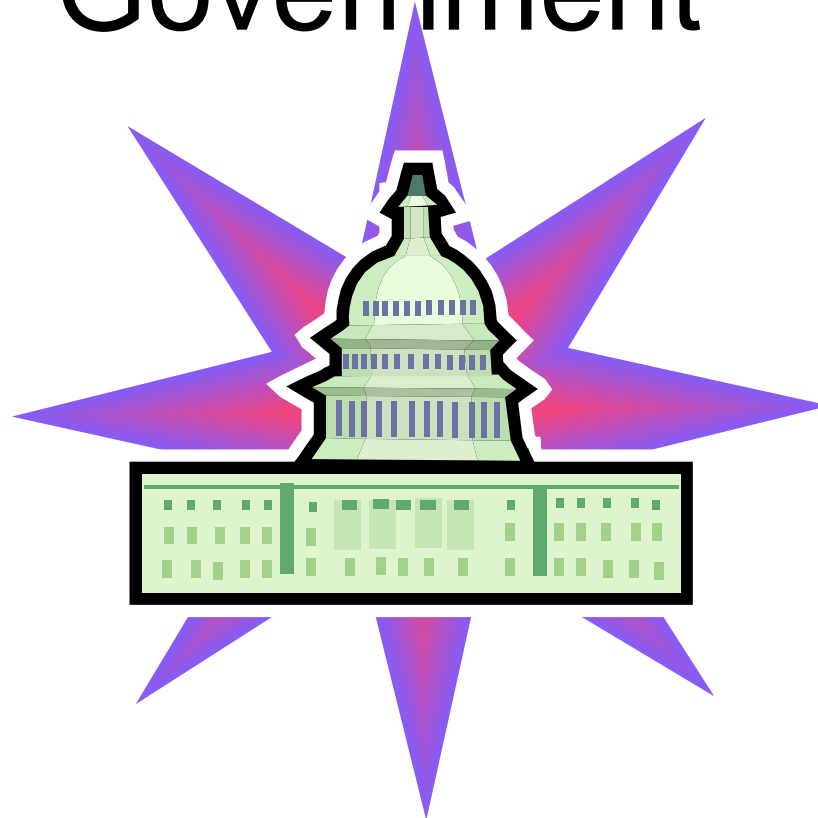


Three Branches of Government



The Executive Branch



The President of the United States is the leader of the executive branch.

The President's duties are to:

- Enforce federal laws and recommend new ones
- Serve as commander in chief of the Armed Forces – Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines
- Meet with leaders of other countries

The President's Cabinet

Carrying out the laws of the United States is a big job!

To help, the President has a Vice President and department heads who advise the President on issues and help carry out policies.

The Vice President serves as President of the Senate and becomes President if the President can no longer do the job.



Leaders in each department are called Secretaries.

These Secretaries make up the President's Cabinet.

Cabinet Departments



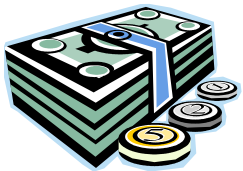
The Department of Education provides money for public schools and loans to help people attend college . It makes sure there is equal access to education and promotes educational excellence throughout the nation.



The Department of Transportation is in charge of highway planning and construction; car, truck, air, and railroad safety; and the safety of waterways, ports, highways, and oil and gas pipelines.



The Department of Agriculture works to support farmers and to develop and expand markets abroad for agricultural products. It protects quality in the daily food supply.

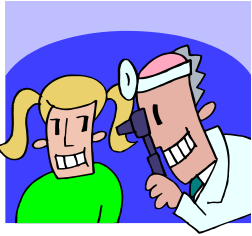


The Department of the Treasury collects taxes, recommends ways to help the economy, and manufactures coins and money.

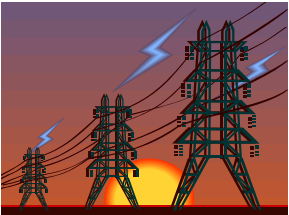
Cabinet Departments



The Department of Defense is responsible for providing the military forces needed to protect the security of our country.



The Department of Health and Human Services looks after people's health and provides services that include conducting medical research, preventing diseases, and assuring the safety of food and drugs.



The Department of Energy researches and develops energy systems that are friendly to the environment, but are not too expensive.

Other Departments in the President's Cabinet are: Commerce, Justice, Labor, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, Veteran Affairs, Homeland Security, and State.

The Judicial Branch

The judicial branch of government is made up of the court system. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. It was established by the Constitution. Other federal courts were established by Congress.

Courts decide arguments about:

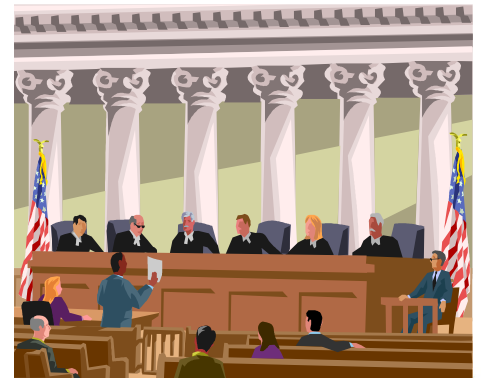
- The meaning of laws
- How laws are applied
- Whether laws break the rules of the Constitution



