

"I'm here to break 50/50 ties, and here in case the President dies." -- Ms. Weaver

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW:

- Tens of thousands of bills are proposed but only a few hundred to a thousand aren't killed.
- These ideas come from representatives, citizens via representatives, presidential lobbying (State of the Union address), interest groups (AARP, NRA, etc.).
- For the House, you can drop ideas in the Hopper (which is literally a box full of bills that looks cool).
- For the Senate, the bill has to be brought to the floor by the Senator (and not everyone has to be there for that). Congress however does need to be in session for this to happen.

LEGISLATIVE POWERS:

- If I have to throw money at it it's a legislative one.
- Creates or helps create laws and legislations.

NONLEGISLATIVE POWERS:

- Doesn't help create laws or legislation.
- Mostly checks and balances granted to Congress (i.e. rejecting S.Court appointees, etc.)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

- Also known as the lower house.
- Handle local affairs.
- Run for 2 years a term instead of 6 which limits the amount of work that they can do
- Must be 25 to run (the average age is 50 however). The current squo is controlled by older generations.
- The House is based on population, which is based on the VA plan (the one that appeals to bigger states).
- Each state does have one member at the very least.
- We have eight reps and eight districts.
- There are 435 total members in the House.
- Reapportionment is the remeasuring of population and subsequent change. It happens every ten years.
- The states that have the lowest are tied for the least reps, with only one rep. The highest states have a lot and it changes every 10 years.
- It was supposed to be every 100,000 people but they changed it as the population grew.
- **SPEAKER:** the chief presiding officer of the House. Basically the moderator during day to day operations. Also the third in line (because the Senate equivalent is the Vice President who is second in line). To take this role you have to be in the majority party and you have to get voted in by your party.
- The speaker has the power to appoint to manage committee heads. The committee heads are the ones who work the actual committee.
- The house gets a vote.

SENATE

- The Upper House.
- Unlike the house every state has two members. These members handle statewide matters.
- Equal voice in the Senate which is why it's considered the Upper House.
- Must be 30 years old to run and you have a 6 year term.
- Interesting fact: there is a no promotion zone around voting sites; you cannot promote anyone's candidacy within a certain radius of certain areas.
- TECHNICAL LEADER: literally the VP.
- The only one with the power to break 50/50s (and one of few times they pay attention).
- PRO TEMPORE: fourth in line after the House Speaker.
- In charge of the Senate when the VP is not there (which they rarely are). They have the same powers of the VP minus the "break the 50/50". Typically this is also another majority party member.
- Also in charge of managing filibusters (specifically pointed out).
- Still a voting member of a Senate (which is probably why they can't break ties).

COMMON STRUCTURES

- Minority and majority leaders. The majority is whichever party has the most people in Congress. As of 2021, the Democrats hold the House and it is split 50/50 in the Senate (but the vice president serves in charge of the Senate and is the tiebreaker, which means it's really 51/50).
- They are selected by the political party they are from. They're in charge of things such as strategy for policy and whatnot. They also have whips which are assistants which ensure the execution of the will of the leader.
- The whips are also in charge of making sure that the party votes in the same way.
- In the Senate, there is the nongermane rule: there might be stuff on the bill that is completely unrelated but still has leverage to get people to vote a certain way.