportionment Act of 1929 set the size of the House at 435.
- Congress has the power to change the number of seats.

# Gerrymandering



- Political districts were and are drawn to benefit a political party or candidate.
- Districts were drawn to concentrate power or spread thin the opposition.
- Historically, the States were carved rural vs. urban. The rural was over represented.

# Gerrymandering



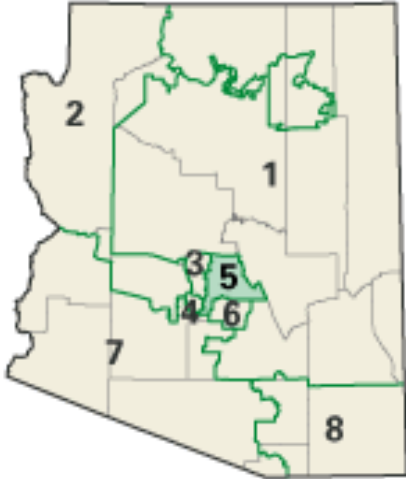
# Gerrymandering



## Congressional District 5



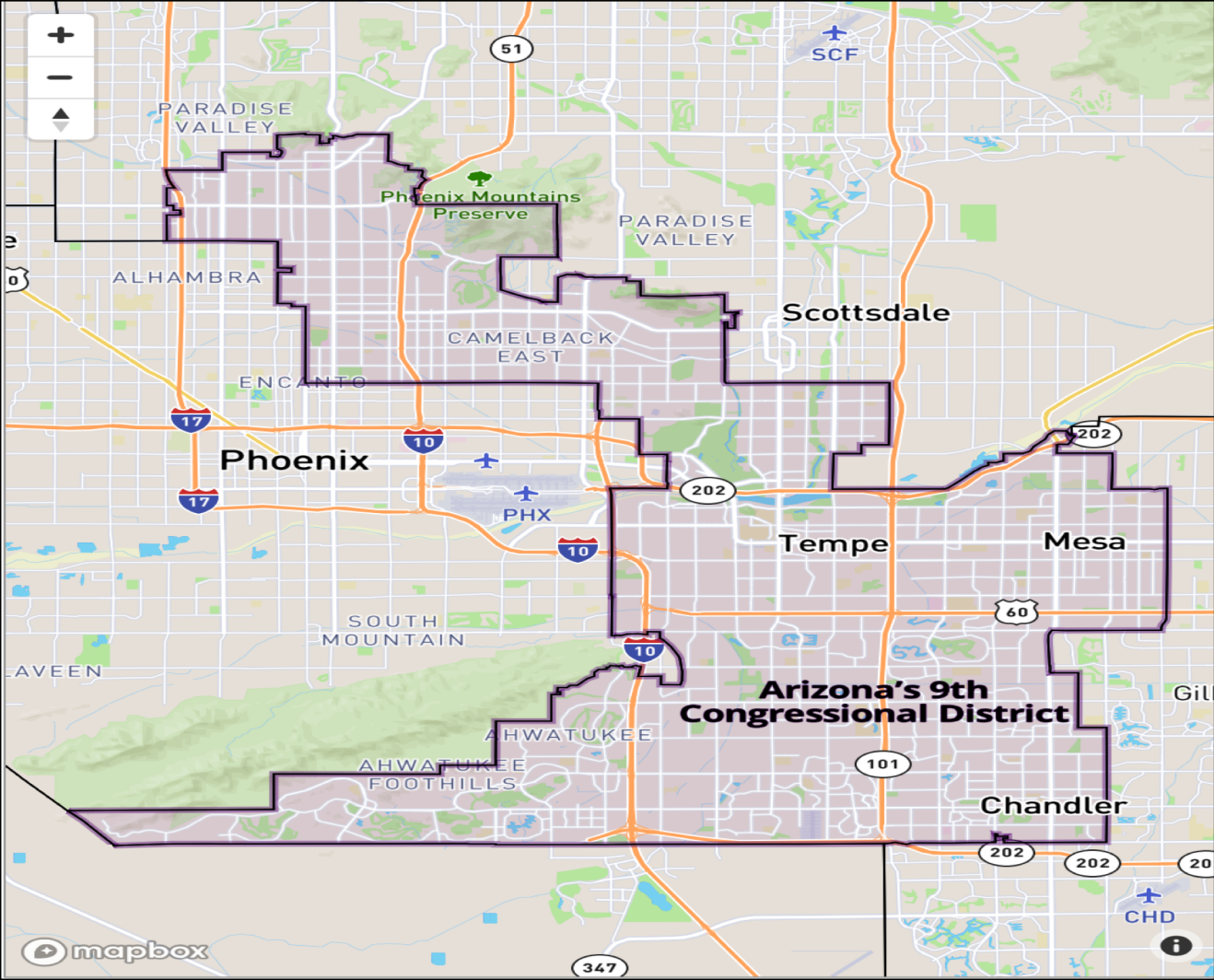
**5** Congressional District  
*Maricopa* County



