

Chapter 1 : Legislature - Wikipedia

The legislative branch on the local level is the division of government that makes state laws. All states except for one has a bicameral legislature. Nebraska is the only state without a bicameral legislature. The bicameral legislature has two separate chambers: the Senate and the House of.

The executive branch The executive branch is headed by the president , who must be a natural-born citizen of the United States, at least 35 years old, and a resident of the country for at least 14 years. A president is elected indirectly by the people through an electoral college system to a four-year term and is limited to two elected terms of office by the Twenty-second Amendment The formal constitutional responsibilities vested in the presidency of the United States include serving as commander in chief of the armed forces; negotiating treaties; appointing federal judges, ambassadors, and cabinet officials; and acting as head of state. Members of the cabinet and presidential aides serve at the pleasure of the president and may be dismissed by him at any time. Courtesy of the George W. Governed by commissions appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate commissioners may not be removed by the president , these agencies protect the public interest by enforcing rules and resolving disputes over federal regulations. Also part of the executive branch are government corporations e. Postal Service , which supply services to consumers that could be provided by private corporations, and independent executive agencies e. The legislative branch The U. Congress , the legislative branch of the federal government, consists of two houses: Powers granted to Congress under the Constitution include the power to levy taxes, borrow money, regulate interstate commerce , impeach and convict the president, declare war, discipline its own membership, and determine its rules of procedure. The president may veto a bill, but a veto can be overridden by a two-thirds vote of both houses. The House of Representatives may impeach a president or another public official by a majority vote; trials of impeached officials are conducted by the Senate, and a two-thirds majority is necessary to convict and remove the individual from office. Congress is assisted in its duties by the General Accounting Office GAO , which examines all federal receipts and expenditures by auditing federal programs and assessing the fiscal impact of proposed legislation, and by the Congressional Budget Office CBO , a legislative counterpart to the OMB, which assesses budget data, analyzes the fiscal impact of alternative policies, and makes economic forecasts. The House of Representatives is chosen by the direct vote of the electorate in single-member districts in each state. The number of representatives allotted to each state is based on its population as determined by a decennial census ; states sometimes gain or lose seats, depending on population shifts. The overall membership of the House has been since the s, though it was temporarily expanded to after Hawaii and Alaska were admitted as states in Members must be at least 25 years old, residents of the states from which they are elected, and previously citizens of the United States for at least seven years. It has become a practical imperativeâ€”though not a constitutional requirementâ€”that a member be an inhabitant of the district that elects him. Members serve two-year terms, and there is no limit on the number of terms they may serve. The speaker of the House , who is chosen by the majority party, presides over debate, appoints members of select and conference committees, and performs other important duties; he is second in the line of presidential succession following the vice president. The parliamentary leaders of the two main parties are the majority floor leader and the minority floor leader. The floor leaders are assisted by party whips , who are responsible for maintaining contact between the leadership and the members of the House. Bills introduced by members in the House of Representatives are received by standing committees, which can amend , expedite, delay, or kill legislation. Each committee is chaired by a member of the majority party, who traditionally attained this position on the basis of seniority, though the importance of seniority has eroded somewhat since the s. Among the most important committees are those on Appropriations, Ways and Means, and Rules. The Rules Committee, for example, has significant power to determine which bills will be brought to the floor of the House for consideration and whether amendments will be allowed on a bill when it is debated by the entire House. Each state elects two senators at large. Senators must be at least 30 years old, residents of the state from which they are elected, and previously citizens of the United States for at least nine years. They serve

six-year terms, which are arranged so that one-third of the Senate is elected every two years. Senators also are not subject to term limits. The vice president serves as president of the Senate, casting a vote only in the case of a tie, and in his absence the Senate is chaired by a president pro tempore, who is elected by the Senate and is third in the line of succession to the presidency. Debate is almost unlimited and may be used to delay a vote on a bill indefinitely. Such a delay, known as a filibuster, can be ended by three-fifths of the Senate through a procedure called cloture. Treaties negotiated by the president with other governments must be ratified by a two-thirds vote of the Senate. The Senate also has the power to confirm or reject presidentially appointed federal judges, ambassadors, and cabinet officials. Chamber of the U. Senate Photo Studio

