

#1 Congress

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 grants Congress the sole authority to enact legislation and declare war, the right to confirm or reject many Presidential appointments, and substantial investigative powers.



The House of Representatives is made up of 435 elected members, divided among the 50 states in proportion to their total population. In addition, there are 6 non-voting members, representing the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and four other territories of the United States. The presiding officer of the chamber is the Speaker of the House, elected by the Representatives. He or she is third in the line of succession to the Presidency.

Requirement	House	Senate
	Lower House	Upper House
Minimum Age	25 years	30 years
Length of US Citizenship	7 years	9 years
Residence	Must be a resident of the state where elected.	Must be a resident of the state where elected.
Number of Members	435	100
How is number determined	Proportional representation – based on state population. Each state has at least 1.	Equal representation – 2 per state.
Term	2 year terms	6 years (1/3 of the members are up for election every 2 years)
Voting Requirements	2/3's vote to pass a resolution	Majority to pass a resolution
Unique powers	Initiate revenue bills (taxing) Impeachment Selects the President if no one wins a majority of electoral college votes	Approves Presidential appointments (Judges, ambassadors ect.) Approve treaties with a 2/3rds approval Impeachment trial to remove officials.
Salary	\$174,000 a year	\$174,000 a year

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1) How is Congressional representation determined? Explain how it is different between the two chambers.
- 2) Why would the qualifications to become a Senator be stricter than a member of the House?
- 3) Why would the House have non-voting members?
- 4) How are the powers of the House different than those of the Senate?

#2 Congressional Apportionment

Congress is bicameral with two chambers. The upper chamber, the Senate is based on equal representation. Each state elects two senators. The House of Representatives, the lower house, has 435 members. The number of representatives per state is based on proportional representation. Population determines representation, as such the Census Bureau completes a decennial (every 10 years) census that calculates changes in population across the nation. That data is used to determine the number of representatives each state will have in the House of Representatives.

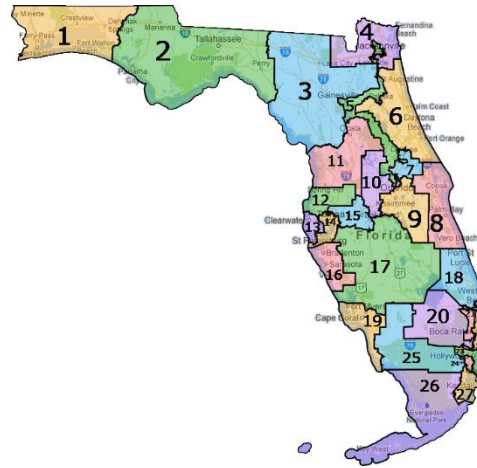


Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

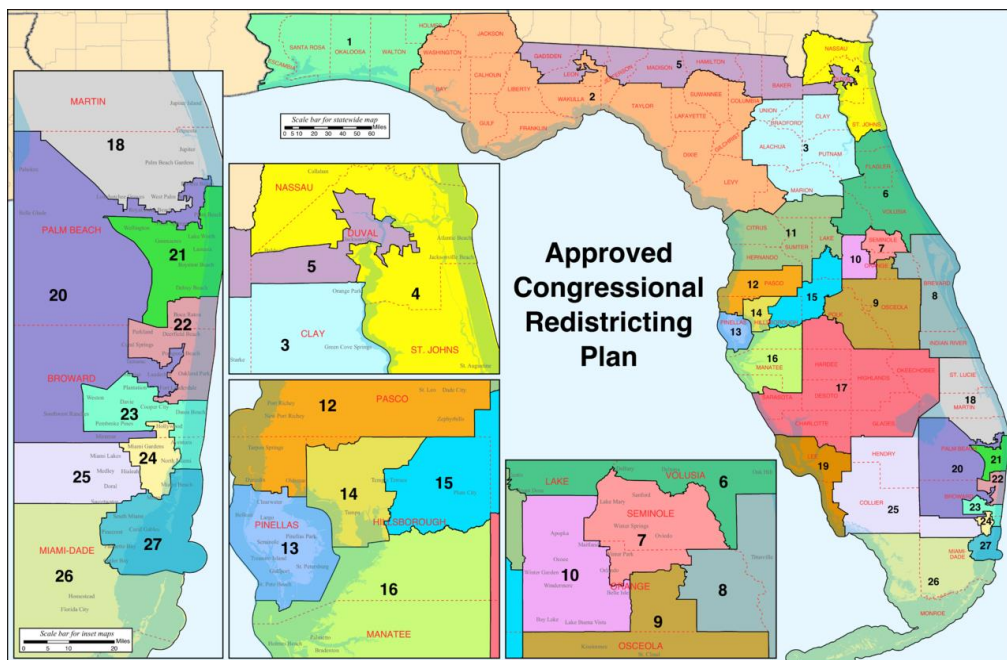
- 1) Why would a state gain or lose representation in the House?
- 2) How does the federal government determine that changes need to be made in representation?
- 3) Generally speaking in what region did states lose representation? Why do you think they did?
- 4) Generally speaking in what region did states gain representation? Why do you think they did?
- 5) In the state of California how did the population change in the 2010 censuses?