Arizona (8 Districts)



# Gerrymandering



# Terms



- Bicameral-two house legislature.
- Apportioned-distributed among the states.
- Reapportionment-redistribute the seats in the house.
- Gerrymandering-districts drawn to the advantage of a political party.

# Objectives



- Compare the Constitutional requirements of the House and Senate.
- List the roles of Congressmen.
- Describe the compensation of Congressmen.



# Qualifications for House



- A member of the house must be at least 25 years of age. The member must have been a citizen for at least 7 years, and must inhabit the State they represent.
- Custom requires that the legislator must reside in the district they represent.

# Qualifications for the Senate



- A member of the Senate must be at least 30 years old, a citizen for nine years and inhabit the State he/she represents.
- Originally the Senators were selected by State legislators, the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment changed the practice and now allows all persons to vote for Senators.

# Major Differences



House	Senate
Larger Body-435	Smaller Body-100
2 yr Term	6 yr Term
Smaller constituencies	Larger constituencies
Younger membership	Older membership
Less prestige	More prestige
Lower visibility	Higher visibility

# Duties of Congress



Legislators

Committee Members

Representatives of constituents

Servants of their constituents

Politicians

# Duties of Congress



- As committee members, the members of congress serve on those bodies to which proposed laws are referred.
- The members also exercise an oversight function. They check up on the executive branch, to see if they are acting in line of the policies set by Congress.

# Roles of Congress - Voting



- There are four roles the members can play when they vote. The roles are:

Trustees

Delegates

Partisans

Politicos

# Roles of Congress - Trustees



- Each question placed before the members must be decided on its merit. In this case, the members vote their conscience, regardless of the constituents.



# Roles of Congress - Delegates



- For this role, the members vote the way the constituents want. They act as representatives.

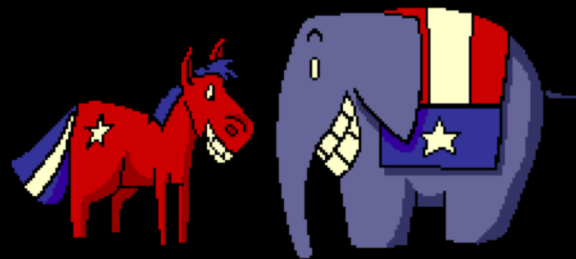




# Roles of Congress - Partisans



- The members vote with the party they are affiliated. They feel duty bound to vote in line with the party.



# Roles of Congress - Politicos



- The members combine the other roles into one. The other roles are conflicting and a Politico needs to balance them.

# Compensation



- Constitution gives Congress the power to set their own pay.
- The yearly salary is \$174,000.
- They are allowed a tax deduction for two residences.
- Travel Allowances

# Compensation – More Benefits



- Reduced life insurance.
- Full medical care for reduced costs at any military hospital.
- Pensions can range up to \$150,000 a year depending on service.
- Mail service, free printing, free parking, free research help, all adds up to over...

# Compensation



Over \$250,000 a year.



# Background on Power



- The Constitution places many restrictions on Congress.
- Congress can not create a national school, require church attendance, and set a minimum age for driver's licenses.

