Paper 3 for WRIT190, Draft 1. Started 5/10/21.

Let’s Reform the Senate

# Introduction/Background: Why the Senate is Broken

Summary of paper 2, citing it and diving deeper into the problems that aren’t just diversity or over/underrepresentation (i.e. campaign finance/election stuff, deadlocking/the filibuster). Emphasis on *what* is wrong, with some citations to *why* it’s wrong.

# Solutions: Ways to Fix the Senate

This part lays out each solution in turn for proposed ways to fix the senate. These should be fairly detailed, and link to more in depth readings where possible. The first three are pretty plausible in the current political climate (and could all be done – not mutually exclusive); the last three are much more radical, harder, and mutually exclusive with each other. ([123] could go with either 4 or 5, but not 6.)

For each, note 1) whether it benefits one party more than the other 2) how feasible/likely it is

## 1. Statehood for Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico

Find some current articles and cite the polls of their citizens; make the basic arguments about statehood used to happen all the time / used to be like 60k people in a state (which needs to be CITED thanks) / PR is huge and populous / DC has the highest GDP per capita of any state / no, it’s not unconstitutional to admit DC.

## 2. The Filibuster: Two (and a half) Paths

Summarize the history and purpose of the filibuster, how Senate rules work so it could be removed/changed by 50 votes (+VP), why it’s popular now and how it’s been chipped away at in the past. Then look at solutions:

### Make Them Talk (1/2 solution)

Change the filibuster so senators have to waste time actually talking until the other side gives up rather than the current status of it being automatic. Makes it more painful to use; less likely to be used on small bills; Manchin/Sinema have expressed some acceptance

### Nuke the Filibuster

Remove the filibuster altogether. Blah blah blah.

### Change the Filibuster to be Pro-majoritarian

This is the interesting / weird one! Cite to Democratizing the Senate from Within and explain how this would be different and maybe better than nuking the filibuster flat out.

## 3. Election & Campaign Finance Reform

Some of the problems, esp. stuff like diversity, comes from how we run our elections and what candidates can make it in the system. (most of the overview here should be in the intro probably?) Talk about HR1 and detail some of what it does (link both to actual bill and a summary because the bill is LONGGG). (Maybe find Opening Arguments episode breaking it down?) Also briefly mention the 1970 commission with some similar findings (maybe).

* Ranked choice voting
* caps on corporate donations, end ‘dark money’ superpacs
* publicly fund elections

### Bigger Voting Reform

Brief discussion of ranked choice voting, who supports it, and what effect it would have (more parties??)

## <Here comes the radical stuff!>

## 4. Reallocate Senate seats

*Brief* summary of how the Orts plan would work, and link down to section discussing it in depth. (Maybe put this last / just don’t include it in the list?)

## 5. Redraw the Map

Find a scholarly source…? But link the WSJ article, reference Oregon/Idaho, do a bit more research here. Talk about combining states and splitting states. Point out that this isn’t a particularly partisan reform.

## 6. Abolish the Senate

John Dingell, the longest-serving congressman in American history, thought we should just flat-out abolish the Senate. [link to Atlantic article somewhere reasonable] Some discussion of what that would look like and how feasible it is, maybe with reference to that comparative international paper?

Alternative: replace with a citizen’s veto?

# Proposal: the Senate Reform Act

Now we get deep into the weeds.

## How it Works

explain the actual mechanisms. pictures?

## What it Means

show how states end up, comparative representation graphs (hopefully), ???

## Can We Do It I: Constitutionality

*Brief* section on constitutionality, or note at the top that we’re taking for granted it’s constitutional with link to Orts paper, since that’s gone over in *d e t a i l.*

## Can We Do It II: Political Feasibility

read section IV of orts.

# Conclusion

stuffffff

Call to Action?

STUFF

make the government less powerful 🡪 senate has less power? prob best as counterargument

Citations will probably be on another page, linked, and ideally also in little popup footnotes :D