

CONGRESS

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REPRESENTATION

WHO ELECTS REPRESENTATIVES?

Constituency the people in the district that an MC represents

Principal constituency

Agent elected representative

Delegate represents preferences of the constituency

Trustee represents based on what the MC thinks is best

DESCRIPTIVE REPRESENTATION

	House	Senate	US population
Age	57	61	37
Women	20%	20%	50%
Black	10%	2%	12%
Hispanic	8%	4%	16%
LGBT	1.3%	1%	??? ¹

¹Probably somewhere between 1 and 10%

HOUSE AND SENATE - DIFFERENCES

- Bicameral legislature
- House is “closer” to the people
- Money bills in House
- 435 members, of House, 100 in Senate

HOUSE AND SENATE: DIFFERENCES

	House	Senate
Minimum age	25 years	30 years
Length of citizenship	7 years	9 years
Term length	2 years	6 years (rotates)
Represents how many?	~700,000 today ~30,000 in 1789	max: CA 39 million min: WY 500,000

HOUSE AND SENATE - DIFFERENCES

- House of Representatives

- Organized
- Centralized
- Strong leadership
- Members specialized

- Senate

- Senate more deliberative (historically)
- Leadership weaker
- Less specialization

- Who runs?
 - Don't really know. The ambitious?
- Incumbency - provides an advantage through
 - Casework - constituency services
 - Patronage - pork-barrel legislation
 - Franking privilege

- House districts redrawn every 10 years
- House fixed at 435 members since 1929 law
- West and South generally gain seats, NE and Midwest generally lose
 - TX gained 4 seats post-2010

- Gerrymandering - drawing districts to (dis)favor a party or incumbents
- 2003: TX Republicans redraw districts
 - Democrats fled to Oklahoma to delay vote
 - 2004: Republicans gain five seats, defeating 4 Democratic incumbents²

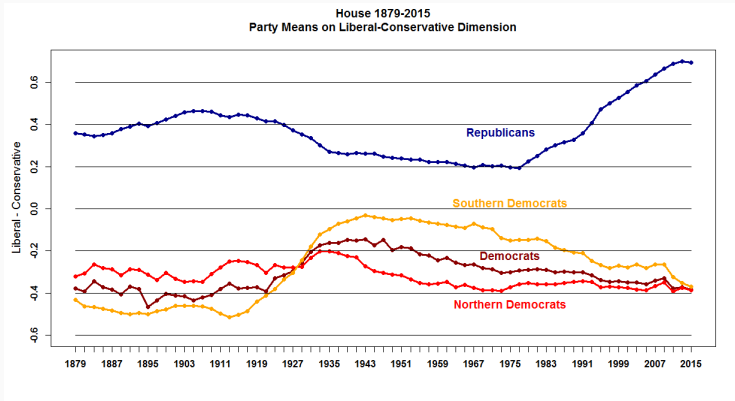
²Supreme Court later orders TX to redraw lines as the plan violated rights of Latino voters

WHAT KINDS OF BILLS PASS CONGRESS?

HOW DOES CONGRESS DECIDE?

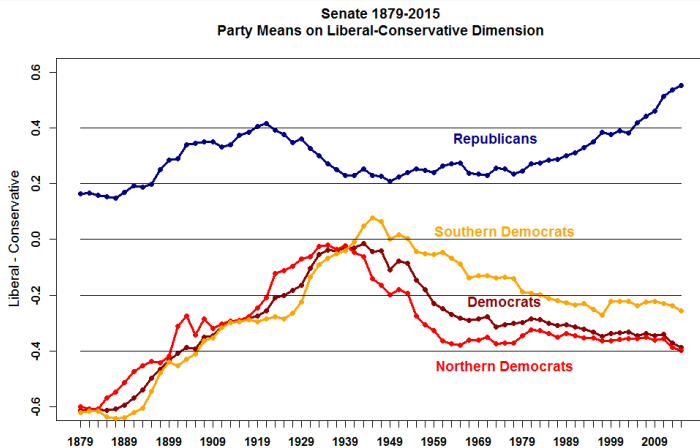
- Constituency
- Interest groups
- Party discipline
- Committee assignments
- Access to the floor
- Whips
- Logrolling
- President

INCREASED POLARIZATION - HOUSE



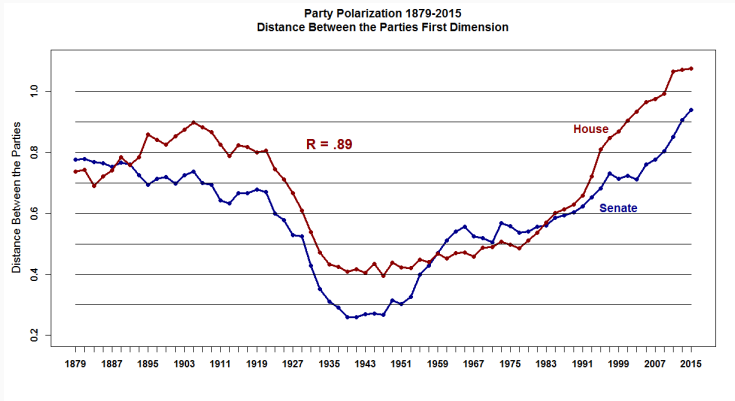
Graph from Poole & Rosenthal, voteview.com