The judicial branch The judicial branch is headed by the Supreme Court of the United States, which interprets the Constitution and federal legislation. The Supreme Court consists of nine justices including a chief justice appointed to life terms by the president with the consent of the Senate. It has appellate jurisdiction over the lower federal courts and over state courts if a federal question is involved. It also has original jurisdiction i. Supreme Court Building, Washington, D. The Judiciary Act of provided the justices with the sole discretion to determine their caseload. Three types of cases commonly reach the Supreme Court: The court can take official action with as few as six judges joining in deliberation, and a majority vote of the entire court is decisive; a tie vote sustains a lower-court decision. The official decision of the court is often supplemented by concurring opinions from justices who support the majority decision and dissenting opinions from justices who oppose it. Because the Constitution is vague and ambiguous in many places, it is often possible for critics to fault the Supreme Court for misinterpreting it. In the s, for example, the Republican-dominated court was criticized for overturning much of the New Deal legislation of Democratic President Franklin D. In the area of civil rights, the court has received criticism from various groups at different times. Its ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*, which declared school segregation unconstitutional, was harshly attacked by Southern political leaders, who were later joined by Northern conservatives. A number of decisions involving the pretrial rights of prisoners, including the granting of Miranda rights and the adoption of the exclusionary rule, also came under attack on the ground that the court had made it difficult to convict criminals. Hayes, Thurgood Marshall, and James M. Supreme Court, Washington, D. Board of Education of Topeka that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional, May 17, Each state has at least one federal district court and at least one federal judge. District judges are appointed to life terms by the president with the consent of the Senate. Appeals from district-court decisions are carried to the U. Losing parties at this level may appeal for a hearing from the Supreme Court. State and local government Because the U. Constitution establishes a federal system, the state governments enjoy extensive authority. The Constitution outlines the specific powers granted to the national government and reserves the remainder to the states. However, because of ambiguity in the Constitution and disparate historical interpretations by the federal courts, the powers actually exercised by the states have waxed and waned over time. Beginning in the last decades of the 20th century, for example, decisions by conservative-leaning federal courts, along with a general trend favouring the decentralization of government, increased the power of the states relative to the federal government. In some areas, the authority of the federal and state governments overlap; for example, the state and federal governments both have the power to tax, establish courts, and make and enforce laws. In other areas, such as the regulation of commerce within a state, the establishment of local governments, and action on public health, safety, and morals, the state governments have considerable discretion. The Constitution also denies to the states certain powers; for example, the Constitution forbids states to enter into treaties, to tax imports or exports, or to coin money. States also may not adopt laws that contradict the U. The governments of the 50 states have structures closely paralleling those of the federal government. Each state has a governor, a legislature, and a judiciary. Each state also has its own constitution. Most state judicial systems are based upon elected justices of the peace although in many states this term is not used, above whom are major trial courts, often called district courts, and appellate courts. Each state has its own supreme court. In addition, there are probate courts concerned with wills, estates, and guardianships. Most state judges are elected, though some states use an appointment process similar to the federal courts and some use a nonpartisan selection process known as the Missouri Plan. State governors are directly elected and serve varying terms generally ranging from two to four years; in some

states, the number of terms a governor may serve is limited. The powers of governors also vary, with some state constitutions ceding substantial authority to the chief executive such as appointment and budgetary powers and the authority to veto legislation. In a few states, however, governors have highly circumscribed authority, with the constitution denying them the power to veto legislative bills. Lieutenant governors generally serve as the presiding officer of the state Senate. Other elected officials commonly include a secretary of state, state treasurer, state auditor, attorney general, and superintendent of public instruction. State governments have a wide array of functions, encompassing conservation, highway and motor vehicle supervision, public safety and corrections, professional licensing, regulation of agriculture and of intrastate business and industry, and certain aspects of education, public health, and welfare. The administrative departments that oversee these activities are headed by the governor. Each state may establish local governments to assist it in carrying out its constitutional powers. Local governments exercise only those powers that are granted to them by the states, and a state may redefine the role and authority of local government as it deems appropriate. The country has a long tradition of local democracy e. There are some 85,000 local government units in the United States. The largest local government unit is the county called a parish in Louisiana or a borough in Alaska. Counties range in population from as few as people to millions e. They often provide local services in rural areas and are responsible for law enforcement and keeping vital records. Smaller units include townships, villages, school districts, and special districts e. Municipal, or city, governments are responsible for delivering most local services, particularly in urban areas. At the beginning of the 21st century there were some 20,000 municipal governments in the United States. They are more diverse in structure than state governments. There are three basic types: The mayor-council form, which is used in Boston , New York City , Philadelphia , Chicago , and thousands of smaller cities, consists of an elected mayor and council. The power of mayors and councils vary from city to city; in most cities the mayor has limited powers and serves largely as a ceremonial leader, but in some cities particularly large urban areas the council is nominally responsible for formulating city ordinances, which the mayor enforces, but the mayor often controls the actions of the council. In the commission type, used less frequently now than it was in the early 20th century, voters elect a number of commissioners, each of whom serves as head of a city department; the presiding commissioner is generally the mayor. In the council-manager type, used in large cities such as Charlotte North Carolina , Dallas Texas , Phoenix Arizona , and San Diego California , an elected council hires a city manager to administer the city departments. The mayor, elected by the council, simply chairs the council and officiates at important functions.