# Two Powers of Congress



Expressed Powers

Implied Powers

# Strict vs. Liberal



At the time of ratification of the Constitution, there was a debate on how Congress should act. Does Congress follow the letter of the law written in the Constitution (Strict) or do they loosely interpret the letter of the law? Example – Students must be in class when the bell rings.



# Expressed Powers



- Most of the powers are found in Article 1 of the Constitution. There are 27 expressed powers found in this section.
- There are powers found in other parts of the Constitution.

# Expressed Powers

- Power to Tax
- Power to Borrow
- Commerce Power
- Currency Power
- Bankruptcy
- Foreign Relations
- War Powers
- Naturalization
- Postal Power
- Copyrights and Patents
- Weights and Measures
- Power over Territories
- Judicial Powers

# Powers of Congress

## • Powers of Senate Only

- Try Impeachments
- Ratify treaties
- Confirm all federal judges, ambassadors, cabinet members, and other officials

## • Powers of House Only

- Bring Impeachments
- Originate Tax Bills

# Necessary and Proper Clause



- This authorizes Congress to “make all laws which are necessary and proper for carrying into execution the foregoing powers and all other powers vested by this Constitution in the government.”
- Another name for this clause is Elastic.

# Necessary and Proper Clause



- Read the case *McCulloch v. Maryland*.
- What is important about this case in relation to the clause?
- Who decided this case?
- The case can be found in your book.

# Power to Tax



- A tax is a charge levied by government on persons or property to meet public needs.

Two types of taxes:

Direct Tax

Indirect Tax

# Powers of Congress



- The powers of Congress that you are responsible for.
- Currency Power
- War Powers
- Implied Powers
- Inherent Powers

# Congress



**UNIT 2**  
**WHO'S WHO IN CONGRESS**



# Presiding Officers

- Speaker of the House
- Most important and influential member of the house.
- President of the Senate
- Not a member of the senate – the Vice President oversees the Senate.

# Powers of the Leaders



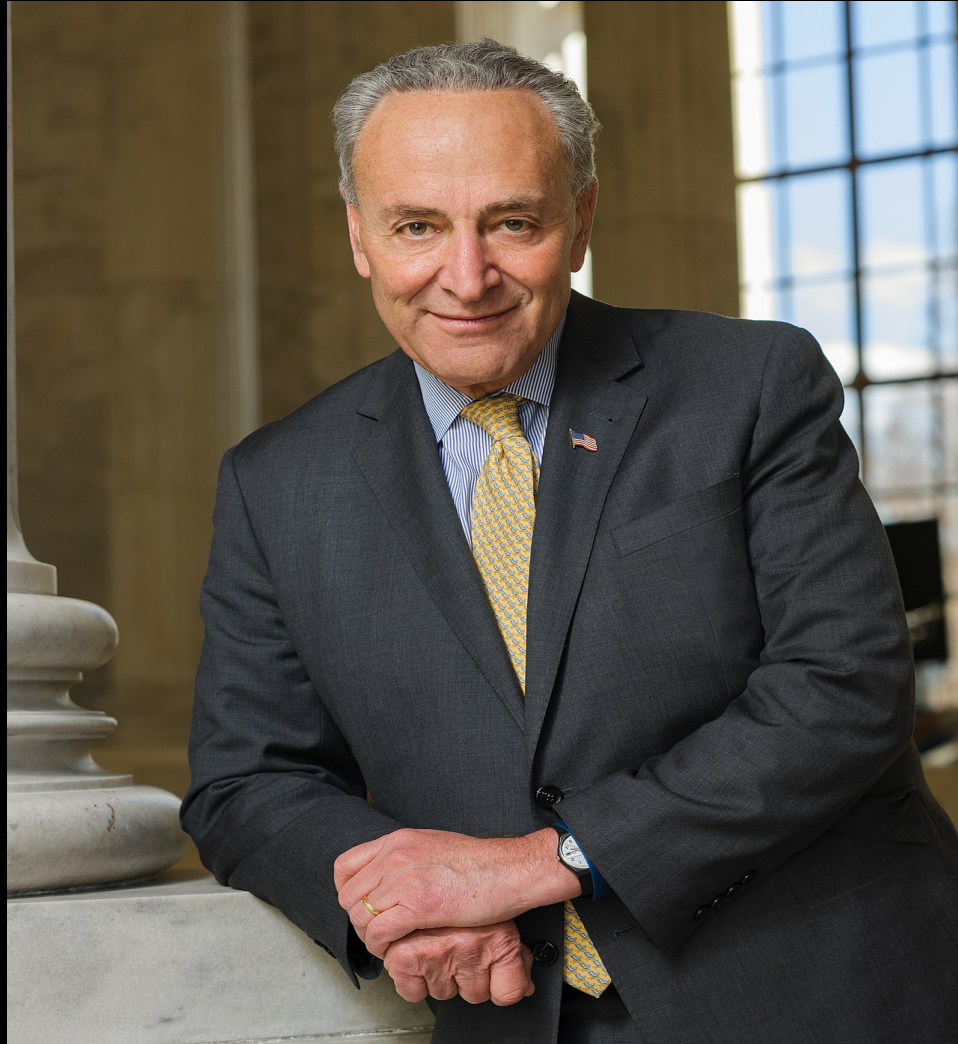
Powers of Speaker of House	Powers of President of Senate
Presides over all sessions of the House	No member may speak until recognized by speaker.
No member may speak until recognized by speaker.	Interprets and applies the rules
Interprets and applies the rules	Refers bills to the standing committees.
Refers bills to standing committee	Puts questions to vote.
Rules on points of order.	Vice-President only votes in case of ties.
Puts questions to a vote.	When Vice-President is not present, there is a president pro tempore of Senate.
Decides the outcome of most votes.	
May debate, appoints a speaker pro tempore	
Must vote in case of tie.	

