

Congress, the Presidency, and the Legislative Process

(a refresher lecture)



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Congress

- ★ Legislative supremacy
- ★ Bicameralism
 - ★ Two *different* chambers
- ★ **House**: 'populist'; constant campaign
- ★ **Senate**: 'elite'; deliberative
- ★ Different *perspectives*


	House	Senate
Term:	2	6
Size:	435	100
District Size:	~765k	~6.6 mil.
Constituency:	Alike	Diverse



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Representation

- ★ Sociological: background, characteristics
- ★ Agency: the 'Electoral Connection'
 - ★ Incumbency; Districting: gerrymandering
 - ★ Different districts, different outcomes
- ★ Direct patronage ("Pork Barrel", "Earmarks")
 - ★ "Bridge to Nowhere" \$400 million
 - ★ Kelchikan, AK (~\$800M) to Gravina Isl, AK (~\$50M) – To replace *existing* ferry



Democratic
Plan #3
GeoEye Satellite Image

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Organization

- ★ Leadership
 - ★ Institutional: Presiding Officers
 - Very powerful ★ House: Speaker – Kevin McCarthy (R-CA)
 - Not so much power ★ Senate: President (VP) – Kamala Harris (D)
Pres. Pro Tempore – Patty Murray (D-WA)
- ★ Party Leaders: Floor Leaders and Assistants ("Whips")

	House				Senate			
Leader								
Whip								

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Organization

- ★ Rank and File (everyone else)
 - ★ Mostly lawyers; more political professionals
 - ★ More minorities/females (still underrepresented)

	Average Age		Occupation				Religion		Gender/Ethnicity			Service	
	House	Senate	Lawyer	Business	Pol. Pro.	Education	Catholic	Protest.	Female	Black	Hispanic	Military	1 st term
1991-92	53	57	244	189	65	67	142	346	31	26	12	277	44
2019-20	58	63	192	212	231	93	163	293	130	53	50	96	99
Change	+9%	+10%	-21%	+12%	+227%	+39%	+15%	-15%	+318%	+102%	+319%	-65%	+125%

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Organization

- ★ Committees (Standing: 22 House, 17 Senate)
- ★ Why Committees? Workload and Expertise
- ★ Types
 - ★ Standing: permanent, legislative
 - ★ Select (Special, Ad Hoc): temporary, investigative
 - ★ Joint: temporary or permanent, co-ordinate
 - ★ Conference: temporary, 'bill-specific'

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Organization

- ★ Committees
- ★ Seniority system
 - ★ Length of continuous service
 - ★ Chamber seniority: committee assignments
 - ★ Committee seniority: committee chairs
 - ★ Benefits of seniority? Expertise, automatic
 - ★ Drawbacks of seniority? Unresponsive, out of step

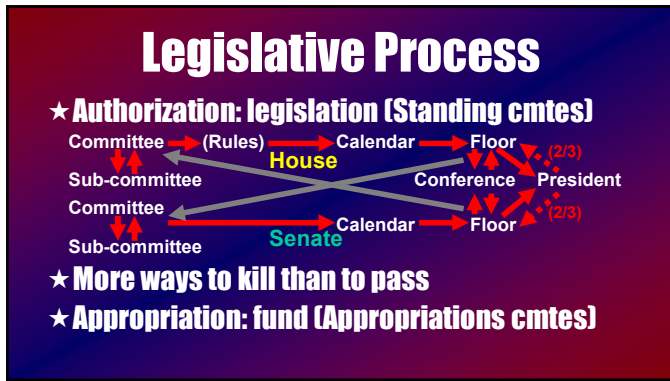
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Legislative Process

- ★ Notes: Debate, Amendments, the Veto
 - ★ House debate and amendments: limits
 - ★ 1 hour/person maximum debate, germane
 - ★ set by Rules Committee
 - ★ Senate debate and amendments: no limits
 - ★ filibuster, cloture (60 votes)
 - ★ President: Veto



