

CONGRESS

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Fall 2016

REPRESENTATION

WHO ELECTS REPRESENTATIVES?

Constituency the people in the district that an MC represents

Principal constituency

Principal constituency

Agent elected representative

Delegate represents preferences of the constituency

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

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- 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

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 - Franking privilege

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 - TX gained 4 seats post-2010

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- 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

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WHAT KINDS OF BILLS PASS CONGRESS?

HOW DOES CONGRESS DECIDE?

- Constituency

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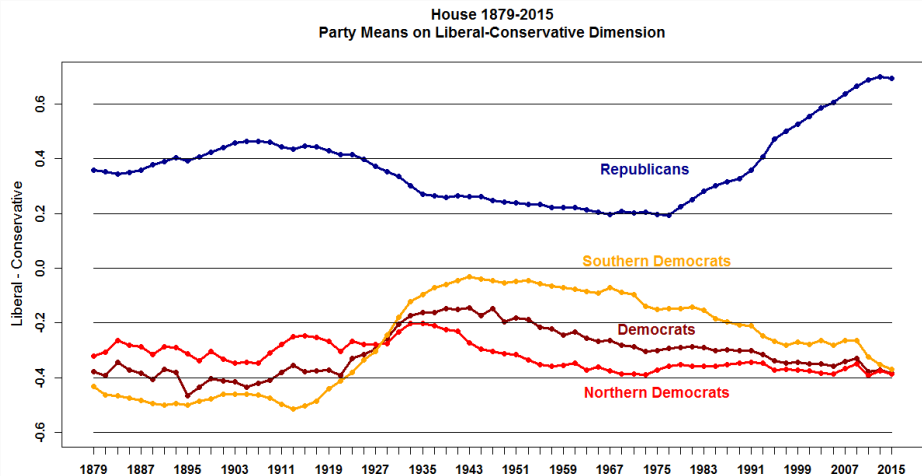
HOW DOES CONGRESS DECIDE?

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

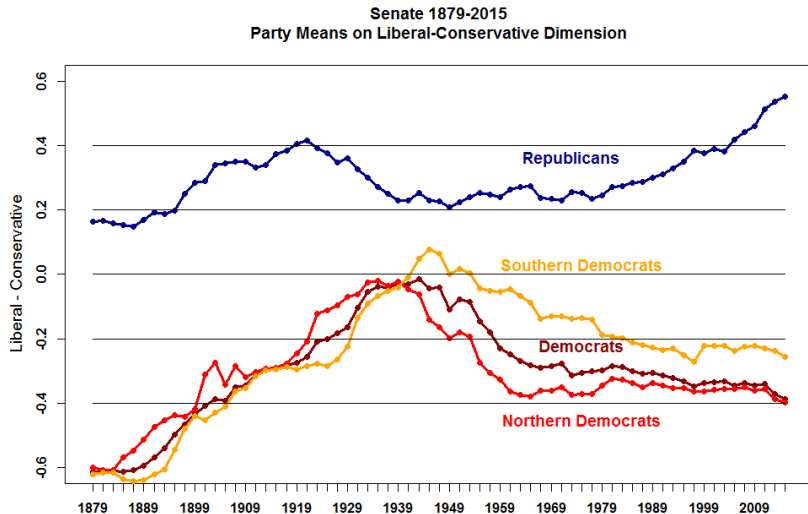
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- President

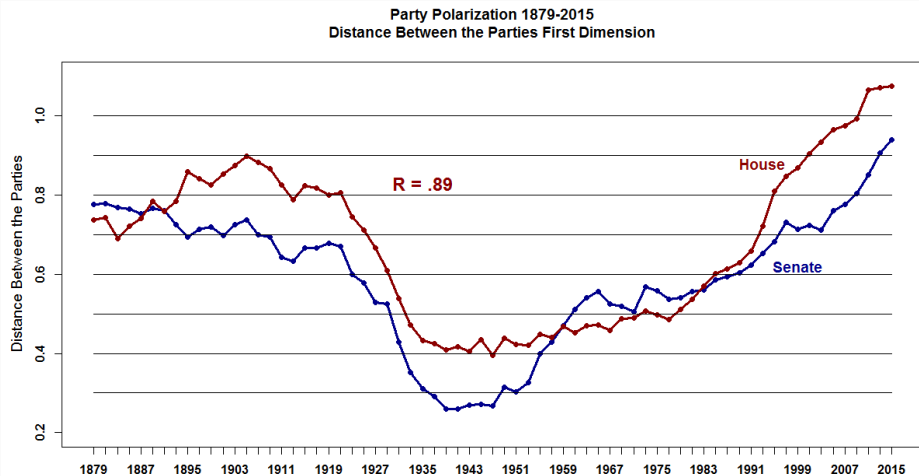
INCREASED POLARIZATION - HOUSE



INCREASED POLARIZATION - SENATE



INCREASED POLARIZATION



CONGRESSIONAL ORGANIZATION

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- Majority leader, minority leader, whips

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 - Senate: Harry Reid (NV)

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- Standing committee - permanent committee with formal rules

- Agriculture

STANDING COMMITTEES - HOUSE

- Agriculture
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- Agriculture
- Appropriations
- Armed services

STANDING COMMITTEES - HOUSE

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STANDING COMMITTEES - HOUSE

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- Budget
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STANDING COMMITTEES - HOUSE

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- Budget
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- Energy & commerce

STANDING COMMITTEES - HOUSE

- Agriculture
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- Energy & commerce
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- Ways & Means

- Agriculture, nutrition, & forestry

STANDING COMMITTEES - SENATE

- Agriculture, nutrition, & forestry
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- Subcommittees

- Decides on a committees agenda

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- Usually (though not always) the senior member of the majority party

HOW DO COMMITTEES DECIDE?

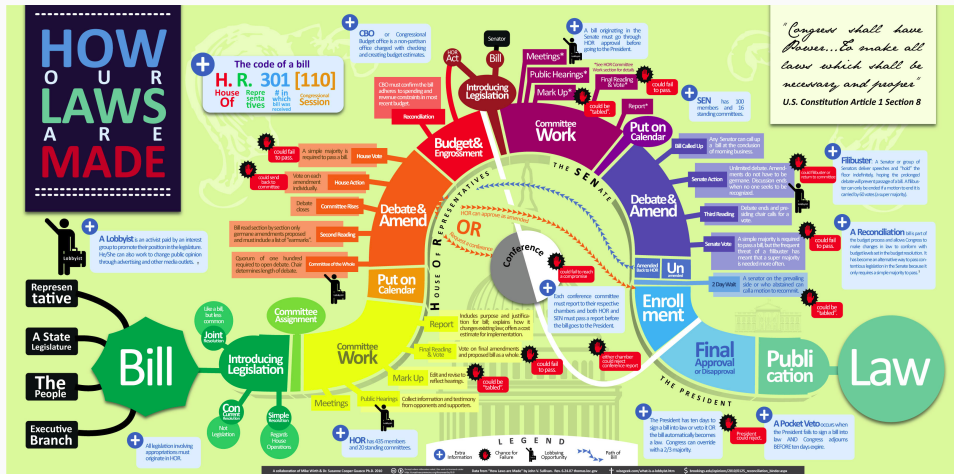
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HOW DO COMMITTEES DECIDE?

- By vote!
- Median voter examples

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

HOW OUR LAWS ARE MADE



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- Presidential action (sign or veto)
 - If veto, return for another vote, two-thirds of both houses needed to override

UNORTHODOX PROCEDURE

Example (Obamacare)

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- “Omnibus bill not great, but gvt shutdown otherwise”