# President Pro Tempore



- **Patty Murray  
(D-Washington)**
- **Always a leading member of the majority party.**
- **Has all the powers listed for the President of the Senate**

# Senate Majority Leader



- **Chuck Schumer**
- **(D-New York)**
- **Represents the party in control. Helps to steer floor action for their benefit.**

# Senate Minority Leader



- Mitch McConnell
- (R-Kentucky)
- Represents the party not in control.





# Speaker of the House

- Kevin McCarthy  
(D-California)
- Follows the Vice President in the line of succession to the presidency.



# House Majority Leader



- Steve Scalise  
(R-Louisiana)
- Represents the party in control. Helps to steer floor action for their benefit.



# House Minority Leader



- Hakeem Jeffries (D-New York)
- Represents the party not in control.



# Committee Chairmen



- The bulk of the work in Congress is done in committees.
- The chairmen of standing committees are chosen by the majority party.
- The chairmen decide when their committees will meet and which bills they will take up and which witnesses the committee should call.
- Seniority Rule: Most important roles will be held by those who served in congress the longest.

# Committees



- In 1789 the House and Senate each adopted the practice of naming a special committee to consider each bill as it was introduced. By 1974 there were over 300 committees.
- There are now a number of standing committees.

# Standing Committees



House	Senate
Agriculture	Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry
Appropriations	Appropriations
Banking and Financial services	Armed Services
Budget	Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs
Commerce	Budget
Educations and Workforce	Commerce, Science and Transportation
Government Reform and Oversight	Energy and Natural Resources
House Oversight	Environment and Public Works
International Relations	Finance
Judiciary	Foreign Relations
National Security	Government Affairs
Resources	Indian Affairs
Rules	Judiciary
Science	Labor and Human Resources
Small Business	Rules and Administration
Standards of Official Conduct	Small Business
Transportation and Infrastructure	Veterans' Affairs
Veterans' Affairs	
Ways and Means	

# Standing Committees



- In the House, each committee has 9 to 74 members.
- In the Senate, each committee has 12 to 28 members.
- House representatives can only serve on one standing committee, Senators can serve on two.

# Other Committees



- Joint Committees  
Composed of members of both houses.

- Conference Committees  
Temporary joint body created to iron out differences in a version of a bill passed in the house and senate.

# Terms you need to know

- Bill
- Joint Resolution
- Subcommittee
- Quorum
- Filibuster
- Cloture
- Veto
- Pocket Veto