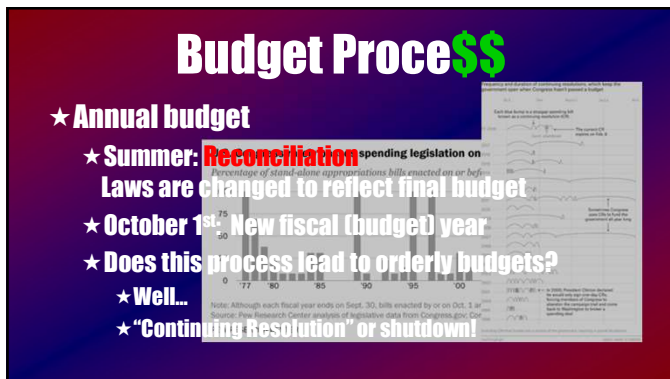
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How Congress Decides

- ★ **Constituents**
 - ★ The “Electoral Connection”
- ★ **Interest Groups**
 - ★ Especially constituent groups: Information
- ★ **Party (especially in House)**
 - ★ Cmte assignments, floor access, Whip system, “logrolling”, the President

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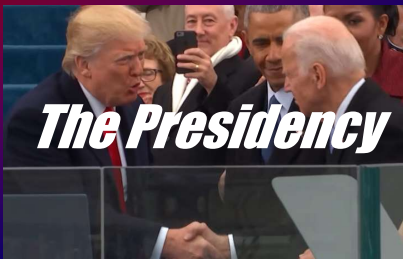
Other Activities

- ★ **Oversight**
 - ★ Especially in appropriations
- ★ **Senate: Advice and Consent**
 - ★ Executive branch, Judicial branch, Treaties (2/3)
- ★ **Impeachment**



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The Presidency



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The Presidency

★ Roles

- ★ Chief of State: National Symbol
- ★ Head of Government: 'CEO'
- ★ Other countries separate
- ★ We combine, but "tether"
- ★ ...to Congress, Courts, People



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The Presidency

★ Constitutional Power

- ★ Expressed power: Constitution
- ★ Delegated power: Congress
- ★ "Inherent" power: ...just 'cuz...
- ★ Not all powers are clear:
e.g., national emergency



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Constitutional/Legal Sources

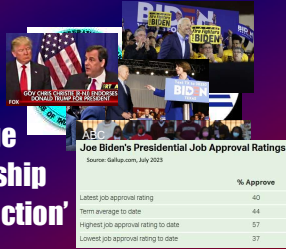
- ★ Appointments ("Patronage"): approx. 5000...
 - ★ White House & Executive Branch
 - ★ Ambassadors
 - ★ Federal judges and Justices
- ★ Executive Branch
 - ★ White House Staff, Executive Office
 - ★ Cabinet, Vice President



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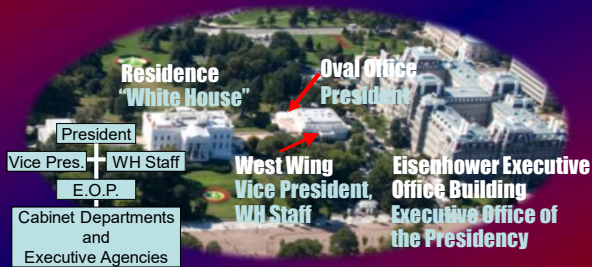
Political/Other Sources

- ★ Elections: mandate
- ★ Political Party: loyalty
- ★ Groups: support
- ★ Media: convey message
- ★ Public Opinion: leadership
- ★ Popularity: 'interim election'



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Organization



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Organization: Limits

★ Cabinet: "Marrying the natives"

When the President says to the Secretary of Agriculture, "I want to put agricultural subsidies," but all of the farmers' groups ... come to the Secretary of Agriculture and say, "We can't live without the subsidies, what does the Secretary of Agriculture do?"

—Political Scientist Shirley Anne Warshaw

★ White House Staff:

- ★ become 'yes' people, shield president from bad news



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Budgeting

★ Annual cycle

★ **March-June:** Agency request to OMB

★ **July-Sept.:** OMB compiles requests

★ **Oct.-Jan.:** President prepares budget

★ **February:** President submits to Congress

★ ***Annual*** federal budget takes 2 years!
