

# 14-United States Congress

## Organization

The **Great Compromise of 1787** at the Constitutional Convention set up a bicameral legislature with the House based on proportional representation and the Senate based on states getting equal representation

### Senate Membership

- 2 from each state
- 100 total (50 states x2 per state=100)
- Each Senator represents the ENTIRE state so the entire state are their constituents

### Senate

- the UPPER HOUSE of Congress
- based on equal representation
- 2 from every state regardless of size

#### Requirements

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### Senate Terms

- 6 year terms
- Unlimited amount of terms
- Term limitations?**

100 members total  
(not fixed, how could we end up with more Senators?)

### House Membership

- census determines how many from each state
- apportionment**-term that refers to the number of representatives each state gets based on population
- Gerrymandering**-creating districts to favor one political party over another (usually end up in weird shapes)
- Each house member represents the people of only one district (his/her **constituents**)

### House of Representatives

- The LOWER house of Congress
- based on each state's population

#### Requirements

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### House Terms

- 2 year terms
- Unlimited amount of terms
- Term limitations?**
- idea that legislators should only be allowed a maximum number of years in office in order to encourage more involvement and change in government
- 435 members total (fixed permanently)

### Congressional Benefits

- salary \$174,000 per year (originally \$0.50 a day)
- budgets to pay staff
- office space in and around the Capital building
- Franking privilege**-can send mail without having to pay postage
- Limited immunity-freedom from prosecution

#### Limitations

- Expulsion**-removal from Congress
- Censure**-formal vote of disapproval of a Congress member's conduct

### Congressional Sessions

- each Congress serves two years and is given a number (we are now on the 115th)
- Congress meets from January to November or December every year (usually Congress members work Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and can go home to meet their constituents over long weekend)
- Can be called into emergency or special sessions by the President if the need arises