Chapter 2 : About the Legislature - The Florida Senate

Legislative Branch All 50 states have legislatures made up of elected representatives, who consider matters brought forth by the governor or introduced by its members to create legislation that.

Names for national legislatures include "parliament", "congress", "diet", and "assembly", depending on country. Internal organization[edit] Each chamber of the legislature consists of a number of legislators who use some form of parliamentary procedure to debate political issues and vote on proposed legislation. There must be a certain number of legislators present to carry out these activities; this is called a quorum. Some of the responsibilities of a legislature, such as giving first consideration to newly proposed legislation, are usually delegated to committees made up of a few of the members of the chamber s. The members of a legislature usually represent different political parties ; the members from each party generally meet as a caucus to organize their internal affairs. Power[edit] Legislatures vary widely in the amount of political power they wield, compared to other political players such as judiciaries , militaries , and executives. In , political scientists M. Steven Fish and Matthew Kroenig constructed a Parliamentary Powers Index in an attempt to quantify the different degrees of power among national legislatures. Such a system renders the legislature more powerful. In parliamentary and semi-presidential systems of government , the executive is responsible to the legislature, which may remove it with a vote of no confidence. On the other hand, according to the separation of powers doctrine, the legislature in a presidential system is considered an independent and coequal branch of government along with both the judiciary and the executive. A legislature usually contains a fixed number of legislators; because legislatures usually meet in a specific room filled with seats for the legislators, this is often described as the number of "seats" it contains. For example, a legislature that has "seats" has members. By extension, an electoral district that elects a single legislator can also be described as a "seat", as, for, example, in the phrases "safe seat" and "marginal seat". A legislature which operates as a single unit is unicameral , one divided into two chambers is bicameral , and one divided into three chambers is tricameral. The British House of Commons , its lower house In bicameral legislatures, one chamber is usually considered the upper house , while the other is considered the lower house. The two types are not rigidly different, but members of upper houses tend to be indirectly elected or appointed rather than directly elected, tend to be allocated by administrative divisions rather than by population, and tend to have longer terms than members of the lower house. In some systems, particularly parliamentary systems , the upper house has less power and tends to have a more advisory role, but in others, particularly presidential systems , the upper house has equal or even greater power. This is a case with the supranational legislature of the European Union. Tetracameral legislatures no longer exist, but they were previously used in Scandinavia. Legislatures vary widely in their size. Legislature size is a trade off between efficiency and representation; the smaller the legislature, the more efficiently it can operate, but the larger the legislature, the better it can represent the political diversity of its constituents.

Chapter 3 : Articles about Legislative Branch - tribunedigital-orlandosentinel

Established by Article I of the Constitution, the Legislative Branch consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate, which together form the United States Congress. The Constitution.