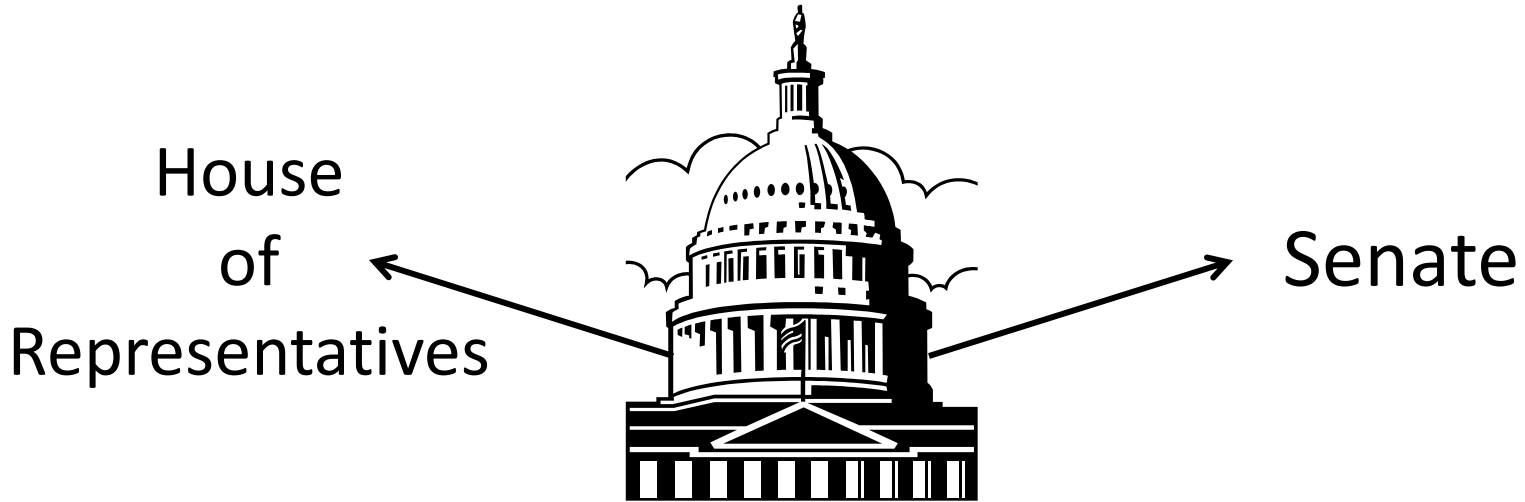
The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court hears cases that have made their way through the lower court system.

- There are more than 7,500 cases sent to the Supreme Court each year.
- Only about 80 to 100 cases are actually accepted.
- There are nine Supreme Court Justices, one of the nine being the Chief Justice.
- The Justices of the Supreme Court are appointed by the President, approved by the Senate, and can serve for life.



The Legislative Branch



The U.S. Congress is made up of two parts, the House of Representatives and the Senate. Congress meets at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. Its primary duty is to write, debate, and pass bills, which are then passed on to the President for approval to become laws.

The House of Representatives

In the House, representation is based on the number of people living in each state.

Therefore, states with larger populations have more representation than states with smaller populations. Each state has at least one representative in the House.



Pennsylvania 19



Delaware 1

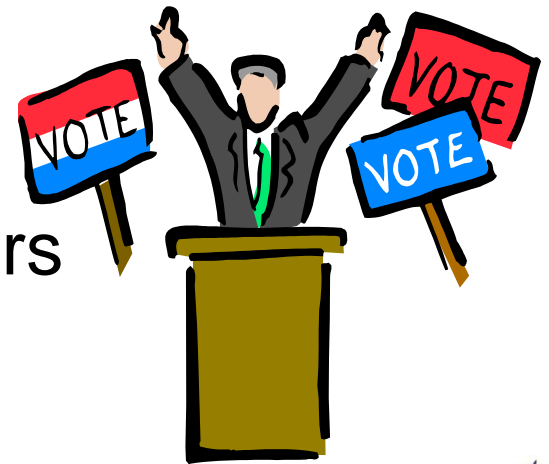
House of Representatives

Each representative serves a term of 2 years.

When the term is over, people from that state may choose to elect a new representative or keep the same one.

Thinking of running for Representative from your state? You must:

- Be at least 25 years old
- Be a U.S. citizen for the past 7 years
- Live in the state you represent

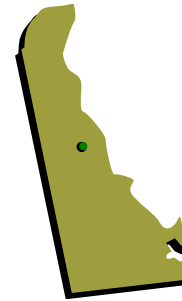


The Senate

Each of the 50 states sends 2 people to the Senate, so there are a total of 100 senators. This means that each state has equal representation in the Senate.



Pennsylvania 2



Delaware 2

The Senate

- Each senator serves a term of 6 years. When their 6-year term is over, the people from that state may choose to elect a new senator or keep the same one.

Thinking about running for Senate?

You must:

- Be at least 30 years old
- Be a U.S. citizen for the past 9 years
- Live in the state you represent



Special Duties of the Legislature

In addition to making laws, the House and the Senate each have some special duties:

Senate can:

- Vote on any treaties the President makes
- Review and approve Presidential appointees, such as Cabinet Secretaries and Supreme Court justices
- Hold a trial for a government official who does something wrong

House of Representatives can:

- Recommend tax bills to become law
- Decide if a government official should be put on trial before the Senate if s/he commits a crime against the country

Did You Know???

When Philadelphia was the capital of the United States, the House and Senate met in Independence Hall. The Senate met on the upper floor and the House met on the lower floor. Even today, the Senate is referred to as the “Upper House” and the House of Representatives is called the “Lower House.”



Dig a Little Deeper

Who is YOUR Representative?

How long have they been in office?

What are some of their ideas on the issues you are interested in?

Do you have some ideas of your own?

Why not write them a letter or send an email?

You will find contact information at:

<http://www.contactingthecongress.org/>