#3 Florida Congressional Districts

Each state is divided into different districts. Each district elects its own representative to the House of Representatives. Here in Florida we have 27 representatives so we have 27 different districts. A representative is responsible to the constituents (voters/citizens) of their district. Voters only participate in elections for their district. For example Brevard County is in district 8. Living here we would not participate in an election for the House held in district 1 that represents Pensacola. As a result members of the House not only strive to represent their state but they are more in tune with what their individual communities needs may be.



Here in Florida an independent groups draw the lines and then the State Legislature approves the lines. It was hoped that this system would limit gerrymandering, or the drawing of lines to benefit a certain political party.



Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1) Explain why someone living in the keys would not be allowed to vote for the representative of our district 8.
- 2) Why would some districts be very large, like district 2, while others such as 24 are very small?
- 3) What is gerrymandering?
- 4) What Florida district could be an example of gerrymandering? Why?

#4 Our Representatives

Junior Senator – Republican Rick Scott – elected 2018 – today



SCOTT, Richard Lynn (Rick), a Senator from Florida; born in Bloomington, Ill., December 1, 1952; graduated North Kansas City High School, Kansas City, Mo., 1970; B.A., business administration, University of Missouri-Kansas City, 1975; J.D., Southern Methodist University, 1978; served in the United States Navy 1971-1974; admitted to the Texas bar in 1978 and commenced practice in Dallas, Tex.; co-owner of Texas Rangers baseball team; venture capitalist and founder of health care, investment, and other companies; chief executive officer; governor of Florida 2011-2018; elected as a Republican to the United States Senate in 2018

Senior Senator – Republican Marco Rubio – elected 2011- today – Presidential Candidate 2016.

RUBIO, Marco, a Senator from Florida; born in Miami, Fla., May 28, 1971; graduated University of Florida, B.S., 1993; graduated University of Miami, J.D., 1996; lawyer; West Miami City Commission 1998-2000; member of the Florida house of representatives 2000-2008; majority leader 2003-2006; speaker 2006-2008; elected as a Republican to the United States Senate in 2011



Representative – Republican Bill Posey – elected 2009 – today

POSEY, Bill, a Representative from Florida; born in Washington, D.C., December 18, 1947; graduated from Cocoa High School, Cocoa, Fla., 1966; A.A., Brevard Junior College (now Eastern Florida State College), Cocoa, Fla., 1969; realtor; member of the Rockledge, Fla., city council, 1976-1986; member of the Florida state house of representatives, 1992-2000; member of the Florida state senate, 2000-2008; elected as a Republican to House of Representatives 2009.

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1) Who are our Congressional representatives here in Brevard County?
- 2) How are Nelson and Rubio similar?
- 3) How are Nelson and Rubio different?
- 4) Rubio has one of the worse attendance rates in Congress, why do you think that is?

#5 Congressional Leadership

After each legislative election the party that wins the most representatives is designated the "MAJORITY" in each house, and the other party is called the "MINORITY." These designations are significant because the majority party holds the most significant leadership positions, such as Speaker of the House.

At the beginning of each new Congress, the members of each party gather in special meetings to select their leaders by majority vote. Democrats call their meeting a "CAUCUS," and the Republicans call theirs a "CONFERENCE." Next, when each house convenes in its first session, Congressional leaders, such as the SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE and the MAJORITY LEADER in the Senate, are selected.

The Speaker of the House is the most powerful member of the House of Representatives, and arguably, the most influential single legislator in both houses. Always a member of the majority party, the speaker's influence depends partly on strength of personality and respect of colleagues, but also on several important powers.

- presides over proceedings on the House floor
- influences which bills go to which committees
- influences committee assignments for new members
- appoints the party's other leaders
- rules on questions of parliamentary procedure



Figure 1 Democrat Nancy Pelosi Speaker of the House

THE MAJORITY LEADER usually the second ranking member of the majority party, is the party leader on the floor and is often hand-picked by the Speaker. THE MINORITY LEADER heads and organizes the minority party. Because the party has less voting power than the majority party has, this person's influence is usually limited.

The Senate leadership actually has very little power. The president of the Senate is the VICE PRESIDENT of the United States, who only can cast a vote in case of a tie. The Vice President rarely sits with the Senate, so a PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE is selected to take his place. This role too has no power, so the chair is often passed to a junior Senator.

The floor leaders are the real leaders in the Senate, although they generally have less power than do leaders in the House. The majority leader is usually the most influential person in the Senate. He shares his power with the minority leader, who leads the other party. Usually the two leaders cooperate to some extent, but the leader of the majority party always has the upper hand.

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1) What is the difference between the majority and the minority?
- 2) Who determines leadership in Congress?
- 3) Who is the most powerful member of Congress? Why?
- 4) What sort of powers do the Senate leadership have?