

How do you think the increasing diversity of the United States in terms of race, economics, ideology, etc., affects the issues that Congress works on? Can members of Congress effectively represent the concerns of their constituents when they often do not share their constituents' economic and social backgrounds? Do recent technological innovations such as Facebook, Twitter (X), etc., make this an easier goal to achieve or a more difficult one? (750 words)

The 118th Congress took office this January, and their demographic makeup set many new milestones for the nation's legislation. And yet, it is apparent that there is still a large separation to cover based solely on race as a reflection of their constituents. Having a voting body that more accurately represents the demographics of the current population will certainly have a better idea of what the people need from their government.

The seeming increase in diversity within this nation does seem to affect the issues that Congress works on, as they aim to bring about equality and liberty for all citizens. Affirmative action is a topic of strong debate within Congress, as a loud portion argued for its dissolution whilst others maintained that its purpose is to set about equity for those who have been historically denied opportunities for success while having the same skills and degree of merit as others who have been given certain spots. Gender-affirming care and trans rights are also a new point of contention in legislation, as more focus and education about queer existence takes place now. With many activists of a younger age who have better experienced many of the issues we are confronting at this time, maybe it would be better for Congress to better reflect the people and demographics who are being debated on its floor.

As they stand today, the government seems to have a decently strong idea of what their supporters want to see changed, but their actions do not always reflect this. Many Democrats seem to be hesitant to argue for more progressive ideas that younger voters call for, and the same can be said of the Republican Party. More calls for radical change in policy and actions being taken can be seen by the newest generation of voters, and as millennials become the majority population in the nation, one can assume that older politicians are no longer as in touch with their constituents as when their generation was the majority. Some argue for term limits in Congress for this reason, as ensured Congressional turnover would allow politicians who reflect a more current perspective on issues to be voted into office, instead of incumbents who garner votes by apathetic voters and are backed by special interest groups. Limits may also improve the rate at which Congress makes decisions, as the limited span a lawmaker had to act while in office would encourage them to introduce legislation while they can.

One aspect the introduction of term limits would strongly influence is the demographic makeup of the House and Senate, as trends have demonstrated that Congress has become more diverse with each election. More and more diversity of race, gender, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status can be seen as elections go by, but at the moment it still fails to cover the awe inspiring diversity that this country possesses. It goes without saying that the current government often fails to keep in mind what their constituents call for in terms of political and social change, as many who have been in office for such long periods of time are more concerned with those who garner them votes and support them financially during election season, rather than listening to the younger generations who will continue to grow in power as older generations move on.

Social media and technological innovations of the sort have certainly increased the channels and opportunities for politicians to connect with their constituents, in a manner that is not as one-sided as in the past. Where town halls and call-in radio interviews or sending a letter to your legislator was once the method in which one could converse – a time where the lawmaker had much more power in the conversation with their constituent; our current society has a strong ability to make politicians hear their voices. The use of networks like Facebook, X, and Instagram is now essential for anyone running for a Congressional office, to connect with one's audience and ensure that they are happy with the attention

they are receiving. Not having or not using these interactive channels would certainly alienate one's base of supporters, and creating a scene through these networks is often a powerful opportunity to gain more votes and support from across the board.

Congress as it exists better represents the increasingly diverse population of the United States, and yet it still fails to hit the mark and ratio made up by their constituents. Many of the current members do not have a strong relationship with their voting base, especially those incumbent members who first took office when their generation was the majority of the voting population. As more and more issues regarding issues of diversity arise, it would be better for Congress to more accurately reflect those being affected by any legislation passed. Using social networks effectively is a necessary skill many Congressional members will have to use in order to keep office, or for new politicians to gain a seat in the House or Senate.