INCREASED POLARIZATION - SENATE



Graph from Poole & Rosenthal, voteview.com

INCREASED POLARIZATION



Graph from Poole & Rosenthal, voteview.com

CONGRESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

- Party caucus/conference at the beginning of each Congressional session to select nomination for Speaker
- Speaker of the House chosen at the beginning of each Congress
 - Presides over House meetings
 - Most important leader of House and party
- Majority leader, minority leader, whips

LEADERSHIP IN THE HOUSE AND SENATE - CURRENT

- Republicans have held the House since 2010
- Republicans have held the Senate since 2014
- **Republicans**
 - Speaker: Paul Ryan (WI)
 - Majority leader:
 - House: Kevin McCarthy (CA)
 - Senate: Mitch McConnell (KY)
 - Whip:
 - House: Steven Scalise (LA)
 - Senate: John Cornyn (TX)
- **Democrats**
 - Minority leader:
 - House: Nancy Pelosi (CA)
 - Senate: Harry Reid (NV)
 - Whip:
 - House: Steny Hoyer (MA)
 - Senate: Dick Durbin (IL)

- Congress has to deal with a huge number of issues, so created the committee system to allow for specialization
- Standing committee - permanent committee with formal rules

STANDING COMMITTEES - HOUSE

- Agriculture
- Appropriations
- Armed services
- Budget
- Education & workforce
- Energy & commerce
- Ethics
- Financial services
- Foreign affairs
- Homeland security
- House administration
- Judiciary
- Natural resources
- Oversight & gvt reform
- Rules
- Science, space, & tech
- Small business
- Transport & Infrastructure
- Veteran's affairs
- Ways & Means

STANDING COMMITTEES - SENATE

- Agriculture, nutrition, & forestry
- Appropriations
- Armed services
- Banking, housing, & urban affairs
- Budget
- Commerce, science, & transportation
- Energy & natural resources
- Environment & public works
- Finance
- Foreign relations
- Health, education, labor, & pensions
- Homeland security & governmental affairs
- Judiciary
- Rules & administration
- Small business & entrepreneurship
- Veterans' affairs

- Jurisdiction is important in determining which committee has power over an issue
 - Does tobacco regulation go to the health committee or the agriculture committee?
- Gatekeepers - decides if a bill will make it out of committee
 - Can also amend
- Responsible for oversight
- Subcommittees

- Decides on a committees agenda
- Usually (though not always) the senior member of the majority party

HOW DO COMMITTEES DECIDE?

- By vote!
- Median voter examples

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

HOW OUR LAWS ARE MADE

US CONSTITUTION

"Congress shall have Power... To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper"
U.S. Constitution Article 1 Section 8

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

THE SENATE

Conference

THE PRESIDENT

Law

Bill

Representative

A State Legislature

The People

Executive Branch

Introducing Legislation

Committee Assignment

Committee Work

Debate & Amend

Put on Calendar

Report

Mark Up

Public Hearings

Meetings

Simple House Conference

Simple Senate Conference

Joint Conference

Final Approval of Legislation

Publication

LEGEND

House of Representatives

Senate

President

Executive Branch

Legislative Branch

Judicial Branch

Other

Callouts:

- House of Representatives:**
 - Introducing Legislation:** A bill is introduced in the House by a member of the House. It must be introduced in the House first.
 - Committee Assignment:** The bill is assigned to a committee. The committee chair has the power to schedule the bill for a hearing.
 - Committee Work:** The committee holds public hearings and debates the bill. The committee can vote to pass the bill, amend it, or reject it.
 - Debate & Amend:** The bill is debated on the House floor. Amendments can be made.
 - Put on Calendar:** The bill is placed on the House calendar for a vote.
 - Report:** The committee reports the bill to the House floor.
 - Mark Up:** The House votes on the bill. Amendments can be made.
 - Public Hearings:** The committee holds public hearings to gather input from citizens.
 - Meetings:** The committee meets to discuss the bill.
 - Simple House Conference:** The House can pass the bill without a conference.
 - Simple Senate Conference:** The Senate can pass the bill without a conference.
 - Joint Conference:** The House and Senate meet to resolve differences between their versions of the bill.
- Senate:**
 - Introducing Legislation:** A bill is introduced in the Senate by a senator. It must be introduced in the Senate first.
 - Committee Assignment:** The bill is assigned to a committee. The committee chair has the power to schedule the bill for a hearing.
 - Committee Work:** The committee holds public hearings and debates the bill. The committee can vote to pass the bill, amend it, or reject it.
 - Debate & Amend:** The bill is debated on the Senate floor. Amendments can be made.
 - Put on Calendar:** The bill is placed on the Senate calendar for a vote.
 - Report:** The committee reports the bill to the Senate floor.
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 - Joint Conference:** The House and Senate meet to resolve differences between their versions of the bill.
- President:**
 - Final Approval of Legislation:** The President can sign the bill into law, veto it, or allow it to become law without a signature.
 - Publication:** The law is published in the Federal Register.

REGULAR PROCEDURE

- Bill received by Speaker/president of Senate
- Assigned to a committee, and/or subcommittee
- (Sub)committee markup
- (House) Rules committee
 - closed rule versus open rule
- Floor debate
 - Senate: filibuster, cloture, and 60-vote Senate
 - Senate: holds and amendments
- Floor vote (possible conference committee)
- Presidential action (sign or veto)
 - If veto, return for another vote, two-thirds of both houses needed to override

Example (Obamacare)

- House passes
- Scott Walker
- House passes Senate (as amended)
- “Reconciliation”

Example (Omnibus bills)

- Usually pass 13 separate appropriations
- More common to package them all together as one omnibus bill
- “Omnibus bill not great, but gvt shutdown otherwise”