Play media Overview of the United States legislative process, as explained by the Library of Congress In , this committee of representatives prosecuted president Andrew Johnson in his impeachment trial, but the Senate did not convict him. However, the Constitution grants each chamber some unique powers. The Senate ratifies treaties and approves presidential appointments while the House initiates revenue-raising bills. The House initiates impeachment cases, while the Senate decides impeachment cases. A Congress covers two years; the current one, the 116th Congress , began on January 3, 2019, and will end on January 3, 2021. The Congress starts and ends on the third day of January of every odd-numbered year. Members of the Senate are referred to as senators; members of the House of Representatives are referred to as representatives, congresswomen, or congressmen. Scholar and representative Lee H. Hamilton asserted that the "historic mission of Congress has been to maintain freedom" and insisted it was a "driving force in American government" [2] and a "remarkably resilient institution". Congress reflects us in all our strengths and all our weaknesses. It reflects our regional idiosyncrasies, our ethnic, religious, and racial diversity, our multitude of professions, and our shadings of opinion on everything from the value of war to the war over values. Congress is essentially charged with reconciling our many points of view on the great public policy issues of the day. Most incumbents seek re-election, and their historical likelihood of winning subsequent elections exceeds 90 percent. The Articles of Confederation in 1787 created the Congress of the Confederation , a unicameral body with equal representation among the states in which each state had a veto over most decisions. Congress had executive but not legislative authority, and the federal judiciary was confined to admiralty. Government powerlessness led to the Convention of 1787 which proposed a revised constitution with a two-chamber or bicameral congress. Zelizer suggested there were four main congressional eras, with considerable overlap, and included the formative era (1787-1800), the partisan era (1800-1850), the committee era (1850-1900), and the contemporary era (1900-today). With the passage of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, the Anti-Federalist movement was exhausted. John Marshall, 4th Chief Justice of the Supreme Court empowered the courts by establishing the principle of judicial review in law in the landmark case Marbury v. Madison in 1803, effectively giving the Supreme Court a power to nullify congressional legislation. The watershed event was the Civil War which resolved the slavery issue and unified the nation under federal authority, but weakened the power of states rights. The Gilded Age (1870-1900) was marked by Republican dominance of Congress. During this time, lobbying activity became more intense, particularly during the administration of President Ulysses S. Grant in which influential lobbies advocated for railroad subsidies and tariffs on wool. The Progressive Era was characterized by strong party leadership in both houses of Congress as well as calls for reform; sometimes reformers would attack lobbyists as corrupting politics. The Senate was effectively controlled by a half dozen men. Committee chairmen remained influential in both houses until the reforms of the 1970s. Important structural changes included the direct election of senators by popular election according to the Seventeenth Amendment , [15] ratified in April 8, 1913, with positive effects senators more sensitive to public opinion and negative effects undermining the authority of state governments. More complex issues required greater specialization and expertise, such as space flight and atomic energy policy. Kennedy narrowly won the presidency and power shifted again to the Democrats who dominated both houses of Congress until 1966. The Republicans have been similarly disabled. The Watergate Scandal had a powerful effect of waking up a somewhat dormant Congress which investigated presidential wrongdoing and coverups; the scandal "substantially reshaped" relations between the branches of government, suggested political scientist Bruce J. Political action committees or PACs could make substantive donations to congressional candidates via such means as soft money contributions. In 1976, a delegate for the District of Columbia was authorized, and in 1980 new delegate positions were established for U. Virgin Islands and Guam. These six Members of Congress enjoy floor privileges to introduce bills and resolutions, and in recent congresses they vote in permanent and select committees, in party caucuses and in joint conferences with the

Senate. They have Capitol Hill offices, staff and two annual appointments to each of the four military academies. While their votes are constitutional when Congress authorizes their House Committee of the Whole votes, recent Congresses have not allowed for that, and they cannot vote when the House is meeting as the House of Representatives. Article I of the Constitution creates and sets forth the structure and most of the powers of Congress. Sections One through Six describe how Congress is elected and gives each House the power to create its own structure. Section Seven lays out the process for creating laws, and Section Eight enumerates numerous powers. Section Nine is a list of powers Congress does not have, and Section Ten enumerates powers of the state, some of which may only be granted by Congress. Congress has authority over financial and budgetary policy through the enumerated power to "lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States". Congress has an important role in national defense , including the exclusive power to declare war, to raise and maintain the armed forces , and to make rules for the military. Congress oversees other government branches, for example, the Senate Watergate Committee , investigating President Nixon and Watergate , in " In the Plame affair , critics including Representative Henry A. Waxman charged that Congress was not doing an adequate job of oversight in this case. Congress also has the exclusive power of removal , allowing impeachment and removal of the president , federal judges and other federal officers.

Chapter 4 : Legislative Branch | www.nxgvision.com

The legislative branch of the federal government, namely, Congress, comprises the two bodies: the House of Representatives and the Senate. All members of the House of Representatives are elected to a 2-year term, and the number from each state depends on the state's population size.

United States Government State and Local Governments Each state has its own constitution that runs the laws of the state that are not covered by the federal government. The 10th amendment to the US Constitution states that all powers not granted to the federal government are given to the states and the people. Today, all the states governments are modeled after the federal government. They each have three branches of government including the Executive, Legislative, and Judicial Branches. State and local governments handle a lot of the systems that we use and come into contact with on a daily basis. These include schools, police departments, fire departments, libraries, parks, and more. Other parts of the executive branch may include the lieutenant governor, attorney general, and the secretary of state. Legislative Branch Just like with the federal government the states have legislatures that make up the state laws, handle the budget, and levy taxes. Every state but Nebraska has two houses similar to the federal government. This is called a bicameral legislature. Nebraska just has a single house. Local Government Below the state government is the local government. There are even separate levels of government here. At the first level is the county government. Sometimes these are called boroughs or parishes. The next level is the city or town government. The powers and responsibilities between counties and cities can vary widely from state to state. In some states there is almost no county government, where in others the county is an important part and may be responsible for something as important as funding schools. Cities, or municipalities, often take care of things like police and fire departments, local courts, public transportation, streets, signs, and parks. Taxes Local governments get their taxes in different ways to pay to run the government. Almost all states have a sales tax that adds to most purchases. This money goes to the local government to help pay for services. Most states have an income tax as well. Another major tax is property tax. If you own a home or a building or a piece of land, you will have to pay a property tax bill. Activities Take a ten question quiz about this page. Listen to a recorded reading of this page: Your browser does not support the audio element. To learn more about the United States government:

Chapter 5 : United States (of America) Federal, State, and Local Government

The legislative branch is in charge of making laws. It is made up of the Congress and several Government agencies. Congress has two parts: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Senate partly to protect us from Supreme Court nominees who might oppose, for instance, abortion rights or free speech. The religious beliefs and other ideologies of the nominee should rightly be scrutinized by the Senate, prior to any confirmation action. Anything less would ignore the obligations of the legislative branch of government. That begs the question: United States, where the U. Following the war, the courts struck down an executive order from President Truman in *Youngstown v. Sawyer*, when Truman attempted to take control of the steel industry during the Korean conflict. Advertisement Inappropriate demand November 3, While on a recent trip to Europe, I received word that Harriet Miers had stepped down and that "Scooter" Libby was indicted. It responds to financially powerful and politically sophisticated factions. And it encourages rent-seekers to exploit opportunities for concentrated benefits and dispersed costs e. Such government inevitably means executive government and the derogation of the legislative branch, both of which produce exploding government debt. In role playing, students act out responses to teen-age pregnancy, abortion and other social issues. How much further can we go from the foundations our forefathers laid if we no longer allow controversial questions in education? Heaven forbid that an idea is posed that not everyone agrees with. The legislative branch was not formed to dissect and analyze every aspect of daily life. This fact amplifies the pitiful state of our legislative branch of government. I mean the runaway national debt, unemployment of the minorities, escalating costs of health benefits for the elderly, the destruction of our industrial base by foreign countries, the homeless, the AIDS virus and dozens of other problems crying for attention. Can the executive branch pursue a foreign-policy objective opposed by the legislative branch, provided it does so with non-appropriated funds? That is still a question that needs to be answered. Inherent in the current practice of the executive branch keeping secrets from the legislative branch is the assumption that the president can act on his own even in opposition to Congress. He said the speaker of the House and the majority leader of the Senate should be subjected to nationally televised press conferences just as the president is. As the man pointed out, Congress is the guts of the federal government. The executive branch executes the laws Congress passes. The judicial branch applies them to a given set of facts or tests them against the Constitution. That means the White House. Though no such attack occurred, the shock of what might have been spurred an effort to develop plans for assuring that the legislative branch quickly recover from a disaster. But three years later, the once-bipartisan issue has become just one more object of political wrangling -- as evidenced by House action Thursday on a measure that Republicans praised but Democrats said could render Congress unable to respond to a crisis. Senate over judicial appointments may be a sequel to molding the judiciary to be the mere enforcer of "political decisions. John Cornyn, is so precedentially fallacious it is inconceivable it was sincerely made. Our greatest chief justice, John Marshall, a contemporary of our founders, served with George Washington in the Revolutionary War, and later as secretary of state, declared in *Marbury v. For the first time in the year history of the General Accounting Office, which is the auditing arm of Congress, the comptroller general went to federal court to ask a judge to order a member of the executive branch to turn over records to Congress. As often as not, as I have noted before, these victories are ignored by the press, which thrives on conflict and finds consensus boring. A particularly vivid example of this distortion -- which contributes so much to public disdain for the legislative branch -- occurred on July 22, when the Nurse Reinvestment Act went through both the House and the Senate on the same afternoon, unnoticed and uncelebrated by almost everyone outside the health-care profession. Voyles, May 28, In response to your request for suggestions about combating drugs: It requires the effort of all levels of government, backed by the people.*

Chapter 6 : United States Congress - Wikipedia

How did the legislative branch of the U.S. government come to be? How does Congress work? And how does a bill get

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Chapter 7 : Organizational Chart | The Ohio Legislature

Legislative Branch Just like with the federal government the states have legislatures that make up the state laws, handle the budget, and levy taxes. Every state but Nebraska has two houses similar to the federal government.

Chapter 8 : US Government for Kids: State and Local Governments

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Chapter 9 : United States - The executive branch | www.nxgvision.com

The legislative branch is one of three branches of the U.S. government—the executive and judicial are the other two—and it is the one charged with creating the laws that hold our society together.